

# CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE

GRADE

3

Social Studies





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Written by Tom Hilgendorf, Carol Grese-Hinz, James Kracht, Gail Pawlitz, and Deborah Rittle

Edited by Carolyn Bergt

Series editors: Carolyn Bergt, Clarence Berndt, and Rodney L. Rathmann

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# PREFACE

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## Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers;

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus the Savior means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

## How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of social studies to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on social studies standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The social studies standards included in this book are informed by the standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (see also Chapter 3) and are provided as a compilation of the social studies standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the social studies objectives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

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The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach social studies.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but, since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in social studies. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.
- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular text-

books. Inside your plan book clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use. Or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.

- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relevant to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month. Or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

# CHAPTER 1

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## A Journey: Developing Citizens through Social Studies

By

James B. Kracht

James B. Kracht, author of various social studies curriculum texts and materials in current use and advisor and board member for numerous organizations and agencies, attended Zion Lutheran School in New Palestine, Indiana, is a graduate of Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois, and began his long and productive teaching career in Lutheran schools. Dr. Kracht is a Fellow of the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education and is a recipient of the Extraordinary Service Award from Texas A&M University and the Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Council for the Social Studies. Dr. Kracht was named director of the writing team for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies in 1995, and in 1996 became Director of the Social Studies Center for Educator Development. He is currently Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University, where he has been on the faculty since 1974. He also serves as a codirector of a national demonstration project for interdisciplinary curriculum development at the middle grades and as a consultant for the development of national social studies standards in the United Arab Emirates and Syria.

### Our Destination

It was a family tradition. On summer Sunday afternoons we would pile into our 1948 Chevy. The first question out of my mouth would be, “Where are we going?” and my dad’s answer was always the same, “We’re going to take a little ride.” “But where?” I would ask. The answer was repeated Sunday after Sunday, “Somewhere.” “Well, how will we know how to get there?” I would insist, knowing I was pressing my luck. “We will just follow our noses,” my mom would laugh. At that point I knew I would never get an answer that would satisfy me, so I would busy myself listening to my parents’ conversation, looking out the back window, and watching the dust trail as our car bumped down the gravel roads. Sometimes those drives would last thirty minutes and sometimes three hours. Frequently we would reach an intersection and disagree on whether to go straight ahead or turn left or right. I was always amazed at the number of new routes we could take and still not know the destination.

While I enjoyed those rides and even continued the tradition with my own children on occasions, most of the journeys I have pursued in life have had a strong sense of destination. Whether travel, education, career, home project, or office task, I approach tasks with a destination or end result in mind. I will admit that sometimes I have chosen the wrong destination and often there have been wrong turns, delays, and detours along the way, but the idea of a destination is comforting. Destinations bring a sense of accomplishment. Destinations are the result of thoughtful decisions. The journey to the destination requires planning and hard work. Wrong turns and detours demand evaluation and correction, while arrival brings a sense of success. In my view, the journey toward citizenship incorporates both the spirit of the Sunday afternoon ride and a planned journey toward a destination. While citizenship is our destination, social studies is the route we take to reach that objective.

Growing new citizens is vital to the continuation of our republican form of government and the

## CHAPTER 2

# Teaching and Learning Social Studies from a Christian Perspective

Social studies explores the world God made, including the universe and especially our planet, Earth, and the plants, animals, and people found in its various habitats. In the great diversity of life, we see the marvelous hand of our awesome God, who in His great love sustains and upholds our world even as He has sent His only Son to pay for the sins of all people.

Social studies and all other subjects can be taught and learned through the following overall goals, which have been the hallmark of the Christian education material prepared by Concordia Publishing House through the years. These materials aim to assist teachers and leaders so that

- through the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, people of all ages may know God, especially His seeking and forgiving love in Christ, and may respond in faith and grow up into Christian maturity;
- seeing themselves as the reconciled, redeemed children of God and individual members of Christ's body, the Church, they may live happily in peace with God, themselves, and their fellow human beings;
- they may be encouraged to express their joy in worship of God and in loving service to others;
- by the grace of God they may value all of God's creative work in His world and Church and witness openly to Christ as the Savior of all people, participating actively in God's mission to the Church and the world;
- they may joyfully live in the Christian hope of new life in Christ now and in eternity.

### Social Studies and God

Our loving and almighty God cares for us. He loves and desires to save all people. Any course of instruction about our world and human history

that ignores the Creator and Preserver of all things is incomplete.

