A landscape photograph showing a vast, golden-brown field, likely a harvested crop field, under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The field has distinct rows of crops, and the horizon is flat. The sky is filled with various cloud formations, including some larger, puffy clouds and some wispy ones.

# *We Are Church for the Sake of the World*

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NEBRASKA SYNOD  
THEOCON 2019



**Growing Disciples + Walking Together + Serving God's World**



# **Growing Disciples**



# How, Then, Will I Lead?

A journey in leading from within -- in the messy world out there.

An intensive, introspective program for rostered ministers of the Nebraska Synod, ELCA.

Helping participants to lead out of out of God-given identity guided by the Holy Spirit.



Why?



How?



When?

seeking  the spirit  
within 

**0/15**



**Sow the Seeds**



# Walking Together

The demands of change...



The *conflict* that results...







For two minutes (each):

- share **one story of ministry** from your faith community that you are **excited** about,
- perhaps showing an example of significant **impact** or **transformation**



What did  
you  
hear?



## What we heard:

- Community-wide faith formation
- Disaster Response
- Celebration Grants
- Hunger ministries
- “this church is big on grace!”
- Holy Spirit’s movement in conflict
- *Listening* to each other, community
- “Chocolate Extravaganza” series
- Rented local theater to view “The Shack”
- Worship streamed via Facebook Live





**Serving  
God's  
World**





***Sanctuary:***  
**What does this mean?**

A photograph of a church sign. The sign is green with white text. The top part of the sign reads "HARTFORD AVE BAPTIST CHURCH" in a serif font. Below this, on a white background, is the phrase "ALL ARE WELCOME\*" in a sans-serif font. The sign is mounted on a building, and some trees are visible in the background.

*HARTFORD AVE  
BAPTIST CHURCH*

ALL ARE WELCOME\*

# *HARTFORD AVE BAPTIST CHURCH*

ALL ARE WELCOME\*

\*EXCEPT SINNERS, TOBACCO  
CHEWERS, TATTOOED PEOPLE,  
HOMOSEXUALS, DEMOCRATS,  
SMOKERS, DRINKERS, DANCERS ETC

**“This church is big on grace.”**

***It ain't grace until  
it ticks you off.***



# Nuts & Bolts

- Churchwide Assembly
- Conflict
- Resolution
- Disaffiliation
- Mission Share
- Development
- Synod Evangelist
- Conference of Bishops





