Helps for the Reading Lutheran Layperson
Version 2.0
By T. R. Halvorson

Contents

Introduction
Suggested Reading List for the Lutheran Layperson
   At All Levels
   Beginning
   Intermediate
   Further On
Bibliographies
Lutheran Book Publishers
Other Book Publishers
Lutheran Journals and Periodicals
Lutheran PDFs and Texts
Calibre E-Reader Application
Online Bookstores and Repositories of E-Books, PDFs, and Texts
Search Engines for Books, E-Books, PDFs, and Texts
Library and School Borrowing Apps
Introduction

A good friend suffered a heart attack. His doctor prescribed a treadmill to strengthen his heart and taught him about healthy diet. My friend took me to his basement to show me the treadmill. He got me on it and started putting the machine through its paces to show me its features. He explained why this kind of walking is necessary for our hearts, even though as farmers, we already do a lot of walking. Our regular walking is not the right kind for heart strength. It is too intermittent. While he was killing me in the paces, he explained how to read the “Nutrition Facts” panel on groceries as it relates to our hearts.

It is crazy what is in a serving of Oreo cookies or those coconut frosted miniature donuts that I like. Canned soup? I quit it because of the salt. The problem is not just with junk food. All kinds of prepared or packaged foods are less heart-healthy than we think.

Too bad there is no “Nutrition Facts” panel on what passes for Christian books and articles. What are the ingredients of those doing to our hearts? They have their own kinds of saturated fat, sugar, salt, and cholesterol. Even though it may be selling like hotcakes in the nearby Christian bookstore, a book might be no better for us than Cheetos or Twinkies, wrapped in bacon, and deep fried.

At least with food, making the shopping adjustment is not so difficult. You know where the fresh fruits and vegetables are in your usual grocery store. But in that nearby Christian bookstore, which is the aisle for you, the aisle for heart health? It is not that there are no worthwhile books there, but they are few, and wow, the sifting process!

Where is the good Lutheran aisle? It is not in the store down the street. We must make special trips, but to where? What to read and where to get it.

As we discover answers to those questions, we find that we often will need to read the materials in electronic form. That happens either because of lower cost, convenience, or our preference for e-reading. More often than we might have expected, a writing that we desire to read is readily available to us only in an electronic format. This raises additional questions. Where to find electronic books and texts, and how to manage them once we have them.
This article addresses some of these problems. Provided here are:

- Suggested reading list at levels: beginning, intermediate, and further on.
- Links to bibliographies for concentrated study of certain topics.
- List of Lutheran book publishers.
- List of Lutheran journals and periodicals.
- List of sources of Lutheran PDFs and texts.
- Recommended e-book reading and management application.
- List of online bookstores and repositories of e-books, PDFs, and texts.
- List of search engines for books, e-books, PDFs, and texts.
- Apps for borrowing materials from libraries and schools.

**Suggested Reading List for the Lutheran Layperson**

**At All Levels**

- *Small Catechism*

There are certain sources that Christians of every level always should keep reading and re-reading. These include the Bible and the Small Catechism. In the preface to his Large Catechism, Luther answered common objections to memorizing and meditating on the Catechism. He said a child can understand the Catechism, but no one can master it, so everyone should keep studying it.

I am also a doctor and preacher ... yet I do as a child who is being taught the Catechism, and every morning, and whenever I have time, I read and say, word for word, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Psalms, etc. And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and am glad so to remain.

In the following three levels (beginning, intermediate, and further on), the arrangement of the entries is: first, entries about the Catechism; and second, the remaining entries in alphabetical order.
Beginning


- *Luther’s Two Catechisms Explained by Himself, in Six Classic Writings*, Martin Luther, trans. John Nicholas Lenker, The Luther Press, 1908.


- “Divine Service: Delivering Forgiveness of Sins,” John T. Pless, presented at the South Dakota District Lay/Clergy Conferences, Rapid City, SD May 6, 1995, Sioux Falls, SD May 7, 1995. ([online here](#))


- *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life*, Gene Edward Veith, Jr.,


- *How is Christ There?*, Martin Luther, Lutheran Press, 2011.


Intermediate


• Liturgy and Spiritual Awakening, Bo Harald Giertz, Augustana Book Concern, 1954. (Another translation online here and online here)

• Luther on Worship, an Interpretation, Vilmos Vajta, Muhlenberg Press, 1958.

• Luther’s Liturgical Criteria and His Reform of the Canon of the Mass, Bryan D. Spinks, Synoptic Text Information Services, Inc., 2021.

• Luther’s Theology of the Cross, Herman Sasse, trans. Arnold J. Koelpin, from “Briefe an lutherische Pastoren,” nr. 18, October 1951. (online here)


• Reclaiming the Lutheran Liturgical Heritage, Oliver K. Olson, ReClaim Resources, 2007.

• “The Authority of Scripture,” Norman Nagel, Concordia Theological Monthly, vol 27, no. 9, September 1956, pp. 693-701. (online here and online here)


• The Gift of Communion; Luther’s Controversy with Rome on Eucharistic Sacrifice, Carl


**Further On**


• *The Doctrine of Man in the Writings of Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard*, eds. Herman A. Preus and Edmund Smits, Concordia Publishing House, 2005.