For the children of God, learning Social Studies involves a developing knowledge and understanding of the following:

- God
- Ourselves
- Other Christians
- Nonbelievers
- All creation

### God's Word teaches these truths:

- God created the holy angels, the universe, our planet, and all things in six days (Genesis 1).
- He created our first parents, Adam and Eve, and through them all people.
- Yielding to the temptation to abandon God's will, Adam and Eve sinned. All of creation suffered sin's devastating consequences.
- Although God made people in His image, that image was lost to our first parents and to all who would come after them through the fall into sin (Genesis 5:3).
- Strife between God and fallen humanity, among people, between people and animals, among animals, and between people and their environment continues as a result of sin (Genesis 3).
- God sent His only Son to live, die, and rise again in order to pay for the sins of all people (2 Corinthians 5:15). Jesus is the Son of God and also true man. Salvation can be found only in Him (Acts 4:12).
- As God who created all things, Jesus exerts control over the forces of nature. For example, He stilled the storm (Luke 8:22–25), and He reversed the natural decaying process when He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38–44).

# *CHAPTER 3*

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## **Using the Ten Strands of Social Studies in Christian Education**

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has approved ten strands for social studies education. These ten strands provide a helpful organizing framework for the social studies standards as they are developed and implemented in our nation's schools.

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

The NCSS has given permission for the standards and performance expectations charts for students in early grades (k–3), middle grades (4–8), and high school (9–12) to be adapted to incorporate elements of the Christian faith. The adapted standards and expectations charts for each of the strands follow.








# CHAPTER 4

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## Social Studies Curriculum Standards for Students in Grade 3

This chapter includes social studies standards that have been compiled from the individual state departments of education. They are organized, grade by grade, into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective:

The first digit indicates the grade level (e.g., the 2 in 2.5.1.8 designates that the performance expectation is for grade 2).

The second digit indicates the area of social studies (as listed above) addressed by the standard (e.g., the 5 in 2.5.1.8 designates the standard as an economic area since 5 is the number for economics).

The third digit identifies a category within the area. These categories are the same at every grade level (e.g., the 1 in 2.5.1.8 relates to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, which is the first category of economics at every grade level).

The fourth digit indicates the number of the specific performance expectation. These expectations will vary from level to level (e.g., the 8 in 2.5.1.8, as found in the economics area of the grade 2 standards relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, refers to the eighth item in that category.)

Chapter 5 provides faith-integration activities organized by category. These activities provide many opportunities to teach aspects of the Christian faith in conjunction with each area of the social studies curriculum. Each activity is keyed to a specific performance expectation.

A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided on the remaining pages of this chapter.

# GEOGRAPHY



**3.1 Third-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of the Earth's resources.**

**3.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people understand the world from a spatial perspective.**

3.1.1.1 Use cardinal and intermediate directions (N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW) to describe locations.

3.1.1.2 Identify the location on a map or globe of the poles, the equator, and the hemispheres.

3.1.1.3 Use scale to determine distances on maps or globes.

3.1.1.4 Recognize terms such as *boundary*, *tributary*, and *island*.

3.1.1.5 Describe the geographic (topographical) features found in their region (e.g., deserts, mountains, valleys, hills, coast, lakes, delta).

3.1.1.6 Identify the physical and political features on maps and globes, locating North America, oceans, major rivers, the Great Lakes, and mountain ranges.

3.1.1.7 Demonstrate knowledge of geographic areas around the world.

3.1.1.8 Study population density patterns and their causes and consequences in various areas.

3.1.1.9 Tell how Earth/sun relationships influence climate.

3.1.1.10 Explain how climate affects the vegetation and animal life of a region.

3.1.1.11 Use a local media source to describe damage done by natural disasters (storm, flood, tornado, or earthquake) and to understand their causes.

3.1.1.12 Differentiate between primary and secondary sources.

3.1.1.13 Use an atlas and online resources to find geographic information.

3.1.1.14 Map an area or region using a compass rose, grid, and symbols; show significant natural and human features; locate major world events.

3.1.1.15 Create a project to illustrate the Great Lakes ecosystem.

**3.1.2 The physical characteristics of places and regions influence where and how people live and work (Physical and Human Systems).**

3.1.2.1 Create a sketch map of your community; provide a map key and scale.

3.1.2.2 Locate your community, state, nation, and continent on a map or globe.

3.1.2.3 Locate the major countries of the world and the states and major cities of the United States.

3.1.2.4 Describe an area's climate, landforms, natural resources, ecosystems, and natural hazards; note any changes over time; also identify the ways that climate and people have affected the physical environment.

3.1.2.5 Recognize that regions are areas that have similar physical and cultural characteristics; show how regions interact with each other.

