

Dear Saints,

Sunday, June 12, we dedicated the Roger & JoAnn Miller Lending Library. It was generously donated by JoAnn Miller's children. I pray that it will be a blessing to Grace. What is it?

Simply, it is my way of getting good books into your hands without expecting you to build a library in your home. And these are books that I recommend without reservation. The idea is just this, 1) take a book home with you, 2) read that book, and 3) bring that book back so someone else can read it. Just like any other library, except that you will not fill out a lending card. In the future, I will add more books to our lending library that I wholeheartedly endorse.

Here is the list of books and why I chose them. I will also put the general difficulty level in parenthesis. This is the order they appear in the bookshelf:

- “Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today” by John Kleinig (Intermediate) – this book shows what real spirituality looks like that is actually pleasing to God.
- “The Spirituality of the Cross – 3rd Edition” by Gene Edward Veith Jr. (Intermediate) – this book is an excellent introduction to how Lutheranism is faithful to the Scriptures and the church throughout all time.
- “The Defense Never Rests – 2nd Edition” by Craig A. Parton (Intermediate) – this book is an excellent introduction to apologetics, or defense of our faith, by a faithful Lutheran who is also a lawyer.
- “Has American Christianity Failed?” by Bryan Wolfmueller (Intermediate) – this book shows the difference between the Lutheran church and American Protestantism. And the difference is important and dangerous.
- “A Martyr’s Faith in a Faithless World” by Bryan Wolfmueller (Intermediate) – this book draws amazing comfort in the midst of suffering from some of the martyrs that have come before us.
- “Eternal Anthems: The Story Behind Your Favorite Hymns” by Concordia Publishing House (Easy) – This book provides a list of hymns well worth memorizing with a brief description of the hymn.
- “Why I Am a Lutheran: Jesus at the Center” by Daniel Preus (Easy) – Hands down, the best book on showing someone else why you are Lutheran. (And it may even remind you why you are Lutheran!)
- “The Hammer of God” by Bo Giertz (Easy) – a great fiction book about a congregation over three distinct generations that highlights the comfort of full force law and full force Gospel.
- “Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions – A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord” by Concordia Publishing House (Difficult) – This book is what our pastors and churches subscribe to as a correct understanding of the Word of God. It is difficult to read, but well worth the effort.
- “The Apocrypha: The Lutheran Edition with Notes” by Concordia Publishing House (Difficult) – This book contains the “extra” Bible writings that are not canonical. They are not used to form what we believe and confess, but they are wonderful historical documents.

- “Law & Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible” by C.F.W. Walther (Difficult) – This delightful book is the LC—MS contribution to worldwide Lutheranism. The Law & Gospel distinction is one of the keys of the reformation and a wonderful gift to all Christians.
- “A Year in the Gospels with Martin Luther (2 Volumes)” by Martin Luther (Intermediate) – This book presents sermons from Dr. Luther for every Sunday of the church year. Outside of the Large Catechism, this is Dr. Luther at his best!
- “Man Up!: The Quest for Masculinity” by Jeff Hemmer (Easy) – This book answers a pressing question for our times by looking at Jesus Christ!
- “The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology in Practice” by Klemet Preus (Difficult) – This book explains why practice in the church matters so much. If you want to understand why I insist on a lot of what I insist on, read this book!
- “We Confess Anthology” by Hermann Sasse (Difficult) – This book is a difficult read even for me, but is a wonderful explanation on why how we confess 1) Jesus Christ, 2) The Sacraments, and 3) The church, matters, especially in the light of rampant ecumenism in our country and times. (“Why can’t we all get along” mentality)
- “To All Eternity: The Essential Teachings of Christianity” by Concordia Publishing House (Easy) – This book is beautiful explanation of what we believe, teach, and confess based on the Small Catechism. It is full of beautiful art as well.
- “The Reformation” by Cameron MacKenzie (Easy) – This book by my favorite professor at our Fort Wayne seminary is a wonderful overview of the Reformation. It presents a fair view of what happened and does not over-hype the people or the movement.

These books are well worth your time even if they are difficult to read. The beautiful thing about a lending library is that if, for some reason, you do not like the book, you can bring it back and get another one to try.

And I would love to discuss any of these books with you over coffee, or whatever your beverage of choice is.

God bless your summer reading!

In Christ,
Pastor Maggard