



I-K Lutheran

Indiana-Kentucky Mission Territory

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (8th Commandment)

As we move through this 500th year since the beginning of the Reformation, many of us are renewing our acquaintance with various writings and resources from and about that medieval movement that changed the church and impacted the world. A great place to begin is with Martin Luther's [Small Catechism](#). A great time to begin is the season of Lent.

Local faith communities might shape Wednesday worship around sections of the catechism or add a brief time for exploration and discussion of the catechism before or after worship. Families could briefly read and discuss parts of it once or twice a week before saying grace at dinner. Individuals might slowly read through, meditate on, and journal about the catechism in devotional time two or three times a week.

However we engage this important booklet, it won't take long to realize that its content is not just for memorization by kids or catechism classes and its wisdom is as relevant today as it was the day Luther wrote it five centuries ago. Take his reflection on the eighth commandment, for example:

What does this mean? We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.

If there was ever a time and place when this understanding of that commandment has been

needed it's here and now, in this country, in social media and public discourse, and in our churches. Scan through your Twitter or Facebook feed. Listen to ten minutes of a news program. Reflect back on your own conversations over the last week. How many lies or unverifiable false claims have been made about others? How many times has someone been betrayed or slandered or their reputation sullied in some way?

The answer? Too many. Too much of our conversation (and thinking) about others these days blatantly breaks the eighth commandment. It's one thing to disagree, even vehemently, or to not understand another person's choices. But, it is another thing altogether to use the disagreement or lack of understanding as an opportunity to lie about, betray, slander, or seek to destroy the reputation of a fellow human being created in the image of God.

Every time we catch ourselves in or supporting this sort of sinful behavior it's time to repent, trust the forgiveness offered in Christ crucified and risen, and to lean into and offer to others the new and abundant life of Jesus by taking every opportunity to instead "come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."

Now there's a Lenten discipline that, empowered by the Spirit and by God's grace, will not only change us, but will transform our churches, our communities, our country, our world.

+Bishop Bill Gafkjen

An elegant and free [Small Catechism](#) app is available for smartphones and tablets from Media1517 (Augsburg Fortress). Search your App Store for "Luther's Small Catechism Publishing House ELCA." This app can also be upgraded to an illustrated study version for \$1.99.

The [Small Catechism](#) can also be found beginning on page 1160 in the back of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW).

I-K Synod Assembly June 1-3, 2017 Covington, Kentucky



About the Assembly

- All synod assembly events will be held at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, One West RiverCenter Blvd., Covington, KY.
- Highlights include: Celebrating leaders and communities within the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, inspiring worship, a celebratory banquet, motivating and informative plenary sessions, election of Synod Vice President, Synod Council, board and committee members, along with all the other aspects of assembly that help us to be the church gathered together as we are formed, reformed and transformed for God's mission of hope, healing and reconciliation for the sake of the world.

Registration Fees & Other Information

- The registration fee is \$170.00 (which includes the Thursday banquet evening meal, Friday plated lunch, refreshment breaks, and all materials) per voting member.
- Fee for registered visitors is also \$170.00, which includes the Thursday banquet evening meal, Friday plated lunch, refreshment breaks, and materials.
- By action of the IN-KY Synod Council (SC/2017/7), retired professional leaders on the roster of this synod pay a reduced fee to attend the assembly – \$85.00.
- Fees for interim pastors are to be paid by the congregation(s) being served.
- Any congregation or voting member needing assistance with the registration fee must notify the IN-KY Synod Council Executive Committee of that need in writing by April 15, 2017, (mail to the synod office address, attention: IN-KY Synod Council Exec.

Comm. or email the IN-KY Synod Council Secretary,
Judy Bush: jatully@sbcglobal.net

Registration Discount

- Congregations are strongly encouraged to select their voting members early. Registration rates increase to \$200.00 after the **early bird registration deadline, Friday, March 31, 2017.**
- Registration rates increase to \$100.00 for Retired Rostered Ministers after March 31, 2017.

NEW things to pay attention to this year:

- Friday afternoon will provide attendees with various opportunities for learning through breakout sessions and service opportunities. We will not have an evening meal together on Friday, June 2, so that attendees can enjoy the local flavor of the Covington/Cincinnati area. A map with dining options will be provided.
- We are working on several optional activities for Friday evening, such as a group block of tickets to a Cincinnati Reds game (right across the river) and Evening Prayer.
- The registration costs for the 2017 Indiana-Kentucky Synod Assembly were reduced this year to offset the higher costs of the hotels in Covington, as well as lower meal expense (we will have 1 banquet dinner and 1 plated lunch in 2017, rather than 2 evening meals as in previous years). We aim to keep attendee cost as low as possible since we are aware that the expense to attend Synod Assembly can become prohibitive for some congregations and rostered ministers.

Hotel Room Reservations

Hotel reservations are in addition to and separate from your synod assembly registration. A block of rooms has been reserved at two downtown Covington hotels: The Cincinnati Marriott RiverCenter, 10 West RiverCenter Blvd. and The Embassy Suites Cincinnati RiverCenter, 10 East River Center Blvd. To make a reservation online, go to <https://aws.passkey.com/e/48988760>

Bring Your Family This Year!

Child-care arrangements are being organized by a local volunteer. A minimal fee is requested to help compensate the individuals who will provide the child care at synod assembly. Covington, KY is just across the river from Cincinnati, and this area offers many activities and things for families to do. Check out the Northern Kentucky CVB's website for places your family can visit, shop and eat. <https://www.meetnky.com/>