

THE RECEPTIVE LIFE

A SPIRITUAL TRAVELOGUE (AND FIELD GUIDE) TO
FINDING THE SOUL'S SACRED REST IN THE
TRIUNE GOD

THE RECEPTIVE LIFE SERIES



PAUL W ARNDT

SHADOW PAW PUBLICATION

The Receptive Life: A Spiritual Travelogue (and Field Guide) to Finding the Soul's Sacred Rest in the Triune God

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A Shadow Paw Publication

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*My soul rests in God alone.
My salvation is from him.
He alone is my rock, my salvation, and my fortress.
I will never be greatly shaken.*

— PSALM 62:1-2 (WEB)

This is what the Sovereign Lord , the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.

— ISAIAH 30:15 (NIV)

Come to me all you who labour and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

— MATTHEW 11:28-30 (WEB)

Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, "Rejoice!" Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made to known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

— PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7 (WEB)

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PROLOUGE



A SACRED REST FOR AN UNQUIET HEART



“Lord God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless (“unquiet”) until they find their rest in you.”

— SAINT AUGUSTINE, *CONFESSIONS*, BOOK 1

My heart is restless.
If I’m honest, it’s not just my heart—my whole body feels unquiet.

Saint Augustine’s confession isn’t just a one-off poetic sentiment; it’s the soundtrack of our age—and of my life.

My ears catch and amplify any news that reminds me that this world is far from right: wars and rumors of wars, brother against brother, plagues, famines, earthquakes. Right is called wrong, and wrong is called right. And that’s just the apocalyptic signs.

Beneath this cosmic turmoil lies the quiet devastation of daily life—moments that shatter our hearts and rob us of peace: the tragic death of a child, a diagnosis that devastates a

family, the suffering of one that you love, the sudden loss of a lifelong friend.

Then come betrayals: lies, broken promises, the unfaithfulness of someone you trusted. Layer on the sting of cutthroat office politics and backstabbing power plays or the heartbreak of personal losses: the job you loved, the relentless grip of depression, the suffocating prison of loneliness, or the ache of saying final goodbyes to a beloved pet.

And yet, beneath it all, the deepest anguish comes from within—a heart weighed down by guilt, a conscience plagued by the fear of God’s wrath, and anger and bitterness toward the very One we were made to trust. The tyrannical trifecta of misbelief, despair, and the shame of hidden vices deepen the unrelenting restlessness.

Once the first domino falls, down goes everything else.

My mind races, emotions swirl, my pulse rises, and my stomach twists.

My hands wring, knees shake, and feet pace.

The world is unwell, and my soul is unquiet.

This world exhausts us. And the solutions it offers are superficial and short-lived, leaving our hearts more restless than when we started.

Apart from Christ, there is no rest and nothing is right.

And yet, amid the unquiet chaos, there is a shout of hope. There is a sacred rest. It is found only in Christ and it is revealed through the pages of Scripture.

My soul rests in God alone.

My salvation is from him.

He alone is my rock, my salvation, and my fortress.

I will never be greatly shaken.

— PSALM 62:1-2 (WEB)

Jesus doesn't leave us wandering and weary through the unquiet wilderness. He calls us out and brings us into His rest.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

— MATTHEW 11:28-30 (NIV)

REPENT. RECEIVE. REJOICE. (REPEAT)

If you're like me, you've felt the ache of an unquiet heart. And your soul craves rest—true, lasting, deep, and sacred rest.

But where do we find it?

The core message of this book is ...

The soul's sacred rest isn't a spiritual state you achieve. It's a gift you receive.

The Triune God is the only One who can give it, and He gives it through His Word—in Jesus, in the Scriptures, and in the Sacraments. We can only receive our soul's rest through faith.

Any self-help attempts to quiet restless hearts are fleeting and bring only a false and deceptive sense of relief. Acknowledging our restlessness is the first step.

"In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength ..."

— ISAIAH 30:15 (NIV)

The rhythm is simple yet profound:

Repent.

Receive.

Rejoice.

And repeat.

We repeat because as long as we live in this world we are restless and at rest at the same time.

AN INVITATION TO WALK TOGETHER

If you're heart is restless and it longs to find its sacred rest in Jesus, this book is for you.

The pages that follow will help you ...

