

# CONFIRMATION MINISTRY



## STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

“Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

### What is confirmation?

Confirmation at Circle of Faith Parish is a two year program. One year focuses on learning the biblical stories. The other year focuses on learning what it means to be Lutheran through Martin Luther’s work *The Small Catechism*. Typically students start confirmation in the fall of seventh grade and affirm their Baptism in the spring of eighth grade.

Confirmation is...

...rooted in Christian baptism and is one of the ways that parents and the greater Christian community fulfill the promises made at Baptism.

...a process of learning, growth, and wrestling with faith in Jesus Christ.

...a ministry shared by parents, pastors, small group leaders, the students, and the congregation.

...a journey and milestone in the faith life of Lutherans. Confirmation is not the end of the student’s life in the church.

...one of the ways a person becomes a member of a Lutheran congregation.

### Who Teaches Confirmation?

Confirmation lessons are taught by Circle of Faith Parish pastors during the large group presentation. Occasionally the pastors may bring in a guest speaker to help teach the lesson. The pastors and any adult volunteers help lead the students in facilitating conversation and modeling the Christian life.

### What are the Expectations of Confirmation?

Confirmation is not an obligation. It is an optional series of lessons, small group discussion, participation in worship and growth that leads to the Affirmation of Baptism where students profess their faith in Jesus Christ and become adult members of the congregation. When a family decides that their student is ready for confirmation and enrolls in the confirmation program, it is with an understanding that the requirements of the confirmation program are not optional.

## 1. Learning:

Each student will attend all nights of confirmation including worship and teaching time. Students should miss no more than 3 weekly sessions each year.

### A. Weekly Requirements

Be on time. Teaching Time begins at 4:15 pm at Trinity Lutheran in Welcome. Students should be at the church before 4:15 pm so that they are ready to begin on time.

### B. Typical Schedule

4:00 pm - Snack Time

4:15 pm - Teaching/Discussion

5:15 pm - Dismissal

### C. Bibles

Every student should bring their bible to each confirmation lesson. During confirmation we use the NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) translation. This allows students to be able to follow along word for word. Upon entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade, your student should receive a student study Bible from your congregation as a gift.

### D. Absences

If your student needs to be absent from Confirmation for any reason, please call the church office (507-728-8259) or send Pastor Anthony a text (507-848-0017) or an email [achristoffels@circleoffaithparish.org](mailto:achristoffels@circleoffaithparish.org). Any makeup work will be handled on an individual basis with the pastor.

### E. Cell Phones

While we understand that communication with parents is important for coordinating transportation, cell phones are a major distraction for the teaching time/discussion.

While students are here for confirmation it is vital that they are fully engaged in the activities taking place here and that is not possible while texting or talking. Cell phones are not to be used for the duration of confirmation (4:00 - 5:15 pm).

## F. Cancellations

Minnesota winters can from time to time change our plans. As a general rule, if Martin County West closes or dismisses school early on any given Wednesday due to inclement weather, all afternoon and evening activities at Circle of Faith Parish are cancelled. You will be properly informed through our HoneyWell Instant Alert system if confirmation class or confirmation related activities are cancelled due to the weather. Talk to a pastor if you are not receiving messages from HoneyWell.

## 2. Worship:

It is expected that each student will regularly attend worship with their family. Worship is central to our Christian faith. It is a time that we set aside each week to praise God, hear God's Word, and be nourished by Christ's body and blood. Please encourage your student and your entire family to make worship a priority each week.

### A. Worship Notes

Each student will complete and turn in 20 worship notes during the course of each year, for a total of 40 worship notes throughout the confirmation program. If there are less than 20 worship notes turned in during the 7th grade year, the remainder will be added to the total needed for 8th grade. If there are more than 20 worship notes turned in during the 7th grade year, the extra will not be subtracted from the total needed for 8th grade.

### B. Participation in Worship

Our worship to God is not passive, it is active. Therefore, we actively participate and offer our gifts to God and serve his church. This happens in many different ways including reading the Scripture lessons, helping with ushering, lighting the candles, offering special music by singing or playing a instrument, or singing in the choir. All confirmation students are expected to participate in worship at least 4 times throughout the year.

### B. Worship During Lent

During the season of Lent (the six weeks prior to Easter), we do not meet for a confirmation lesson. Instead we

have worship services as we prepare for the upcoming crucifixion, death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. These worship services are joint services that rotate throughout Circle of Faith Parish. Please refer to the confirmation schedule to see which church will be hosting the worship service each week. Students are required to attend all Lenten Eve Worship services as these worship services are in place of our regular confirmation lessons. Parents and family are asked to accompany their student to the 7:00 pm worship service. A meal is served beginning at 5:30 pm before worship.

#### **C. Worship During Holy Week**

Holy Week is the most important week of the year for Christians. Therefore, attendance at every worship service this week is required. Please put all of these important dates on your calendar immediately.

