

R. Adam Berndt
Making Faith Connections Summer 2022

Unlocking Love

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40

The season after Pentecost is the longest season in the liturgical year. During this time, we celebrate our role as the church in the ongoing life of Christ in the world, guided by the companionship and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We encounter scripture that invites us to give faithful attention to our formation, devotion, ministry, and mission on a daily basis as the life of Christ is lived through us. (sacredordinarydays.com/Pentecost)

This summer our Making Faith Connections small groups are invited to consider unlocking love through the scriptures of worship and the 10 commandments. As we contemplate how Christ lives through our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit, we'll also consider how the 10 commandments provide clear boundaries that unlock our ability to freely love God and neighbor. The questions for reflection will remain the same as your small group, your family, or yourself in devotion encounter new scripture and commandment each week. The 10 commandments are taken from Exodus 20:1-17 and we'll use the tool for teaching the faith in the home from Martin Luther called the Small Catechism (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pg. 1160) to aid our reflection (Find many options to purchase from Augsburg Fortress by clicking [here](#), get it for your phone or device in the app store, or speak to Pr. Adam if you need a copy).

God bless you as we continue to share the journey of life and faith.

Unlocking Love schedule

June 19 – 1st commandment – You shall have no other gods.

June 26 – 2nd commandment – You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.

July 3 – 3rd commandment – Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy.

July 10 – 4th commandment – Honor your father and your mother.

July 17 – 5th commandment – You shall not murder.

July 24 – 6th commandment – You shall not commit adultery.

July 31 – 7th commandment – You shall not steal.

August 7 – 8th commandment – You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor

August 14 – 9th commandment – You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

August 21 – 10th commandment -You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Questions for the Summer

Gathering: Where did you experience God's love in a new way this past week?
How did you show or share love this past week?

Prayer: Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people, and the commandments to guide us into the freedom of your Divine Love. Grant that we may hear them anew and contemplate them deeply with others, that, comforted by your promises and stirred by your Spirit, we may hold fast to the hope of eternal life, and our lives may bear witness to your love, which you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen. (Adapted from *Grace to receive the word* ELW p72)

Discussion: *Read again the scripture that was preached on.*
What did you notice/captured your imagination this time reading/hearing the story?
In what ways does this story unlock God's love to flow through our lives?
How does this story help me and/or challenge me to learn and grow in faith?
In what ways does this story show the way of Jesus?

Read the commandment of the week.
What did you notice/captured your imagination this time?
How would you summarize what this commandment means?
What are examples of honoring this commandment?
What are things that make this commandment challenging?

Read Martin Luther's explanation of the commandment.
How does his explanation impact your reflection?
Discuss how this commandment offers guidance/sets you free to love God and neighbor.
How does Jesus offer a way of life that honors this commandment?
What in your life do you need to work on in order to continue to unlock love?