- Understand the deep roots of your restlessness and why your striving for peace leaves you empty.
- Discover how to receive—not achieve—the sacred rest your soul longs for, through the promises of the Triune God.
- Master spiritual practices that will guide you through life's wilderness with the promises of Scripture.
- Build a sustainable and repeatable pattern of daily repentance, receptivity, and rejoicing allowing the Triune God to quiet your restless heart.
- Experience the peace that surpasses all understanding as you rest in the promises of Christ—no matter what chaos surrounds you.

PART I: A SPIRITUAL TRAVELOGUE – THE
JOURNEY OF THE RESTLESS HEART

Here's how we'll walk this path together...

In Part I, we'll explore the territory of the restless heart—what it is, how it feels, what it wants, where it wanders, what it's looking for, and where it ultimately finds its sacred rest.

We'll navigate the spiritual wilderness, guided by God's Word and all the promises that we have in the person and work of Jesus.

This first section invites you to pause, reflect, and explore the landscape of your unquiet heart. Through stories, Scripture, and reflections, we'll uncover the deep roots of our restlessness and journey to a place where we receive our soul's sacred rest in Jesus.

PART II: SPIRITUAL REST AND REFLECTIONS
ALONG THE WAY

Part II offers a series of meditations designed to help you pause and reflect deeply as you journey.

Think of these as rest stops along the way—moments to slow down, catch your breath, rest, and receive whatever gift the Triune God desires to give.

PART III: A SPIRITUAL FIELD GUIDE – MAP,
COMPASS, TOOLS AND GEAR

Part III equips you with practical tools, spiritual exercises, and step-by-step practices. Included are daily and weekly spiritual rhythms, prayers, and resources that will help you receive and live in God's rest.

These resources are drawn from the riches of Scripture,

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the pattern of the Divine Service and Martin Luther's *Small and Large Catechisms*,

The *Small and Large Catechisms* are not just doctrinal texts—they are practical tools for prayer, meditation, and daily renewal. They offer a simple yet profound framework for understanding and receiving God's gifts.

You'll learn a Lutheran spiritual formation process for receiving the Triune God's promises, resisting spiritual attacks, and building repeatable spiritual practices that get you to all the places that the Triune God has promised to give His gifts.

WITH CHRIST AND ONE ANOTHER

I don't want this book to be something you simply read and then set aside. I want it to be a book that you keep at your side and use. My hope is that it will be a trusted guide.

No journey is meant to be taken alone

Let's walk this path together.

Paul

PART I
A SPIRITUAL TRAVELOGUE -
THE JOURNEY OF THE
RESTLESS HEART



WALKING IT OUT THROUGH DODGE PARK



For nearly 30 years, Dodge Park has been my territory. I know every twist and turn of its trails, every bend of the Clinton River that winds through it. Over the years, my family and I have even named certain parts of the trail, the locations of which are known only to us.

There's the ...

*Bear Trap, Big Skinny Little Skinny, Russia,
Danny J Beach, the Loop, the Sitting Spot,
the Schwampy Valley of Ogres, Tire Swing,
and Boy Scout Bend.*

It's not Sedona or the Appalachian Trail or one of our National Parks, but it's my territory, my domain. After walking the trail for thirty years I'm no longer an explorer, I'm a native.

Others see me as a native as well. One day as I was walking with my black Labrador Retriever, Shadow, a little

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boy pointed to me and said to his mom, “that’s the park ranger and his dog.”

I know the trails and the trails know me.

TAKING IT UP WITH THE TRIUNE GOD

I walk the four-to-five-mile loop most every day because most every day I have things to take up with the Triune God. It usually starts with a lot of questions, laments, longings for vindication, or rants about this or that. You know, all the usual suspects of the Psalms.

At times, I wrestle with God about a lot of things.

I level claims that He doesn’t know what’s going on in the world. If He does know, He’s not doing anything about it. If He does act, He’s too slow or not decisive enough for me.

And so, we walk it out. It’s a slow walk with a long conversation. Over 30 years we’ve covered a lot of territory.

During the walk, there are moments when my words trail off and the Triune God begins to speak. I don’t hear voices from burning bushes. Rather Scriptures and parts of Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism* that I have hidden deep within my heart come up alongside and join the conversation.

The ninety-minute walk gives me just enough time to cycle through the chief parts of the *Small Catechism*, portions of Psalm 119, and whatever other portions of Scripture that are needed.

The years of memorizing Scripture and the *Small Catechism* have given me a backpack full of provisions for the soul’s journey. This mobile daily practice helps me get to all the places where the Triune God has promised to speak.

Places like ...