**Palm Sunday, March 25, 2018**

**Maundy Thursday, March 29, 2018**

**Good Friday, March 30, 2018**

**Easter Vigil, March 31, 2018**

**Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018**

*\*Rehearsal for the Easter Vigil will be on Wednesday, March 28, 2018. All confirmation students are required to participate in the Easter Vigil.*

#### **D. Absence During Holy Week**

Due to the importance of Holy Week, any student absent from any Holy Week service will be expected to write a 250 word essay telling of the importance of the service that was missed. For example, if student A misses Good Friday worship, but attends all of the other Holy Week services, then student A will need to write a 250 word essay about why Good Friday is an important day for Christians. If student B misses Maundy Thursday and the Easter Vigil, then student B will need to write a 250 word essay about why Maundy Thursday is an important day for Christians **AND** write a 250 word essay about why the Easter Vigil is an important day for Christians. All essays are due to Pastor Anthony by Sunday, April 15, 2018.

#### **3. Service:**

Service in the Lord's name is an important part of Christian life. Service projects will be planned by Circle of Faith pastors and the details will be announced with plenty of notice. Throughout each year there will be 2 service projects. Some of the projects may take place at any one of the Circle of Faith churches and some may take place off-site. All details will be properly communicated to parents ahead of time. If a student is unable to participate in a service project, please talk to the pastor to arrange for a time to serve either at church or in the community.

#### **4. Fellowship:**

Fellowship is a time to build relationships with each other. There will be at least 2 fellowship events each year. These designated fellowship times may occur on or offsite. These activities will be planned by Circle of Faith pastors and/or parent volunteers. Students may be asked to bring some money to cover costs. All details will be properly communicated to parents ahead of time.

##### **A. Junior High Youth Gathering**

Confirmation students have an opportunity to attend a youth gathering in Willmar, MN with other area 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The youth gathering is Friday, November 17 - Saturday, November 18. Registration opens on October 1 and closes on October 20. Please talk to Pastor Anthony if you are interested in going to the youth gathering.

##### **B. Christmas Party**

On Wednesday, December 20, instead of a normal lesson, we will be celebrating the birth of our Savior by having a Christmas party at the church. There will be food and games.

##### **C. Lock-in at Waverly**

Each year, we do a lock-in for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Circle of Faith Parish and Partners in Ministry (Trimont). This is a 12 hour (8:00 pm - 8:00 am) lock-in at Waverly Lutheran Church. The lock-in is on a Friday night to Saturday morning in January. More information to come in late fall.

## 5. Family Participation:

The support and participation of you, as parents, is key to the confirmation ministry that we do at Circle of Faith Parish. It is important to the passing on of our faith that you remain engaged with your student before, during and after their time in the confirmation ministry at Circle of Faith Parish. Faith is not something that you learn as a child and then stop learning. Faith formation is an ongoing thing that every Christian at every age does on a daily basis. The teenage years can be a challenging time for young people as they are just beginning to question and seek out who they are. It is an important time in their life to have their parent(s) actively present in their faith formation. Confirmation can be faith formation for the entire family.

### A. Family Confirmation Nights

On one Wednesday every month, your entire family is invited to come to confirmation. So, parents and students, as well as other siblings (older or younger) are invited to come and grow in your faith **as a family!** The schedule for Family Confirmation is as follows:

4:00 PM - Snack Time

4:15 PM - Teaching/Discussion Time

5:00 PM - Family Discussion Time

5:30 PM - Family Meal Time and Dismissal

Please make the effort to be here to learn and grow in your relationship with God as a family!

## B. *FAITH5* (Faith Actions In The Home)

Families should be a source of emotional and spiritual support, nurturing and protecting, love and comfort. As the church, we would like to help your family be the best family you can be by offering things that you can do together as a family. We encourage you, each night of the week, to take a few moments as a family to do 5 easy things:

1. SHARE - a high and a low for the day
2. READ - a short Bible verse
3. TALK - about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows
4. PRAY - in thanksgiving for each other's highs and pray for help for each other's lows
5. BLESS - say a blessing to each other

## 6. Mentor Program

Each confirmation student will be asked to find a confirmation mentor. A confirmation mentor is someone who is willing to befriend and guide a confirmation student in matters related to faith and life. A mentor is an adult, non-family member, who is actively involved in worship and congregational life at one of our Circle of Faith congregations. Mentors will pray daily for their mentee, engage in regular conversation (weekly is ideal), discuss matters of faith in an honest and helpful way, stand with their mentee on their Confirmation Day, and take an interest in their mentee's life. Confirmation students are encouraged to find a mentor by the beginning of October.

## **7. Affirmation of Baptism:**

The chief goal of confirmation is growth in faith and relationship with Jesus resulting in the public affirmation of a young person's faith. This affirmation cannot, and should not, take place when a student does not desire to make public affirmation of their faith. To do so simply turns the confirmation program into a list of hoops to jump through and not a process where students learn about the basics of what it means to be a Christian, believing and following Jesus.

