

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Confirmation Orientation 2017 – 2018

What is Confirmation?

While Confirmation has been around in Lutheran Churches for centuries, it is important for us to pause and explore the basic idea behind Confirmation before we begin our journey together. Whether you are beginning your first year of Confirmation instruction or completing your last, it is appropriate to think about the “what” and “why” of Confirmation ministry. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has said:

“Confirmation ministry is a pastoral and educational ministry of the church which helps baptized person through Word and sacrament to identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission.”

This definition challenges us to broaden our understanding of confirmation. This ministry is much more than just three years’ worth of classes. To “identify more deeply” and “participate more fully” suggest that, regardless of our age, what God wills for us and has begun in us has not been finished, nor will it be at the completion of the Confirmation program. By the grace of God, we continue – each and every day of our lives – to walk in the newness of Christ Jesus.

Confirmation intends to instruct each individual in how to live out their daily life while walking in the newness of Christ. It teaches us the promises that God has made to us and how we can depend on those promises during our lives. It seeks to make the Christian faith and trust in God not merely an abstract concept, but a personal reality based on the honest beliefs of each person. It encourages us to live out our baptismal identity as God’s children through active participation in the church and society.

Through an in-depth study of scripture, the Sacraments, and Luther’s catechism; and through experiences of worship and the Christian life, students will come to a deeper and more personal understanding of their faith. At the completion of the program students will be called upon to make a confession of faith as meaningful, honest, and personal as possible.

Confirmation is a journey of faith filled with new questions and answers, new discoveries, new relationships, new responsibilities, and new possibilities. Clearly confirmation is intended to be a milestone, not a destination; it is not graduation! Rather, Confirmation is a tool that equips for the life-long process of living out Christian identity.

Remember, the Lutheran Church’s educational ministry does not stop after Confirmation Sunday. The church will continue to help all members grow in the faith with the community of believers no matter what age!

*God’s richest blessings to you and your family as you grow in your Christian identity!
May your journey be directed by the grace and love of our Savior Jesus Christ!*

Confirmation Program Goals

1. To gain appreciation & understanding of the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments as means of encountering God in our lives.
2. To become fully aware of the promises God has made to you and to learn how to depend on these promises throughout your life, especially in times of need.
3. To grow in your awareness of Lutheran understanding of the Christian faith.
4. To express willingness & ability to profess the Christian faith as your own.
5. To understand that the Church is the people of God, and as the Church, we are called to serve each other and all peoples in God's Kingdom.
6. To identify appropriate service opportunities in both the church & the community, and to accept the responsibility to fulfill that service and love the neighbor.
7. To develop a greater understanding of stewardship and the Christian's responsibility to care for and wisely manage God's creation.
8. To realize that Christian growth and understanding is a lifelong process.
9. To witness Christian growth in worship, education, and service.

Overview

1. Classes meet roughly every other week (see schedule). They are held on Sundays from 12:30pm – 2pm. Students will gather in the Fellowship Hall.
2. It's hard to imagine what could be more central to our Christian lives than worship. We ask that students are in worship on a regular basis and hope that this is already a practice for your family.
3. Christian education is an important aspect of the Christian life. Sunday School attendance it is strongly encouraged and you will receive extra points for attending.
4. The Confirmation Retreat provides an opportunity for a weekend of Christian fellowship, recreation, and relationship building with the entire Confirmation group. The cost and location is yet to be determined. Once finalized, information will be sent out regarding this trip.

Expectations for Youth and Parents/Guardians

1. Youth and their families are asked to make a firm commitment to attend worship together. Worship is essential to our identity as believers in Christ. As such, worship attendance is crucial to the Confirmation experience (and beyond!). Each confirmand this year will be expected to complete 18 worship notes. These notes can be taken while at any Good Shepherd service (including Advent, Lent, and any special worship services throughout the year). Worship notes can be found in your notebook and extras are located in the information rack in the Narthex. Once completed please place in Pastor Paul's box outside his office. *While we applaud your commitment to worshipping at other congregations while out of town those experiences will not count.*
2. Youth and their families are asked to make a firm commitment for the student to attend Confirmation classes.
3. Students will work on and present a yearly Confirmation Project. This project will either be accomplished individually or within a group. Details and advice for this project will be given by Cat or Pastor Paul.
4. As a part of a Christian community we expect that all students attend the Confirmation Retreat. During this retreat we will cover specific confirmation lessons will be accomplished during this retreat. Location and cost will be sent out once finalized.

5. As we explore what it means to be Christian, intensive experiences are helpful. Good Shepherd believes that weeklong trips give students the opportunity to experience the Christian life and community in a way that an hour long class cannot. For this reason each student should attend one or all of the following during their three year program:
 - a. Summer Mission Trip. 2018 trip is TBD. Details will be sent once finalized
 - b. A week of camp at Lutheridge in Arden, NC. This options is individually scheduled (assistance in planning is available. Talk to Cat if you are interested)
 - c. Affirm, June 10 – 15, 2018, University of West Alabama. About Affirm: Affirm is an event put on by the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA that nurtures faith, equips youth leaders for today and tomorrow, and trains youth in discipleship skills.
6. At baptism parents and sponsors make promises to their child. Parental participation in the Confirmation program is a part of living according to those promises. We ask that you keep the promises you made to your child by engaging them in conversations about their Confirmation lessons and projects. This is a vital important component of Confirmation learning for your child and takes only a few minutes.
7. As a part of our Christian vocation, we are called to work and serve in the world. Each student is expected to participate in the lending of their gifts and talents in service to the church and the world. The following acts of service are encouraged
 - a. Serve in worship. Confirmands are encouraged to serve in worship as acolytes, crucifers, readers, ushers, or greeters. Training sessions for worship participants are held periodically throughout the year.
 - b. On December 17th students will join together with FX3 to sing Christmas carols.
 - c. Students are to complete a spiritual gifts inventory and discipleship offering packet with their parents as they prepare to be an adult member of Good Shepherd.

Confirmation Covenant
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
2017-2018

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. 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. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9

1. I will regularly attend Confirmation class. If I cannot attend a class I will inform Cat so I can receive any missed lessons.
2. I will attend all Confirmation events and be an active participant in the group.
3. I will complete all work assigned, including tests and projects.
4. I will attend worship regularly and complete the required number of worship notes this program year.
5. I will attend the Confirmation Retreat.
6. During my three years in the Confirmation program I will attend at least one of the following events:
 - a. Summer Mission Trip. 2018 trip is TBD. Details will be sent once finalized.
 - b. 1 week of summer camp at Lutheridge. This options is individually scheduled (assistance in planning is available. Talk to Cat if you are interested.)
 - c. Affirm, June 10 – 15, 2018, University of West Alabama. About Affirm: Affirm nurtures faith, equips youth leaders for today and tomorrow, and trains youth in discipleship skills. (Talk to Cat if you are interested in attending)

Student Signature: _____

Student Name: _____

I will support my child and live out the promises I made to them at their Baptism by encouraging, assisting, and discussing their participation in the Confirmation program. I will engage in conversations regarding their lessons, ensure they are in attendance at classes and important events, and I will share my faith in a way that encourages them to gain a deeper understanding of God and their relationship to God.

Parent Signature(s): _____

Parent Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Contact Number: _____
