

# Confirmation Handbook Trinity Lutheran Church 2014 & 2015



## 1. DEFINITION OF CONFIRMATION (Matt. 10:32-33, Rev. 2:10)

The Confirmation Ministry is an educational ministry of the church that is designed to assist parents in helping their baptized children deepen their faith in Christ. It is to aid students in understanding what it means to be a part of the communion of saints and to play a responsible role in the Christian community.

## 2. GOALS FOR CONFIRMATION MINISTRY

The goals of our Confirmation Ministry are that the catechumens, as baptized children of God and as members of the body of Christ:

- A. Confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and take ownership in declaring, by the power of the Holy Spirit, their own allegiance to Christ;
- B. Know and understand what God does through His Word and Sacraments; (Rom. 15:3-4; 2 Tim. 3:15)
- D. Know, believe, and confess the Christian faith as their own, along with why it is true, and how it relates to life;8
- E. Understand that Christian growth is a life-long process; that the Christian is never in a state of completion, but always in the process of becoming; (Deut. 6:7; 11:19; Prov. 22:6)
- F. Grow in the life of the Christian community and its mission. Understand that the church, as the people of God, has the following God-given functions: worship, witness, education, service, and fellowship; (Deut. 16:11; Matt10:37; 12:48-50; 1 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 3:15-17)

## 3. GENERAL DESCRIPTION & CURRICULUM

The objective of Confirmation Ministry is to affirm the Christian identity of the students, an identity which they received in their baptism. Because God claimed each of them as His own, all effort is directed to help the student identify with God's person and to explore what it means to live as a child of God.

As leaders of the program, pastors, teachers, and volunteers will encourage students to work to their potential, but the responsibility to grow, work, think and strive lies primarily with the student and his or her family.

The two year Confirmation curriculum is based upon the six chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism. Students are expected to attend Sunday School *and* the Wednesday evening confirmation program. The two part curriculum is as follows:

### ***Trinity's Confirmation Program Years***

#### **Pre-Confirmation – (typically 6<sup>th</sup> Grade non-TLS)**

- Bible Review

#### **Confirmation 1 - (typically 7<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

- Learn the 6 chief parts of the Small Catechism
- Emphasis on memorization of the 6 chief parts

#### **Confirmation 2 – (typically 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

- Review/expand on the 6 chief parts of the Small Catechism
- Emphasis on memorization of supporting Bible passages

#### **4. RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

In the rite of confirmation, the catechumen promises to “Conform his/her life to the divine Word of God, to be faithful in the use of God’s Word, and in faith, word, and action remain true to God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit even to death.”

Confirmation has the potential of being a significant event in a young person’s life and a connection to God and the church. It should not be sloughed off or treated casually. Confirmation is not a graduation event, but a rite of passage into a whole new area of Christian life and fellowship.

#### **5. PARENTAL GUIDANCE AND MODELING OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH**

Parents are still the most important ingredient in the developing years of children. Parents are the most powerful teachers of children. If the parents’ desire is that their children stay active in the church and grow in their commitment to the Lord, they must model it themselves. (Num. 18:11; Deut. 15:20, 16:11) It is crucial that parents model that desired behavior by worshipping regularly, participating in the Sacrament of Holy Communion frequently, and by engaging in personal and group study of God’s Word. Your role in monitoring progress and modeling authentic Christian discipleship is paramount. It is a task given to you directly from God. The confirmation program is only to assist you in preparing your child for the rite of confirmation. Your behavior can have two different impacts.

Negative: Unless parents continue to show by example a life worthy of their calling in Jesus Christ, their children will be inclined to follow the pathway of the parents and become inactive and/or have low-commitment to their spiritual life. Faith, when not applied and practiced, can become stagnant and such a child could become delinquent and even lose the saving faith in Christ altogether.

Positive: We are convinced that the more parents become aware of their spirituality and practice it, the more likely their children will remain faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ and practice their faith openly in the body of Christ, their homes and their communities. Parents are reminded that it is their God-given duty and obligation to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Deut. 1:31, 6:4-9, 11:18-21, 21:18-19; Ps. 78:5-8; Luke 8:39; Eph. 6:4)

## 6. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Confirmation Ministry is designed to assist parents and individuals in understanding and feeling part of the community of saints. God has designed Christian education in the home and this Confirmation Program is to help support the on-going Christian education already going on in the home. We encourage parents, godparents, grandparents, and family members to assist the catechumens in the most important time in their life.