*the Sign of the Cross and the Trinitarian Invocation,
the Evening and Morning Prayer,*

*Daily Repentance, the Ten Commandments, the
Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism,
Confession, Absolution, the Office of the Keys, the
Lord's Supper, the Table of Duties, Vocation,
Doxology and Blessing.*

I later organized this daily practice into a framework called the *Receptive Life Prayer Cycle*—a spiritual formation path that helps guide the unquiet heart to the sacred places where the Triune God has promised to work and gives His gifts.

This framework isn't just a method; it's a simple and accessible guide, a spiritual map to sacred rest. It's a way to intentionally travel to all of the places where the Triune God has promised to give His gifts.

Every day I take another lap, retracing familiar paths, not out of rote habit, but because each step brings my unquiet heart back to the sure and certain promises of Christ.

After all, Martin Luther did note that the life of the Christian should be one of daily repentance.

*"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent,' he willed
the entire life of believers to be one of repentance"*

— THE FIRST OF MARTIN LUTHER'S 95 THESES

Repent. Receive. Rejoice. (Repeat)

I have learned to walk these spiritual trails over the last 30 years. And now I want to help you navigate and explore this sacred territory as well.

PO-LE, PO-LE

In Africa, they refer to me as “Paul who is po-le, po-le”. The Swahili translates to “slowly, slowly”. I like to think that it means that I’m steady and deliberate in life, not someone who’s slow to make it up the hill to the cafeteria for lunch.

Po-le, po-le is more than just a way to hike; it’s a way to approach the spiritual life. It reminds us that we walk slowly, by faith, trusting that step-by-step the Triune God is leading us to His promised rest.

The words that follow are meant to be a spiritual travelogue, a recounting of places visited with lessons learned and conversations had along the way. In the end it’s about getting to the places where the Lord has promised to do His work.

I’d like to show you some of these places as a guide so that you might come to know them for yourselves. Together, we’ll explore them step by step. It will be a slow walk and a long conversation with the Triune God that will help your soul find it’s sacred rest in Christ.

We’ll walk po-le, po-le.

ALMOST SIXTY



The first day back from a two-month teaching deployment at the Lutheran School of Theology at the foot of the Ngong Hills in Kenya, I laced up my boots, put a thirty-pound cast iron plate in my backpack, strapped myself in for the five-mile hike through the local park, positioned my sunglasses, and headed out the front door.

My wife came around the corner, gave me a concerned look, and said, “Paul, you better be careful. You know you’re almost sixty.”

I lowered my sunglasses to the tip of my nose and fired back, “Almost sixty? What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Well, it’s true,” she said. “You’re not almost thirty, or forty, or even fifty ... you’re almost sixty!”

I pushed my sunglasses back over my eyes, marched down the driveway, put a little extra vim and vigor in my step, and finished the five-mile hike in around ninety minutes. Not bad for someone who’s almost sixty.

Don’t feel sorry for me. Unknowingly, my wife gave me a gift for the rest of my 59th year. She gave me the almost-

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sixty-get-out-of-doing-chores card. And I've been playing it every chance I get.

"Paul, we should really clean out the garage and get it ready for the winter."

"Oh, I don't know if I can. I better be careful because, you know ... I'm almost sixty."

"Can we at least ...?"

"I don't think I should. You know, I'm almost ..."

But my wife's words weren't just a free pass to avoid chores. They also prompted me to reflect on life's journey and the fleeting nature of time. As Psalm 90 reminds us:

"The length of our days is seventy years, or eighty if we have the strength."

Sixty candles on a birthday cake—just ten shy of the end of life's threshold as Moses describes it—served as the spark for this book.

There's an African proverb that says,

"When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground."

I don't know if I have a library in me, but I do think there is book or two that could help you number your days and find your soul's sacred rest.

LET'S CLIMB MT. KENYA



On April 21st, 2024, in the year of my 59th lap around the sun, I strapped on my new GoRuck backpack with a thirty-pound cast iron plate inside. I went from walking through Dodge Park to ruck sacking. That's the same day my wife sent me off with her caution,

Paul, you better be careful.

You know, you're almost sixty.

The day before, we had just returned from teaching the spring semester at the Lutheran School of Theology near Nairobi, Kenya. The seminary sits at the foot of the Ngong Hills, nested just above the Great Rift Valley.

During Holy Week, Rev. James May, the executive director of Lutherans In Africa, drove us five hours north of Nairobi to Meru, a region near Mt. Kenya—Kilimanjaro's little sister.