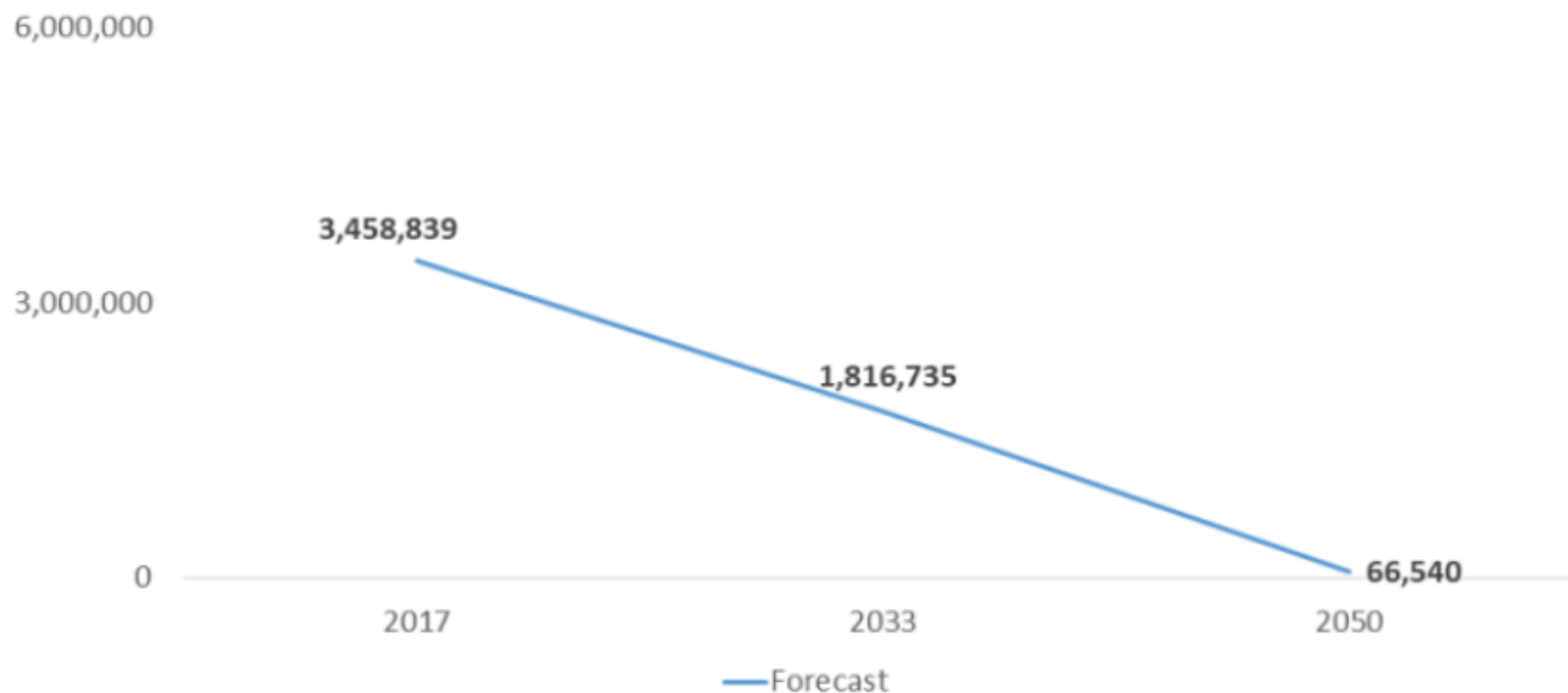
**Growing Disciples + Walking Together + Serving God's World**

# Will the ELCA be Gone in 30 Years?

DWIGHT ZSCHEILE / SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 / [7 COMMENTS](#)



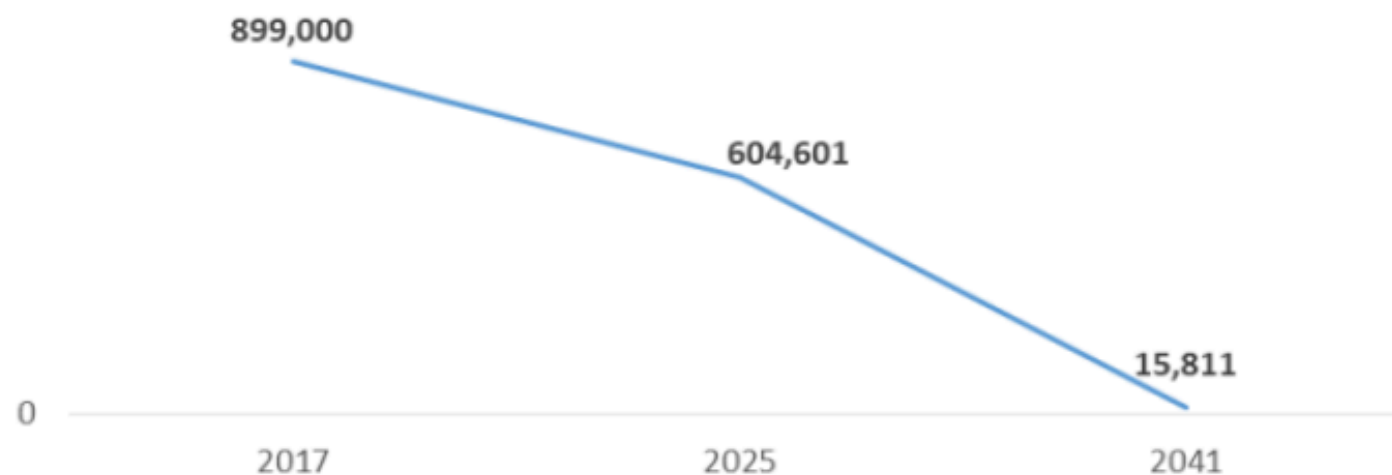
# Baptized Membership in the ELCA 2017-2050 Projections



