

“Will 2026 Be a FOMO Year?”

“Do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28, Modern English Version)

FOMO – fear of missing ot. Some live much of their earthly lives this way. They are afraid to miss out on the social gathering that everyone else in the family or the neighborhood may be attending. They fear being the only one not joining their friends and co-workers in heading for this year’s most popular vacation destinations. Even though their cell phone is working well, they will buy the newest one that comes out because they wouldn’t want to be caught dead without the most recent model. Those living with FOMO may have purchased the newest toy trending last Christmas because they didn’t want their child to be the only kid at school not having it.

Ever observed FOMO in the lives of others? Ever noticed it in your own life? The fear of missing out is a real thing in this world. And often it’s a relatively harmless act of imitation or just an attempt to fit in. The thing that one fears missing out on could be something rather trivial that a person doesn’t even need – a “wish list” type of thing. But on the other hand, the thing one fears missing out on could be something significant, meaningful, or even a once in a lifetime type of event or opportunity. Sometimes that which a person fears missing out on is something good and positive – like the wedding of a loved one or a job promotion. Sadly, what one may fear missing out on could also be something immoral, self-destructive, or even illegal – like committing adultery with someone you’ve been lusting after for years or consuming a mind-altering drug because you don’t want to be the only one in your class not to have done so. Yes indeed, FOMO is a powerful thing in our lives.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I would venture to guess that at one time or another every one of us has experienced FOMO and may have even succumb to this fear. Do any of your New Year’s resolutions or goals for 2026 revolve around FOMO? If so, I sincerely hope that you will seriously consider the importance and necessity of what you are afraid of missing out on before investing in the pursuit of it. And as your pastor, I of course hope and pray that whatever your FOMO may all involve, that it comports with God’s will as revealed in His Word.

This being said, though, I truly hope that every church member actually does have FOMO in 2026. I hope that you fear missing out on receiving God’s good gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. And if you do, I have a wonderful solution. Every Sunday we gather for worship to receive the forgiving, saving, and life-giving gifts that God’s Son earned for the world by His suffering and death two millennia ago. For God’s Son Jesus Christ sacrificed His life into death and victoriously rose again three days afterward so that you don’t have to miss out on everlasting life with God. This is great news. Nothing we could ever obtain could be of greater importance or value than God’s saving gifts. And these gifts are offered free of charge every Sunday at church through the Gospel in the Word and the Sacraments. And there is room for you to attend every week.

Added to that, Bible class is offered weekly as well. The church also has devotional material available and even provides radio and Internet links to assist you in studying God’s Word at home. There is a Bible reading plan at the bottom of the weekly bulletin insert (a daily lectionary that resembles the one in our hymnal) as well as one on the back of the monthly church calendar (this

one is also posted on the church's website). And don't forget that *Luther's Small Catechism* serves as a wonderful daily devotional as well.

Every Christian ought to have a fear of missing out on what our gracious Lord offers. But we don't have to fear being unable to attain such gifts. There is no required fee. They are given freely through God's Means of Grace. And if for whatever reason you are not able to access these gifts, let me know and I will do my best to deliver God's saving gifts to you (delivering them personally if necessary).

So, I hope that 2026 isn't a FOMO year for you if what you fear missing out on is something that God doesn't want you to have. For sadly, the sin of coveting is a temptation that can be connected to FOMO. But if you fear missing out on the good things that God wishes you to have, I hope that you receive God's good blessings in 2026. And I know that what He truly wishes every one of you to have is the forgiveness, salvation, and unending life that Jesus Christ has earned for you. You ought to have FOMO when it comes to these wonderful gifts. And desiring them needs to be at the top of your list everyday throughout 2026. For as Jesus says: ***“Do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him {namely God} who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*** So, don't let the fear of missing out on things that won't matter for eternity control your life. Jesus tells us not to even be afraid of those who could destroy our physical lives in this world. Instead, we are to have a right and healthy fear of God. And as you fear the Lord, remember His desire for you. For He ***“desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4, ESV)***. Jesus wants you in Heaven. And through His Gospel, He gives you that very thing – taking away your fears and giving you new life with Him that shall never end.

Blessings in 2026,
Pastor

PS – Shay and I thank everyone who sent us Christmas cards and gifts. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Also, those of you who have been using the Bible reading schedule posted on the back of the monthly church calendar (and found on the church's website), I hope that you found great joy and blessing in doing so throughout 2025. The Bible reading schedule continues for this year. The only thing different will be the daily Old Testament readings because they are part of a two-year cycle. Otherwise, the other Scriptural readings (including the Psalms) are the same as last year. If you read through the Psalms last year, you read the Psalter twice. If you read all the Holy Gospel and other New Testament readings last year, you read through the entire New Testament. I hope that you continue in God's Word daily throughout 2026 no matter what reading plan you choose to use. Don't miss out on the great blessings that God gives through His Word ~
Pastor.