We crossed the equator, entered the northern hemisphere, and celebrated Good Friday and Easter Sunday near the base of Africa's second tallest mountain.

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On the Saturday before Easter, we visited the Anabas lodge, a rustic base camp with crisp air and clear view of Mt. Kenya. We took tea, talked to the host, took a tour of the accommodations, and then Rev. May noted, as if he had already thought it through and planned it out ten different ways from Tuesday,

*In January 2025 we'll host a pastors' conference here
for African Lutheran bishops. We'll teach for a
week. After the conference we'll climb Mt.
Kenya.*

Three days up and two days down.

Before my brain could think it through, my mouth said,
“Yes! Let's climb Mt. Kenya!”

Rev. May has this uncanny ability—like a Jedi mind trick
—to get you to agree to things you never imagined doing.

But then my brain kicked back in and out came the
questions ...

*What am I doing? I never hiked a mountain before
—am I even fit enough? How do I train? Do you
have to camp? What gear do you need?
What about food, water and altitude sickness?
Would there be a guide? What's the route?
What's the terrain like? Can I do it?*

And then there's my wife's reminder,

*Paul, you better be careful.
You know, you're almost sixty.*

NO TURNING BACK

But now, I was in. No turning back.

And so on April 21st, 2024 my training began. Walking turned to ruck sacking. How else would one train in the suburbs of Detroit to climb the second tallest mountain in Africa?

And so rucksack I do.

Just as I needed to ready my body and mind for the climb, we need to prepare our souls for the journey to sacred rest, equipping ourselves with the spiritual tools and disciplines that the Triune God will use to sustain us along the way.

Much like preparing to climb Mt. Kenya, the journey to finding sacred rest in Christ requires preparation, guidance, and the right tools. Just as every climb requires a map, sturdy boots, and a reliable guide, the spiritual journey requires its own provisions.

This book is your spiritual field guide, designed to help you prepare for the climb ahead—step by step, po-le, po-le. Together, we'll discover the sacred rest that only Christ can give.

Onward—one step at a time!

PART II
SPIRITUAL REST AND
REFLECTIONS ALONG
THE WAY



PART III
A SPIRITUAL FIELD GUIDE



PROVISIONS, MAP, AND
COMPASS



THE PROVISIONS: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



Before beginning any journey, preparation is key. This field guide is designed to equip you with the tools, provisions, and direction to navigate the path ahead.

Like any well-planned expedition, you'll need a clear map of the territory, a reliable compass, essential supplies, and a step-by-step itinerary.

THE PROVISIONS: TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Every traveler needs to pack wisely. Here are the indispensable resources to carry with you as you embark on this spiritual expedition.

- *The Lutheran Study Bible (ESV)*: Your map through God's Word.
- *Luther's Small and Large Catechisms*: A guide to understanding the core promises and chief parts of the Christian faith.
- *The Treasury of Daily Prayer*: A trusted companion

to help with structured readings, prayers, and reflections.

- *Concordia: The Reader's Edition of the Book Concord:* A deeper exploration into the confessions of the Lutheran faith.
- *A Simple Way to Pray* by Martin Luther: Practical guidance on developing a prayer life.

These tools are more than provisions—they are your life-line, connecting you to God's promises every step of the way.