### **A. Introductory Faith Statements**

At the beginning of the year, all students, both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students will write a short Faith Statement. These Introductory Faith Statements must be turned in by Wednesday, September 27, 2017 and should be 1 page, double-spaced.

*For 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students, answer the following questions:*

- Who is God and what do you know about Him?
- What is the Bible?
- Why do you come to worship?
- Why are you in confirmation?

*For 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students, answer the following questions:*

- Who is God and what do you know about Him?
- What is the Bible and what do you know about it?
- Why do you come to worship?
- Why are you in confirmation?
- What did you learn last year in confirmation?

### **B. Faith Statements**

In the final year of the confirmation program, each student will write a Faith Statement. The Faith Statements will be written and turned in during March/April. A Faith Statement gives the student an opportunity to:

- Reflect on and describe their life and faith
- Identify how God connects with them and how they grow in faith
- Express their hopes and plans for going out into the world while serving God and living out their faith.

## **C. Faith Conversations**

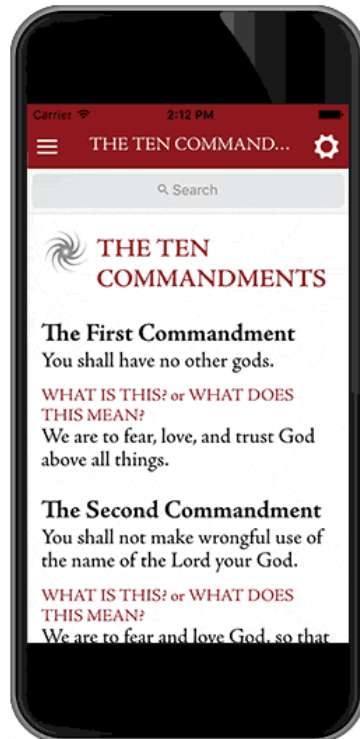
In the final year of the confirmation program, each student will have a 25-30 minute one-on-one time to talk about their Faith Statement with a pastor. These conversations are a chance to talk about what is going on in each student's life of faith and to discern together the student's readiness/willingness to affirm their Baptism. Faith Conversations will take place during March/April.

## **D. Confirmation Sunday**

After the two years of instruction, having met all of the expectations and requirements for confirmation, students are considered "prepared" for Confirmation or Affirmation of Baptism. During the Faith Conversations with a pastor, it will be determined if each student is spiritually ready to affirm their Baptism. Not all students are ready in their faith journey to affirm their Baptism at that time, and that is okay. Students may affirm their Baptism at any time after they have completed the two years of confirmation instruction. A student's readiness/willingness to affirm their Baptism is determined on an individual basis with a pastor.

**We thank you for the privilege of being part  
of your family's faith formation!**

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We're excited to announce our first mobile app, featuring Luther's Small Catechism. Perfect for youth education and confirmation classes, individuals, adults, congregations, church leaders—anyone who wants easy access to Martin Luther's guide to the basics of Christian faith.

## “What does this mean?”

Luther's Small Catechism and Spanish El Catecismo Menor de Lutero are both included in a free mobile app, available from the Apple iOS App Store and on Google Play. Content from the Study Edition is also available as an in-app purchase. Search “Catechism” in the Apple or Google app stores, or download through one of the links below.



2017-2018

CONFIRMATION

CALENDAR

### September 2017

9/13 Family Confirmation  
9/20 Lesson  
9/27 Lesson

### October 2017

10/4 Family Confirmation  
Service Project #1  
10/11 Lesson  
10/18 **NO Confirmation**  
10/25 Lesson

### November 2017

11/1 Family Confirmation  
11/8 Lesson  
11/15 Lesson  
11/22 *Thanksgiving Eve  
Worship @ Waverly*  
11/29 Lesson

### December 2017

12/6 Family Confirmation  
12/13 Lesson  
12/20 Fellowship Night  
12/24 *Christmas Eve Worship*  
12/27 **NO Confirmation**

### January 2018

1/3 Family Confirmation  
1/10 Lesson  
1/17 Lesson  
1/24 Lesson  
1/31 Lesson

### February 2018

2/7 Family Confirmation  
2/14 *Ash Wednesday  
Worship @ Waverly*  
2/21 *Lenten Eve Worship  
@ Trinity*  
2/28 *Lenten Eve Worship  
@ St. Peter*

### March 2018

3/7 *Lenten Eve Worship  
@ Waverly*  
3/14 *Lenten Eve Worship  
@ Trinity*  
3/21 *Lenten Eve Worship  
@ St. Peter*  
3/28 **NO Confirmation**

### April 2018

4/4 Family Confirmation  
4/11 Lesson  
4/18 Lesson  
4/25 Lesson

### May 2018

5/2 Rehearsal  
5/6 Confirmation Sunday