• *The Doctrine of the Atonement from Luther to Forde*, Jack D. Kilcrease, Wipf & Stock, 2018


Bibliographies

Following are links to some bibliographies that list material for concentrated study of selected topics. This is not a well-rounded set. They just happen to be topics that I had reason to explore, so I offer the bibliographies for anyone who might benefit from them.

- Antinomianism
- Baptism
- Bible Commentaries
- Catechetics
- Christian Dogmatics
- Gospel of Matthew
- Gospel Reductionism
- Hermeneutics and Exegetics
- Homiletics
- Liturgy — General
- Liturgy and Communion
- Luther’s Catechisms

Lutheran Book Publishers

Understand that, as to doctrinal soundness, most book publishers are a mixed bag, and they vary over time. Inclusion of a publisher here is not an endorsement indiscriminately of everything it publishes. One still must use discernment. These are listed in alphabetical order.

- Concordia Publishing House (LCMS)
- Concordia Theological Seminary Bookstore
- Emmanuel Press
- Fortress Press
- Just and Sinner Publications
- Kloria Publishing
• Luther Academy Books (via Logia)
• Lutheran Legacy
• Lutheran Press
• Mark V Publications
• Northwestern Publishing House (WELS)
• Repristination Press
• Sola Publishing

Other Book Publishers

Several publishers that are not classified as Lutheran do publish significant Lutheran books.

• Baker Academic
• Lexham Press
• Wipf and Stock Publishers
• Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Lutheran Journals and Periodicals

• Around the Word
• CLC Journal of Theology Archive
• Concordia Journal
• Concordia Theological Quarterly
• For the Life of the World
• Gottesdienst: The Journal of Lutheran Liturgy
• Issues, Etc. Journal
• Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology
• Lutheran Quarterly
• The Canadian Lutheran
Lutheran PDFs and Texts

- Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne Media Resources
- John W. Kleinig Resources
- LCMS Document Library
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Essay File

Calibre E-Reader Application

You may be happy with your dedicated e-reader device: Kindle, Nook, Kobo, or another. If so, you might never need to know about e-reader applications. But there are reasons for such applications, and for many people, such an application is a must.

What are some of the reasons?

- You found a document you want to read, but it is in a format your e-reader device does not support. There are dozens of formats of e-books and texts.
- You want to read anywhere on any of your devices, be it phone, tablet, notebook, laptop, or desktop.
- You want to carry your tablet computer, but then you would be carrying two devices if you also carry your dedicated e-reader.
- You want control over where your book files are stored for any one of several reasons, including to save space on your device’s or tablet’s internal storage, and your e-reader device either does not allow that, or makes it difficult to discover how to do it.
- You want to be able to do other things with some of your e-books, PDFs, or texts in addition to reading them, such as editing the metadata (author, publisher, year of publication, ISBN, cover, summary, tags, etc. so their entries in your library listing are more useful).
- You want to convert a document from one format to another.

The software industry has produced dozens of independent e-reader applications. There are many good ones. An excellent one is Calibre.

Calibre is a free and open-source e-book library management application developed by users of e-books for users of e-books. It runs on Windows, OS X, Linux, and portably such as on jump drive. It has a cornucopia of features divided into the following main categories:
• Comprehensive e-book viewer. It reads all formats, provide a rich set of built-in features, and it has open extensibility by plug-in so that may developers can add functionality.

• Syncing to e-book reader devices

• Content server for online access to your book collection

• Library Management

• E-book conversion

• Downloading news from the web and converting it into e-book form

• E-book editor for the major e-book formats

Besides that, Calibre has a built-in feature called Get Books that helps you search for e-books online. By default, it searches over 40 stores and repositories various countries, and you can select only the ones you want to search. You can search by title or author. Calibre can sort the results by price. While researching the historic Lutheran liturgy, I found many out-of-print books by Lutheran authors in PDF format through this feature, and easily loaded them into Calibre.

For certain formats such as PDF, Calibre may call an external viewer, such as Adobe Reader. If you use a different PDF reader, such as perhaps Foxit Reader, and set it as your default reader on your device, then when you choose in Calibre to read a document in PDF format, the document automatically will open in you default reader.

Calibre has a large user base. Many favorable reviews have been written about it. Perhaps the best way to get an idea about whether you want to try it is to look at the Grand Tour Video, video tutorials, and screenshots. Or, since it is free, just download and try it.

**Online Bookstores and Repositories of E-Books, PDFs, and Texts**

These bookstores and repositories are not specifically Lutheran but contain many valuable Lutheran e-books and texts.

• Academia

• Amazon

• Barnes & Noble

• Bookyards

• Books-A-Million
- Christian Classics Ethereal Library
- eBooks.com
- Feedbooks
- Google Books
- Internet Achieve eBooks and Texts
- ITunes US (books)
- Kobo
- Lulu
- ManyBooks
- Open Library
- OverDrive
- Project Gutenberg
- Read Print
- Scribd

**Search Engines for Books, E-books, PDFs, and Texts**

- BookFinder.com *(my favorite for books)*
- Digital Book Index
- EBOOKEE
- E-Books Directory
- Find-pdf-doc
- Good Reads
- LibraryThing
- Pdftgeni
- PDF Search Engine
- PDF Yes
Library and School Borrowing Apps

OverDrive provides apps for borrowing ebooks, audiobooks, and digital content from libraries and schools.

- OverDrive - Their original app for borrowing digital content from libraries and schools.
- Libby - Ebooks and audiobooks from your local library.
- Sora - Discover and read ebooks and audiobooks offered by your school.