3.1.2.6 Create a map showing lakes, streams and rivers, mountains, plains, and marshes; then identify on the map where people are likely to choose to live.

**3.1.3 Understanding the damage that results from mismanagement of our natural resources and the failure to care appropriately for our environment, responsible people practice good stewardship of the Earth and its resources.**






3.1.3.1 Classify various resources as to whether they are renewable or nonrenewable.

# CHAPTER 5

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## Information and Activities for Integrating the Faith as Keyed to Grade 3 Standards

The social studies standards included in this chapter have been compiled from the individual state departments of education and organized grade by grade into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective as described on the first page of chapter 4.

Performance expectations are numbered sequentially (e.g., the 8 in 3.5.1.8 is found in the grade 3 area, relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life* and is the eighth item in that category.) A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided in chapter 4.

On the pages of chapter 5, you will find an easy-to-reference two-column format for faith integration with the social studies standards. The left-hand column under the heading “Information by Topic” provides helpful teaching background information and insights relevant for integrating some aspect of the Christian faith. The number following the topic identifies the performance expectation to which the topic relates (see chapter 4). Beside each entry, in the right-hand column under the heading “Discussion Points/Activities,” you will find ideas helpful for planning and organizing student learning experiences that reinforce and expand upon these faith connections.

Be sure to consult the index at the end of this volume for a complete listing of topics and where they may be found.



- 3.1 Third-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of the Earth's resources.**
- 3.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people understand the world from a spatial perspective.**

## Cardinal and Intermediate Directions

It's important to know directions when traveling, and the Bible is filled with many travels. The Old Testament patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) were nomads, traveling from place to place to meet the needs of their herds of animals. The New Testament journeys served a different purpose—to spread the Good News of salvation. For example, the apostle Paul made several missionary trips, often traveling by boat. The most important journeys were Jesus' travels from town to town preaching God's love and ultimately demonstrating this love in His final journey to Jerusalem to suffer, die, and rise again for our salvation.

Most of the key events of Holy Week, when Jesus died and arose, took place in the large city of Jerusalem. But the Bible also tells of some nearby smaller communities: Bethphage, Bethany, and Emmaus. Read Mark 11:1–11 and Luke 24:13–35 to find out what happened in these small towns near Jerusalem. (3.1.1.1)

- Use biblical maps to trace the direction of the journeys of several biblical characters. For example, the direction of Jonah's journey is very significant. God told Jonah to go one direction, and he stubbornly set off in the other direction. Who made the final decision about the direction? How?
- Also look at the direction of Joseph's journey to Egypt as a slave, and compare it to the journey four hundred years later when Moses led Joseph's descendants and other relatives (the people of Israel) out of Egypt, out of slavery, and back to the land promised to Joseph's father, Israel (Jacob).
- It is also interesting to note that God led Abraham from his homeland in Ur to Canaan. Centuries later, when his descendants had turned away from the Lord, God allowed them to be led into exile back to the same general area (called Babylon) where Abraham had first lived. The story does not end there, because God led the people back to their homeland seventy years later, guided by faithful leaders such as Ezra and Nehemiah.

## Global Locations (Poles, Equator, Hemispheres)

Most of the world's population is located between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn (imaginary lines equidistant from the equator, another imaginary line). Few people live in the polar regions because of the harsh conditions. Ernest Shackleton was an explorer of the South Pole regions. Leading a famous expedition from 1914–1916, his party encountered many dangers and hardships, but all survived. Shackleton had a strong belief that God would guide his journey. One of the treasured possessions he took on the trip was a Bible given to him by Queen Alexandra of England, in which she wrote, "May the Lord help you to do your duty & guide you

- Hemispheres are half-circles. If you made an imaginary slice, cutting the Earth across the center, North America would be in the top half. What do we call that half? (The Northern Hemisphere) If you made an imaginary slice, cutting the Earth down the center, from pole to pole, what half would North America be in? (The Western Hemisphere) Which hemisphere is best of all? We may have opinions, but God would not have favorites because He wants all people everywhere to be saved. (Read 1 Timothy 2:4.) In God's eyes, east, west, south, or north do not matter. He wants the whole world to be saved. (Read John 3:16.) Sing "In Christ There Is No East or West"



## INFORMATION BY TOPIC

through all dangers by land and sea. May you see the Works of the Lord & all His wonders in the Deep.” (3.1.1.2)

## DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

(*All God’s People Sing!* 135, CPH), in which these thoughts are expressed.