Parental Involvement Includes:

- A. Monitor memory work, discussing class topics (and spiritual life in general) with child, and monitoring sermon notes during the year;
- B. Involvement with special activities and teams of fellowship, service, and spiritual gifts;
- C. Encourage and speak well of the program and its leaders.
- D. Confirmation Covenant
  - We ask parents to be accountable for the progress of their children.
  - We ask parents to commit yourselves to praying regularly for your child, the pastors, and others involved in the confirmation ministry.
  - We ask that parents take the lead in the education process of their child. Please discuss the content of confirmation with the student, and monitor their memory work, sermon notes and other learning experiences.
  - We ask that parents worship regularly with your child and take sermon notes with them.
  - We ask that parents keep learning themselves. Take part in Bible study opportunities and devotional disciplines.
  - We ask that parents encourage the youth -- this is their opportunity to show God their love and dedication. It is a big sacrifice of time, but nothing like the sacrifice Christ has given for all of us. With the help of God all these tasks can be done joyfully.

## 7. OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOW LOVE, COMMITMENT & OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Christians are always confirming their faith in Jesus Christ and are not to think in terms of “completing” their faith. However, students declare themselves ready for confirmation by following through on the following opportunities for Christian growth.

- A. Church and Sunday School attendance: All participants in the Confirmation Ministry are called upon to attend at least 70% of the normally scheduled Sunday School classes and worship services during the confirmation year. God asks for 100%. We realize this cannot always be accomplished in a world tainted with sin. Along with church attendance, you have the opportunity to show your dedication by preparing 20 sermon notes by May 13th. There are roughly 42 Sermons during the Confirmation term including Advent and Lenten Services. We anticipate each student will complete at least two sermon summaries each month and then also have sermon summaries from the Lenten and Advent services as well.
- B. Memory Work Program: Students are required to complete assigned memory work and will be quizzed weekly.

C. Confirmation Covenant

D. Other opportunities to show you are ready for Confirmation:

- i. Participate in classes
- ii. Complete the memory work
- iii. 70% church and Sunday School attendance
- iv. Complete the required sermon notes
- v. Strive for 100% class attendance.
- vi. All students will assist in various service events held throughout the year. (i.e. – leaf raking service project, Sauerkraut Supper, Lenten Meals, etc.)
- vii. Help clean up the class areas after classes.
- viii. At end of Year 2, score 70% or higher on written catechetical examination and complete verbal examination with Church Elders.

E. Student Behavior: Students have an excellent opportunity to witness great Christian behavior in the class setting. Confirmation is an environment in which learning, discussion and sharing take place. Rarely do we find behavior in confirmation to be a problem. If the need arises we have the following policy. If a student is disruptive and/or shows disrespect for the instructor or other students, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom after one warning from the instructor. The student will wait outside the classroom with a parent helper until the end of the class period. The instructor will then discuss the behavior with the student. Parents will be contacted and informed regarding disruptive or disrespectful behavior. Good behavior is expected not only in the classroom, but with all outside service, or fellowship activities.

*After accomplishing the above requirements, it is our hope that the youth:*

- Solidify their understanding of salvation by grace through faith;
- Become grounded in Scriptural teaching through the memorization of key Biblical texts, and Luther's Small Catechism;
- Grow in knowledge of the unique history of the Lutheran Reformation and the Lutheran Church;
- See the importance of worship; that God blesses His people through worship and how they can express praises and thanks to the Lord through it, learning to make profession of faith with fellow believers, to listen to the exposition of God's Word and to comprehend and apply it to life;
- Learn how to express the Gospel of Christ in a meaningful way and to share what God in Christ has done for them and relate it to others.

8. 2015 RITE OF CONFIRMATION, PICTURES AND PRACTICE

**Confirmation will take place Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup> at the 10:30 am Service.**

**Practice and pictures for confirmation will take place on Friday May 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.**

9. MEMORY WORK PHILOSOPHY (PSALM 119:10-12)

Memorizing Bible text, hymns, verses, and catechism selections has been a big part of Christian education it is hard to imagine a program of study that does not include memory work.