THE MAP: THE LAY OF THE LAND



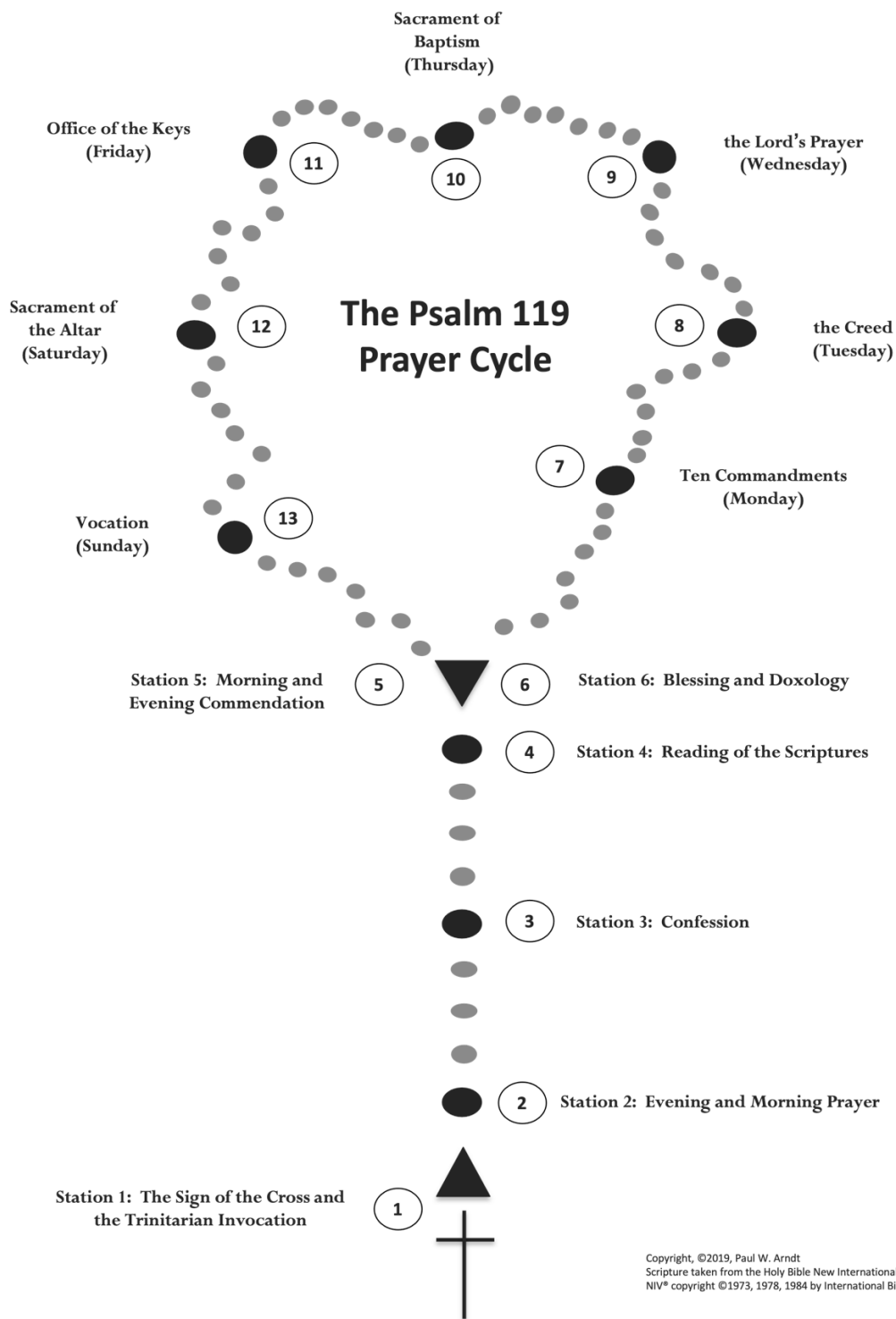
A map show us where we're headed and how we're going to get there. The spiritual landscape of *The Receptive Life* is divided into 13 Stations—places where Christ promises to meet us with His gifts.

Each stations represents a vital aspect of faith:

1. The Sign of the Cross and the Trinitarian Invocation: The starting point of faith.
2. Evening and Morning Prayer: Establishing the rhythm of grace.
3. Confession: The daily rhythm of repentance and forgiveness.
4. The Scriptures: Reading, meditating on, and studying God's Word.
5. Morning and Evening Commendation: Entrusting all that you love into the Lord's hands.
6. Blessing and Doxology: Responding to all of God's gifts.
7. Ten Commandments (Monday): The way of love.
8. The Creed (Tuesday): All of God's gifts.

9. The Lord's Prayer (Wednesday): An invitation and the very words to pray.
10. Sacrament of Baptism (Thursday): Washed, made clean, and brought into the family.
11. Office of the Keys (Friday): Forgiveness and restoration.
12. Sacrament of the Altar (Saturday): Forgiveness, connected to Christ, and nourishment for the soul.
13. Vocation (Sunday): Living out your calling.

Each station is a sacred outpost where Christ promises to meet you with His gifts.



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THE COMPASS: STAYING ORIENTED



When disoriented, a compass points us back to true north. For this journey, the *Psalm 119 Prayer Cycle* serves as your compass, guiding you through the spiritual terrain with these key themes:

- Oratio (prayer): A supplication for the Triune God to lead, guide and teach us along the way.
- Meditatio (meditation): A call to reflect deeply on the Scriptures.
- Tentatio (trial): A reminder that we participate in the sufferings of Christ and that He is our help in every trouble.