- We know how God feels about the world—He demonstrated that when He sent Jesus to save us. (Read Romans 5:8 and 1 John 4:9.) But how do we feel about the world? Read 1 John 4:11 and Matthew 28:18–20 to see where God is leading us. Sing “Go into the World,” especially the first two lines, where the message from God’s Word is expressed in song (*All God’s People Sing!* 101).

### Distance Scales

Compare a map of Israel in Bible times to a similar-size map of the world. Circle or point to the land of Israel on the map of the world. Though the two maps are similar in size, the land area each represents is very different. The difference is in scale. Use the scale to determine what 1 inch represents on each map. (3.1.1.3)

- Using information about missionaries that are directly connected to your school or congregation, locate the specific area where they are serving. Measure the distance from your location to the location where the missionaries are serving. (If there is no direct connection with a missionary, check *The Lutheran Annual* for addresses of missionaries that your church body as a whole supports.) Discuss how God’s Word continues to be spread throughout the world, as it has been since Christ first commissioned His disciples to do so and the Holy Spirit empowered them to do so at Pentecost.

### Geographic Terms (e.g., Boundary, Tributary, and Island)

Look specifically at the term *boundary* and consider that there are many types, seen and unseen. For example, a wall or fence could be a boundary between two houses. The lines on a basketball court or a line drawn in the sand can set up the boundaries for a game. Rivers or mountain ranges sometimes serve as boundaries between two areas. But there are also many unseen boundaries that are legal boundaries (properties determined by surveys and deeds) or political boundaries (governmental or territorial determinations). Sadly, political boundaries have often been the cause of wars. Pray that God would lead us and our nation to always seek a peaceful resolution to disputes over boundaries. (3.1.1.4)

- Read the story of Abraham and Lot in Genesis 13. There was a territorial problem. The servants of this uncle and nephew were quarreling. Boundaries were needed. How was the problem resolved peacefully? (Abraham unselfishly let his nephew have first choice. His nephew, Lot, selfishly chose what appeared to be the better land.) Was Abraham a loser in this deal? (No. God promised to be with him and bless him wherever he was.)
- Use a biblical map to locate the boundaries of the twelve tribes of Israel as they were set when the Israelites returned from Egypt to the land promised to their forefathers.

**Geographic Features** (e.g., Deserts, Mountains, Valleys, Hills, Plains, Rivers, Lakes)

Use geographic terms to identify topographical features found in your local region. Then discuss in what ways your life might be different if you lived in an area that was the opposite. For example, if you live in the mountains, how would life be different if you lived in a valley (and vice versa). Or compare life in a desert region to life by a lake, or life on the plains to life in a hilly region. Emphasize that God has blessed our world with a variety of environments, climates, and geographic features. Thank Him for the blessings that are derived from such diversity. “In His [God’s] hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are His also. The sea is His, for He made it, and His hands formed the dry land” (Psalm 95:4–5). (3.1.1.5)

- Read Deuteronomy 11:10–12; then compare the region of Egypt where the Israelites were slaves to the new land God provided for them after the exodus.
- Make a list of geographic features, and try to identify a Bible story that happened in such an area. For example: desert—Philip and the Ethiopian; river—John baptizes Jesus; lake—Jesus helps the disciples catch many fish; mountain—Moses receives the Ten Commandments.

**Geographic Features in North America**

Identify on a map or globe some of the major physical and political features of North America, such as the Mississippi River, the Rocky Mountains, and the Great Lakes. Discuss where the name *North America* came from in the first place: Mapmakers in the sixteenth century were unsure what to call this “new land” that had been discovered by Christopher Columbus. Columbus thought he had discovered a new trade route to India, but it was Amerigo Vespucci who recognized that these lands were actually two continents that had previously been unknown to them. For whatever reason, mapmakers at the time were interested in using the letter *A* to begin the name of all the southern continents. The new southern continent was explored first and was given the name *America* (a variation of Vespucci’s first name) because it fit the needs of the mapmakers better than naming it after Columbus, with the name *North America* following the pattern. (Point out the continents of Africa, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica.) (3.1.1.6)

- On poster paper or chart paper, keep two running lists of the names of geographic features in North America and in biblical areas (such as the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River) as you encounter them in your reading or class discussions.



## Transportation

Transportation means have developed rapidly in the past two hundred years because of the use of machines. Before that time, transportation mainly relied on one of three methods: by your own feet, using animal power, or traveling by boat on water. Traveling by boat was always one of the fastest and most efficient ways to travel. Rivers, lakes, and oceans provided ready-made highways. This is why many population centers were located along a water route. Make a list of the machinery-powered forms of transport we have today that were not available centuries ago. (Include subways, submarines, forklifts, and other unique forms of travel.) Thank God for the blessings we have today because of the inventions developed by so many people before us.