Memorization has always served God's people well. Throughout the Old Testament, we have countless examples of God's people committing things to memory and the transmitting of the commandments. In the New Testament, we read of numerous examples where Jesus and others quoted Scripture. One practical example for us is how Jesus resisted the devil when He was tempted (Matthew 4:1-10). Jesus did not carry a Bible around with Him. He did not have any. Since we do not carry a Bible around with us when temptations come, what can we do to fight off temptations against Satan? Recall and quote comforting Scripture selections that we have learned and cherished.

However, to memorize something is not necessarily learning it, but memorization has important values we would not want to lose. Memorization and later recall leads to a growing understanding and appreciation of what is being studied. Therefore, the students are encouraged to memorize, to the best of their ability, the selected memory text and locations when applicable.

The younger we are the more easily we can memorize. The fallout rate for some memorized material is high because of a lack of review. But meanings, assuming they were taught and grasped when the material was memorized, seem to stick with the learner long after the exact wording has been forgotten.

This is really the important thing. In the case of memorizing Scripture passages, the wording may serve as a convenient handle for recalling the mercy and grace of God, but it is the recalling of the memory ... not the exact wording that counts. Frequent review and repeated use of the memorized material can substantially cut down on forgetting memorized material.

Some may argue that in a digital age where we can carry portals to the world's information in our pockets has made memorization unnecessary and archaic. This could not be further from the truth. More than ever it is important we keep God's Word as close as possible to ourselves and to our children. The world of God is to dwell in us richly and then it can continue to encourage, uplift and feed us when we are assaulted with the temptations and distractions of the world's endless stream of information.

#### ***Goals for the memory work program***

- A. To equip children with a working knowledge of the Lutheran faith and doctrine in order that they might be able to explain or defend the Christian faith whenever the opportunity arises;
- B. To help children gain a "storehouse" of memory material and aid them with their needs regardless of their position in life;
- C. To help children learn to use the memorized material in a practical way and relate it to their life experiences;
- D. To stimulate a love and desire for memory work through a growing awareness of its present and future usefulness;
- E. To better prepare children for that day in which they affirm their faith before God at His altar.

## Confirmation Covenant with God

As I look upon \_\_\_\_\_, whom I am raising for my Father in heaven<sup>1</sup>, I am so aware of our human vulnerabilities and frailties. I recognize that left to our own secular teachings and devices, we simply raise children who will be vulnerable to Satan's worldly attacks.

God shines his love down on us ever faithfully and I wish to reflect that love back to him through my child. As a Christian steward, I will lead \_\_\_\_\_ in the direction God has shown me in his Word.<sup>2,3</sup>

Therefore, out of my love for the Father and \_\_\_\_\_, I will honor him by assisting \_\_\_\_\_ as he/she works through the Confirmation process to affirm his/her faith. I will do so by committing to my child's attendance to the classes and other events, and supporting him/her in studying memory work and for examinations to help gain God's wisdom. God will do the work, I know, and I will nurture and love along with Him.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 127:3-5 shows that children are the fruit of the womb; a reward to man from God. They are his possessions rewarded to us as a blessing from Him.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 38:19 says that the father (parents) makes known to the child God's faithfulness.

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs 22:6 says to train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

## Affirmation of Faith

As a child of God, I am so very thankful for my parents; for they have brought me to this point in my life, making sure that I have seen God's love in action.

I know that it is my responsibility to begin my own faith walk with God – for my own heart to be filled with faith and love.

God loves me and has shown that I show love to Him through obeying his Commandments. I will be honoring my father and mother, the Fourth Commandment, as I begin to develop my own personal relationship with Jesus. This is the start of a journey where I move from being a child to becoming a committed disciple of Christ as God lays out for me in Ephesians.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, I commit myself to the study of God's Word in Confirmation. I will attend Wednesday classes and Sunday School. I will also seek to apply God's Word to my life. I will study the Word at home, not just for memory work and examinations, but to gain His wisdom. May God strengthen me in His Word and love.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:12-15, 23-24 To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ might be built up until we all reach unity in faith and in knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men and their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. To be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

## Confirmation Sermon Notes

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Time: (Sun.) 8:00 am 10:30 am 10:45 am (Wed.) 7:00 pm

Preacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Sermon Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Sermon Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Sermon Notes: (Please share at least 4 things learned from sermon)

❖ Law points



❖ Gospel points