The Psalm 119 Prayer Cycle helps you stay grounded, directing you to the promises of Christ when life gets chaotic.

WALKING THE TERRITORY



THE ITINERARY



The journey is intentional and paced. With 15-30 minutes a day for 12 weeks, you'll walk through the spiritual landscape one station at a time. Here's the itinerary:

WEEK 1: THE FOUNDATION OF THE FAITH

- Focus: The Trinitarian Invocation
- Theme: The heart and core of faith

WEEK 2: THE RHYTHM OF GRACE

- Focus: Evening and Morning Prayer
- Theme: Establishing a daily rhythm of trust and rest.

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WEEK 3: REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

- Focus: Confession
- Theme: Turning from sin and receiving God's grace.

WEEK 4: ENGAGING GOD'S WORD

- Focus: Scripture reading, study, meditation, and memorization.
- Theme: The Word of God does the work.

WEEK 5: COMMENDATION

- Focus: Morning and Evening Commendation
- Theme: Entrusting all that you love into the Lord's hands.

WEEK 6: GOING WITH GOD'S BLESSING

- Focus: The Doxology and Blessing
- Theme: Thanking and praising God for all his blessings.

WEEK 7: THE CALL TO LOVE

- Focus: The Ten Commandments
- Theme: Love for God and love for the neighbor.

WEEK 8: I BELIEVE ...

- Focus: The Creed
- Theme: The God who gives all gifts needed.

WEEK 9: PRAYER AS WARFARE

- Focus: The Lord's Prayer
- Theme: Fighting the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh through intercession.

WEEK 10: NEW LIFE IN BAPTISM

- Focus: The Sacrament of Baptism
- Theme: Remembering who you are and whose you are.

WEEK 11: FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION

- Focus: The Office of the Keys
- Theme: Reconciled to God and one another.

WEEK 12: STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY

- Focus: The Sacrament of the Altar
- Theme: Receiving and strengthened by Christ's body and blood.

WEEK 13: LIVING OUT YOUR CALLING

- Focus: Vocation

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- Theme: Loving God and serving the neighbor in your daily life.

THE DAILY RHYTHM



*A*t the heart of the this journey is a simple rhythm:

- **Repent:** Agree with God about your sin and acknowledge your need for forgiveness.
- **Receive:** Agree with God about His grace and receive the forgiveness of sins that is found in the person and work of Jesus.
- **Rejoice:** Respond with gratitude and worship.
- **Repeat:** Begin each day again.

This rhythm anchors you in the sacred rest that only Christ can give.

PO-LE, PO-LE



WHERE THE LORD HAS GONE
BEFORE



REPEAT. REPEAT. REPEAT.



STEP BY STEP GUIDE



THE DAILY PRACTICE: STEP BY STEP GUIDE

STATION 1: MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS AND
SAY THE TRINITARIAN INVOCATION

In the morning, when you rise, AND in the evening, when
you go to bed, you shall bless yourself with the holy cross
and say:

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the
Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Then meditate on the following ...

Christ FOR me (Romans 8)

Christ WITH me (Matt. 28:20)

Christ IN and THROUGH me (Gal. 2:20-21)

Marked by the cross and the Trinitarian invocation meditate
on ...

*What the Triune God has done in your baptism!
Who you are in Christ Jesus!
Whose you are!
I belong to Jesus Christ!*

... that I may be [wholly] His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

*-Meaning of Second Article of Apostle's Creed
Small Catechism, Concordia Triglotta*

STATION 2: PRAY THE MORNING AND/OR EVENING PRAYER

Luther's Morning Prayer

*I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray Thee to keep me this day also from sin and all evil, that all my doings and life may please Thee. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me.
Amen.*

— TRIGLOTTA, SMALL CATECHISM

Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, that Thou hast graciously kept me this day, and I pray Thee to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and

graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me. Amen.

— TRIGLOTTA, SMALL CATECHISM

STATION 3: CONFESSION

As you prepare to examine your life, say ...

Ps. 119:1 Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the Lord's law.

Ps. 119:133 Establish my footsteps in your word. Don't let any iniquity have dominion over me.

Ps. 119:176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I don't forget your commandments. You shall have no other gods.

Examine your life according to the 10 Commandments.

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

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And then say one or all of the following ...