Good transportation was also important in Bible times. (Without it, people become isolated and separated from one another.) After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples used the Roman roads and traveled by boat to tell people all over the world about Jesus. James is thought to have traveled as far west as Spain in Europe, and Thomas went as far east as India in Asia. After learning from Philip, the man from Ethiopia took the Gospel news to Africa. Where in the world do people today need to hear the Gospel of salvation through Jesus? (Everywhere!) (3.1.4.3)

- When the apostle Paul traveled on his missionary journeys, he usually traveled on foot or by boat. What unusual means of transportation did Paul once use to get out of a city? See Acts 9:23–25. Obtain information about how missionaries travel today. Many travel by jeep but are limited by the location and condition of roads. Also learn about LAMP missionaries, who travel in small airplanes in northern areas of North America to cover long distances where there are fewer roads. Check with the World Mission Department at the headquarters of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in St. Louis (see *The Lutheran Annual* for addresses).

## Relationship of Geography and History

History is the study of what people have done. Geography is the study of where people are. History happens in the context of geography. Where you are influences what you do. Look at the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 19:3–18. Where was Elijah? (In a cave) What does the geography tell you about what was happening? (Elijah was giving up. He was by himself, but God wanted him out among the people, preaching God's Word.) We understand more about what was happening by knowing the geography of the situation. Another example is in the New Testament, in John 1:43–49. Nathanael said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (v. 46). He was judging

- How does where you are (geography) affect what you have done (your history)? Do you act differently when you are in a library than when you are in an amusement park? If you are watching a movie, in what ways do you do things differently if you are at home than if you are in a theater? What effect does being in a church sanctuary have on your behavior? It should make a difference because a church is built for the purpose of worshiping and honoring God. It is God's house, and we should show respect for the Lord. But this is not just a matter of what we *should* do (per the Third Commandment); this is what we will do out of gratitude and thanks for all that



## INFORMATION BY TOPIC

Jesus by geography, by where Jesus lived. (Nathanael felt that nothing important would come from that little town in Galilee. To him, important things happened in the influential city of Jerusalem in Judea. He is not the only one who felt that way. Remember that the Wise Men first went to Jerusalem when looking for the Savior that was born.) (3.1.4.4)

## DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

God has done for us in Christ Jesus. In what ways do we show respect for God when we are in church? In what ways can we honor God wherever we are?

- Geography has influenced history, particularly because humans tend to be territorial. This often leads to conflict. The Alsace-Lorraine region in Europe has been the site of many battles throughout history as France and Germany have struggled over the geography, fighting to determine to which nation the land belongs. Rather than criticize such squabbles, it is important to note that we have the same difficulty, though on a smaller scale. For example, are you territorial at home about your room or your half of the bedroom—your territory, your geography? How do you feel when someone crosses the boundaries you have established? Do squabbles, arguments, and anger result? Pray together that God would lead us to live in peace and harmony wherever we are (our geography) in whatever we do (our history).

### Legends and Myths (Related to Geographic Features)

As you talk about legends and myths, especially as they relate to geography (Paul Bunyan's footprints filling with water to make the ten thousand Minnesota lakes, or Pecos Bill's riding a tornado to carve out the Grand Canyon), emphasize that these stories were made up by people either as entertainment or because they had no explanation for something. Legends, myths, and folktales tend to be spread by word of mouth and altered freely. Point out that there are people who attack God's Word, saying that some Bible stories are myths. But we know that there are no other ancient stories that have been passed down in writing so completely and accurately. Two important words to learn about the Bible are *inerrant* and *inspired*. *Inerrant* means the Bible does not make mistakes. "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). "The sum of Your word is truth" (Psalm 119:160). *Inspired* means that God gave the words and thoughts to the writers. "No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). The Bible is totally factual. Jesus did remarkable things because He is true

- Look at a hero in the Bible who had uncommon strength: Samson. See Judges 13–16. Emphasize the antihero aspects of Samson. He was sinful and proud. He trusted in his own abilities and was not faithful to God. In the end he realized that his power depended on the gift of God. Whenever we look at what some people call "heroes of the Bible," we see that there is only one true hero in the Bible: God Himself. Our life now and eternally depends on the grace of God. As Romans 9:16 says, "It depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy." Sing the first stanza of the hymn "All Depends on Our Possessing (God's Free Grace and Constant Blessing)."