

DEVOTIONS AT HOME

A Tutorial

If you haven't been in the habit of daily devotions at home, there's no time like the present to begin! Devotions - whether with your family or by yourself - are a comforting routine when everything else is chaos, a routine that keeps you grounded in what the Word of God says, instead of the noise of the world around you. We've put together this tutorial to give you some ideas for your devotional life at home.

Lutheran Service Book

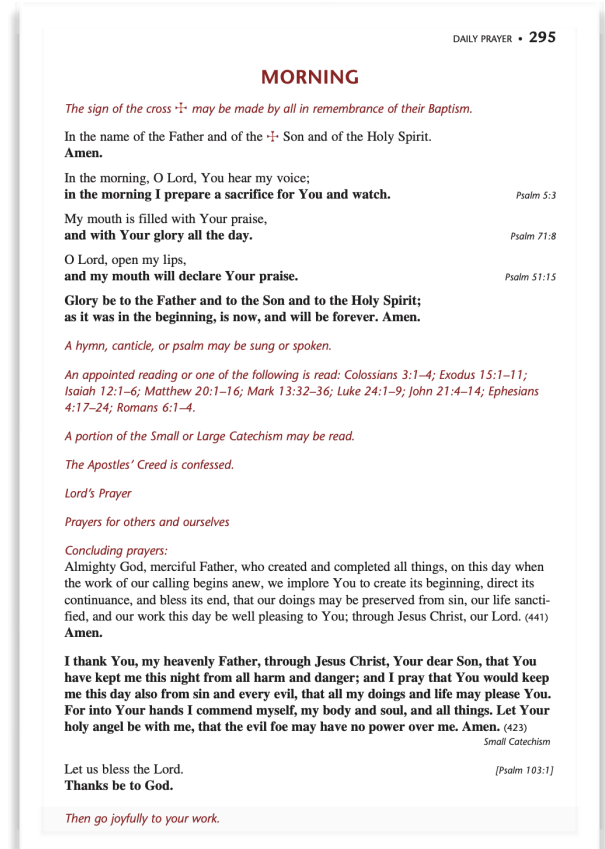
There is no greater devotional tool than the hymnal. The *Lutheran Service Book* hymnal has everything you need. Page 294 is the beginning of the section for "Daily Prayer for Individuals and Families." This section has brief spoken liturgies for morning, noon, early evening, and close of the day. Each one has a similar format - opening versicles (short sentences with responses); an option for a hymn, canticle, or psalm; a reading from Scripture and sometimes the catechism; the Apostles' Creed or a canticle; and prayers.

Once you select one of these liturgies, you'll need the "propers" - the parts of the liturgy that change, such as the Scripture readings, catechism readings, the hymns or psalms, and the prayers. The hymnal provides that, too! On page 299, a daily lectionary (Scripture reading plan) is provided. Each day has a reading from both the Old and New Testaments that covers nearly all of the New and about 1/3 of the Old in the course of a year. You can read both, split them up to different times of the day, or just use one, as best fits your circumstance.

A table of psalms for each day is also provided on page 304. When selecting hymns, you can simply sing your family's favorites, or participate with the church's song by singing the hymn of the day from the preceding Sunday, or the hymn of the month if your church selects one. You can sing a different hymn each day, or use one per week to study it more closely and maybe even commit it to memory. The Small Catechism is provided beginning on page 321.

Each liturgy specifies a time to pray "for others and ourselves." Pray for yourself, friends, family, and church family, and then end with the specific suggestions on page 294 for a pattern of daily and weekly prayer.

That's the basic template. Easy! If you want to add a bit extra, you can sing some of the parts of the liturgies - the Kyrie (Lord, have mercy) for noon prayer, the Phos Hilaron (Joyous Light of glory) for early evening prayer, and the Nunc Dimittis (Lord, now You let your servant go in peace) for prayer at the close of the day. If you want to go even bigger, you can use the liturgies of the daily offices - Matins, Vespers, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline. These are found on page 219 and following.



The Treasury of Daily Prayer

Another fantastic resource is *The Treasury of Daily Prayer*. This volume compiles all the propers for each day, plus the Daily Prayer liturgies and the daily offices, all of the Psalms, additional prayers, suggestions for readings from the Book of Concord, additional psalms, a hymn stanza, and writings from the church fathers. It's a one-stop shop for all your devotional needs.

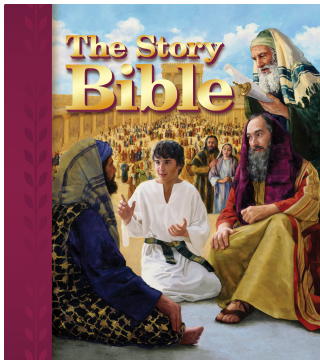
Additional Resources

The Lutheran Study Bible

If you don't already have a Bible at home, or are interested in an in-depth study Bible from a Lutheran perspective, check out *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions

Concordia is a newer edition of the Book of Concord. The *Treasury* lists additional optional readings from the Book of Concord, so if you want to dig deeper, you'll need this book or another edition of the Book of Concord. This contains the Large Catechism, which is another great devotional tool that further explains the six chief parts of the catechism.



The Story Bible

A great resource for families of small children is Concordia Publishing House's *The Story Bible*. This book has all the major Bible stories in slightly modified language paired with beautiful illustrations and suggested questions. You can use this as the Scripture reading for the day and work your way through the major themes of the Bible with your small children.

Read the Psalms over Thirty Days

The Psalms - the church's first prayer and hymn book - are a source of great comfort. Here is a schedule to read them all in 30 days' time. You can also split them up between morning and evening.

Day	Psalms	Day	Psalms	Day	Psalms
1	1-9	11	60-65	21	104-105
2	10-17	12	66-68	22	106-107
3	18-22	13	69-71	23	108-112
4	23-28	14	72-76	24	113-118
5	29-34	15	77-78	25	119:1-96
6	35-38	16	79-82	26	119:97-176
7	39-43	17	83-87	27	120-134
8	44-48	18	88-89	28	135-139
9	49-54	19	90-96	29	140-144
10	55-59	20	97-103	30	145-150

All books mentioned in this tutorial can be purchased through Concordia Publishing House: www.cph.org

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Psalmody

¹We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks, for your name is near.*
We recount your wondrous deeds.
²"At the set time that I appoint* I will judge with equity.
³When the earth totters, and all its inhabitants,* it is I who keep steady its pillars.
⁴I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,* and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horn;
⁵do not lift up your horn on high,* or speak with haughty neck.'"
⁶For not from the east or from the west* and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,
⁷but it is God who executes judgment,* putting down one and lifting up another.
⁸For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours it out from it,* and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.
⁹But I will declare it forever;* I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.
¹⁰All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,* but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.
—Psalm 75

Additional Psalm: Psalm 108

Old Testament Reading: Daniel 6:1-28

Daniel and the Lions' Den
"It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; and over them three

presidents, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."
Then these presidents and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction.
When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. Then they came near and said before the king, concerning