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner”

AND/OR

1 John 1:8-10: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us the sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10If we say that we haven't sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (WEB-BE)

AND/OR

“O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.”

— THE GENERAL CONFESSION FROM THE
LUTHERAN HYMNAL, 1941

After making confession, comfort yourselves with the forgiveness of sins that comes through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

- remember your Baptism,
- make use of the Office of the Keys
- attend the Lord's Supper in the Divine Service on the Lord's Day

STATION 4: THE READING AND STUDY OF SCRIPTURE

As you prepare to read the Scriptures say ...

Ps. 119:8: Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of your law. (WEB-BE)

Ps. 119:97 How I love your law! It is my meditation all day. (WEB-BE)

Ps. 119:25 My soul is laid low in the dust. Revive me according to your word! (WEB-BE)

And then read or study the Scriptures ... (a method or plan of your choosing)

- Read through the Bible in a year
- Read through the Psalms in a month
- Read a book of the Bible
- Treasury of Daily Prayer

STATION 5: THE PRACTICE OF "COMMENDING"

As you prepare to commend the day into the Lord's hands, remember that the Triune God desires to give Himself completely to you AND that it is good to proclaim His love in the morning and His faithfulness at night.

THE DAILY PRACTICE: STEP BY STEP GUIDE

THE MORNING COMMENDATION

Say Psalm 92:1-2

It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, Most High, to proclaim your loving kindness in the morning, and your faithfulness every night (WEB)

Remember the "ALLs" of the Triune God

I believe that the Triune God gives Himself wholly to me and is abundant in the giving of His gifts. The Father gives all of creation. The Son all of His work. And the Holy Spirit all of His gifts.

*- Paraphrase from Large Catechism,
II, 67-70 Triglot Concordia*

Say the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pray Psalm 5:1-3

Give ear to my words, Lord. Consider my meditation. Listen to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for I pray to you. Lord, in the morning you will hear my voice. In the morning I will lay my requests before you, and will watch expectantly. (WEB)

Reflect upon your station in life and note some directed action steps that the Triune God is calling you to fulfill in your vocation.

Use the following thoughts from Psalm 5:1-3 to pray for the events of the day ...

This morning I ask the Triune God for ...

This morning I trust that the Triune God gives ALL gifts needed for this day and I commend the following into His hands ...

As I begin the work of this day and fulfill my vocation I wait in expectation for ...

Say The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,*

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*Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
glory forever and ever.
Amen.*

EVENING COMMENDATION

As you prepare to commend the evening into the Lord's hands, remember that the Triune God desires to give Himself completely to you AND that it is good to proclaim His love in the morning and His faithfulness at night.

Say Psalm 92:1-2

*It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD, to sing
praises to your name, Most High, to proclaim
your loving kindness in the morning, and your
faithfulness every night (WEB)*

Remember the "ALLs" of the Triune God

*I believe that the Triune God gives Himself wholly to
me and is abundant in the giving of His gifts.
The Father gives all of creation. The Son all of
His work. And the Holy Spirit all of His gifts.*

*- Paraphrase from Large Catechism,
II, 67-70 Triglot Concordia*

Say the Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pray Psalm 4:8

*In peace I will both lay myself down and sleep,
for you alone, Lord, make me live in safety.
(WEB)*

As you prepare to go to sleep, reflect upon the events the day and thank the Triune God for his faithfulness.

Use the following thoughts from Psalm 4:8 to go to bed in peace ...

As I end this day, I thank the Triune God for his faithfulness.

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Throughout this day, He has ...

*As I sleep and rest from the activities of this day, I
release and commend the following into the
hands of the Triune God ...*

*I trust that the Lord will guard my heart and my
mind and I ask that He will grant me His peace,
especially from the following ...*

Say The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it
is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
glory forever and ever.
Amen.*

STATION 6: SAY (SING) THE DOXOLOGY AND THE
AARONIC BLESSING THE "DOXOLOGY"

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!*

— THOMAS KEN, 1674

The Aaronic Blessing

*“The Lord bless you, and keep you.
The Lord make his face to shine on you, and be
gracious to you.
The Lord lift up his face towards you, and give you
peace.”*

— NUMBERS 6:24-26

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STATION 7: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (MONDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the Ten Commandments by saying
and meditating on Psalm 119:32.

*(say 7x) I run in the path of your commandments,
for you have set my heart free. Psalm 119:32 (WEB)*

Pause at this station and spend time meditating upon the Ten
Commandments.