Source: ELCA Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

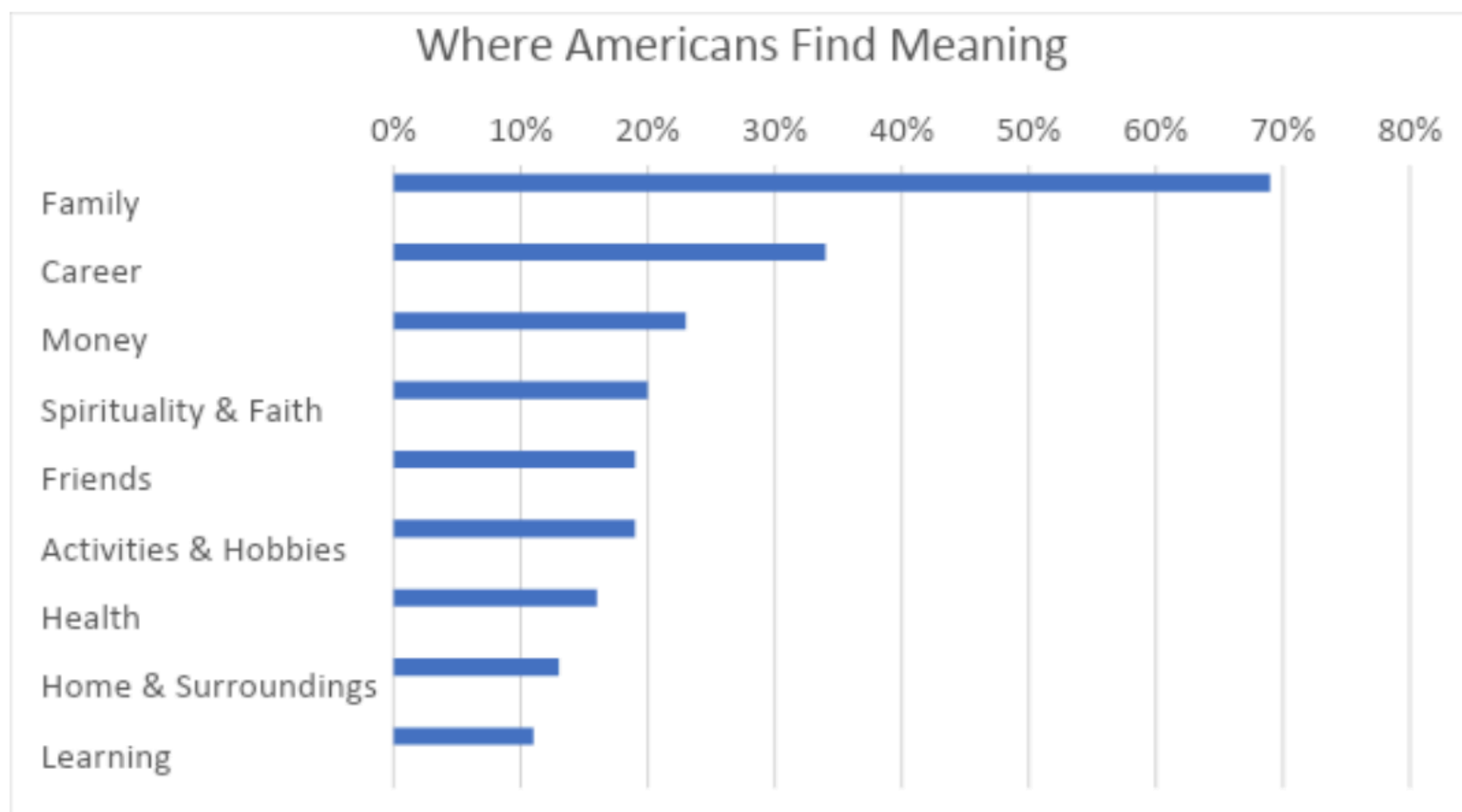
# Average Weekly Worship Attendance 2017-2041 Projections

1,500,000



Source: ELCA Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

1. We live in a culture that makes it hard for people to imagine and be led by God.
2. We aren't clear about what's distinctive about being Christian.
3. For these reasons, church isn't helping many people make meaning of their lives.



Source: Pew Research Center



# Cultural Climate Change

- You can deny it, but it's still happening
- Can't be changed by better disaster response
- It's going to mean living differently—one way or another
- *How do we convince people?*

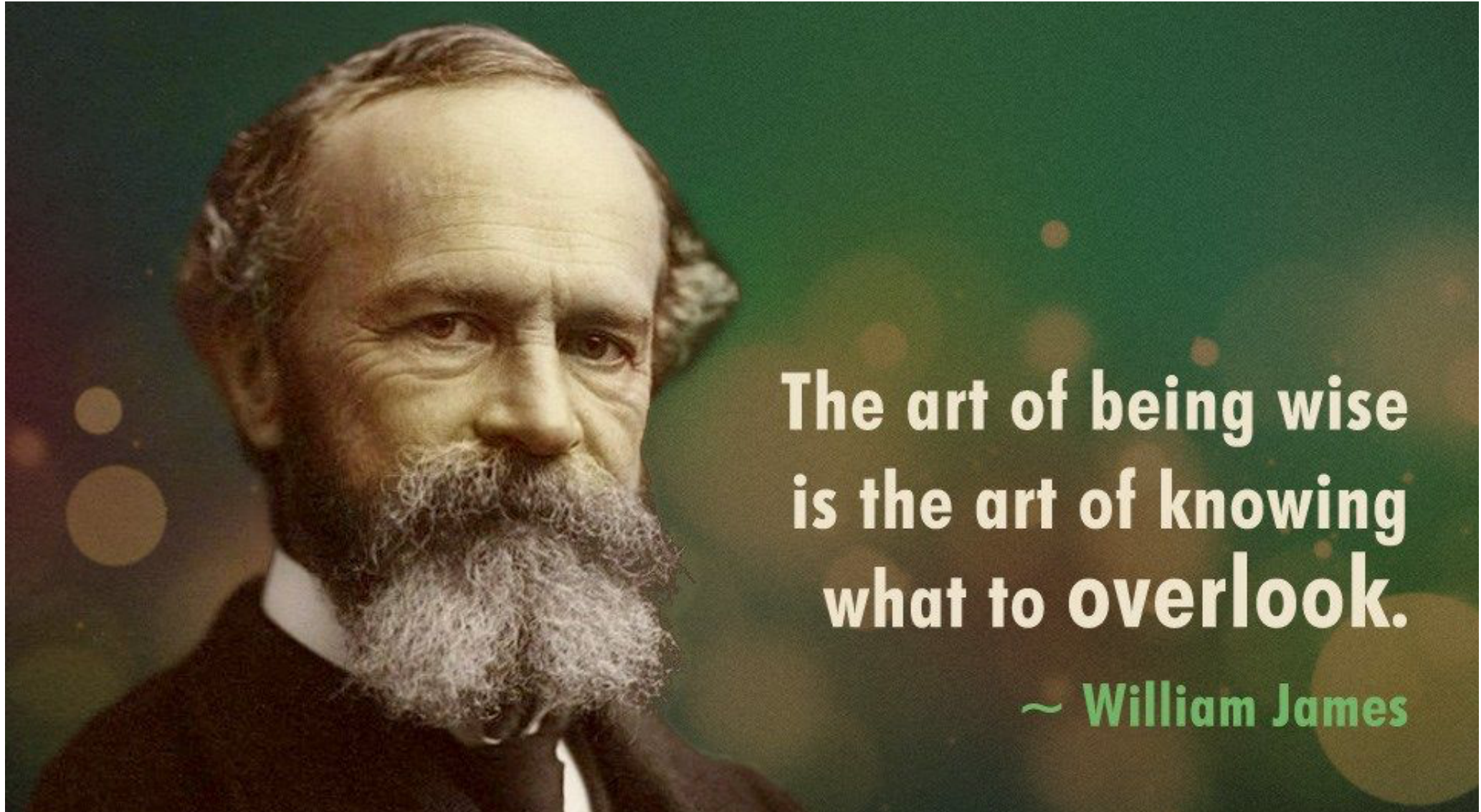
- 1.Go back to basics.
- 2.Shift from performative to participatory spirituality.
- 3.Listen.
- 4.Translate.
- 5.Experiment.
- 6.Share.