*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God
in vain.
Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.
Honor thy father and thy mother.
Thou shalt not kill.
Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

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Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbors.

If time allows, you can use Luther's Meaning to the Commandments in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation.

STATION 8: THE CREED (TUESDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the Creed by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:73.

*(say 7x) Your hands have made me and formed me.
Give me understanding, that I may learn your commandments. Psalm 119:73 (WEB)*

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating upon the Apostle's Creed. Use the Creed to focus your thoughts on the nature, the character and the work of the Triune God.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; He

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ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrections of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

If time allows, you can use Luther's Meaning to the Creed in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation

SESSION 9: THE LORD'S PRAYER (WEDNESDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the petitions of the Lord's Prayer by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:145.

(say 7x) I have called with my whole heart. Answer me, Lord! I will keep your statutes. Psalm 119:145 (WEB)

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating upon the Lord's Prayer. Use the petitions of the Lord's Prayer to express all of the needs, desires, sighs, groans and hopes of your life.

Be assured that these petitions are heard by the Father because he has commanded us so to pray and has promised to hear us.

*Our Father who art in heaven.
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

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*Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
glory forever and ever. Amen.*

If time allows, you can use Luther's Meaning to the Lord's Prayer in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation.

SESSION 10: BAPTISM (THURSDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the forgiveness of sins that comes to us through the Sacrament of Baptism by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:41.

*(7x) Let your loving kindness also come to me, Lord,
your salvation, according to your word. Psalm
119:41 (WEB)*

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating on the forgiveness of sins that comes through the sacrifice of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace.

Say and pray "the Jesus Prayer".

*The Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me a sinner (THE sinner)."*

Remember your Baptism.

Drown the Old Man in confession.

Rejoice in the New Man coming forth.

Meditate on the following Scriptures ...

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Romans 6:1-4

Titus 3:3-7

Matthew 28:18-20 Mark 16:15-16

If time allows, you can use Luther's Meaning to the Sacrament of Baptism in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation.

SESSION 11: THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS (FRIDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the forgiveness of sins that comes to us through Confession of Sins and Absolution by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:176.

(say 7x) "I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I don't forget your commandments." Psalm 119:176 (WEB)

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating on the forgiveness of sins that comes through the sacrifice of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace.

Say and pray "the Jesus Prayer" and remember the promise of Jesus in the Office of the Keys.

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner (THE sinner)."

Meditate on the following Scriptures:

1 John 1:8—2:2

John 20:19-23

Also, comfort and console your conscience with the gift of private confession before the pastor.

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If time allows, you can use Luther's Meaning to Confession and the Office of the Keys in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation.

STATION 12: THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR
(SATURDAY)

Prepare to meditate on the forgiveness of sins that comes to us through the Sacrament of the Altar by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:175

(say 7x) Let my soul live, that I may praise you.

Let your ordinances help me. Psalm 119:175 (WEB)

Pause at this Station and spend time meditating on the forgiveness of sins that comes through the sacrifice of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace.

Say and pray "the Jesus Prayer" and remember the promise of forgiveness that Jesus gives in the Sacrament of the Altar.

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner (THE sinner)."

Meditate on the following Scriptures:

Matthew 26:26-29

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

Finally, in preparation to receive the Sacrament of the Altar in the Divine Service, examine yourself by using Martin Luther's Christian Questions with Their Answers as printed in the Small Catechism.

If time allows you can use Luther's Meaning to the Sacrament of the Altar in the Small and Large Catechism.

STATION 13: THE CHRISTIAN'S VOCATION
(SUNDAY)

Prepare to meditate on your the vocation (the "calling of God") by saying and meditating on Psalm 119:35.

(say 7x) "Direct me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in them." Psalm 119:35 (WEB)

Meditate on how God works in his world through means:

The Triune God provides, saves, sanctifies, encourages, loves, feeds, teaches, creates, guides, protects, rules, heals, comforts, rebukes, punishes, dispenses justice, keeps social order, etc.

... through means.

station in life +location = vocation

Pause at this Station and spend time identifying and meditating upon all of the vocations ("callings") that God has given to you.

Reflect and focus on the truth that in and through these "callings" we love God and serve our neighbor.

*Spouse
Parent
Child*

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Friends

Neighbors

Geographic Locations

*(say 7x) "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light
for my path." Psalm 119:105 (WEB)*

If time allows, you can use Luther's Table of Duties in the Small and Large Catechism for further meditation.