PATRICK KEIFERT AND  
WESLEY GRANBERG-MICHAELSON

HOW  
**CHANGE**  
COMES TO YOUR  
**CHURCH**

A GUIDEBOOK FOR CHURCH INNOVATIONS



**The art of being wise  
is the art of knowing  
what to overlook.**

~ **William James**

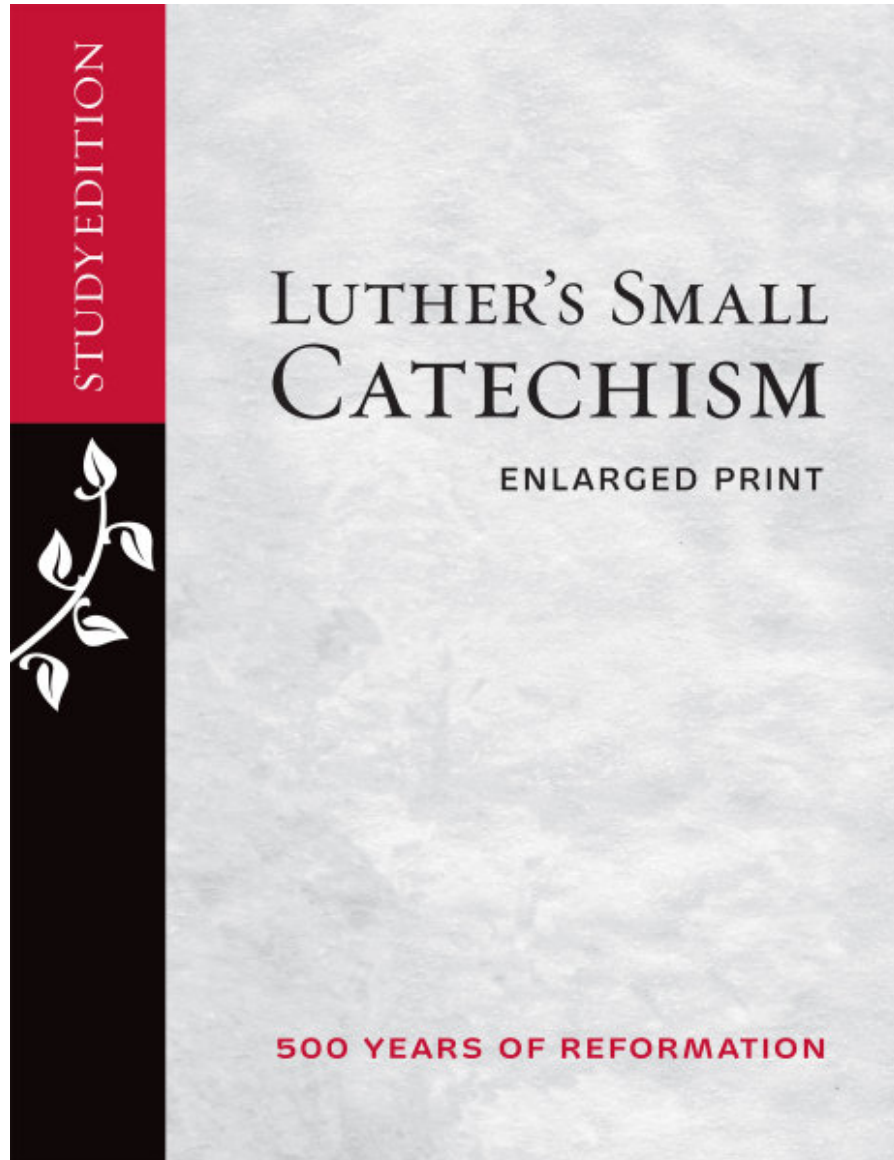
NO!



*Doing Church to the World*

*vs.*

*Being Church for the World*



***What  
does this  
mean?***





- Who are we?
- Why are we here?
- What is God calling us to do?
- What gifts has God given us to do this?

# What then are our priorities?

- No more than three
- Rank by importance to our mission
- How will we hold one another accountable to these priorities?