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Other Information

Bringing Friends (Public School Confirmation Class & Youth Group Events)

Friends are welcomed and encouraged at all classes and events. Visitors, however, must follow the same expectations and rules as the rest of the class. Make sure they understand all the rules before coming to class or events. Please introduce your friend to the pastor or adult leader and then to the class so that they feel part of the family here at Bethlehem.

Snow Days/Cancellations

Class cancellations due to bad weather will be determined by the local school closure policies. If school is cancelled due to weather, then, Confirmation is also cancelled for that day.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not to be used during Confirmation time. If a student is caught talking or texting messages on their phone during Confirmation class, it will be taken from them and returned at the end of the class period.

Special Education Needs

If your student has any special education needs, please let Pastor Niles or Pastor Hanson know, as well as indicating how to best teach and engage with your student.

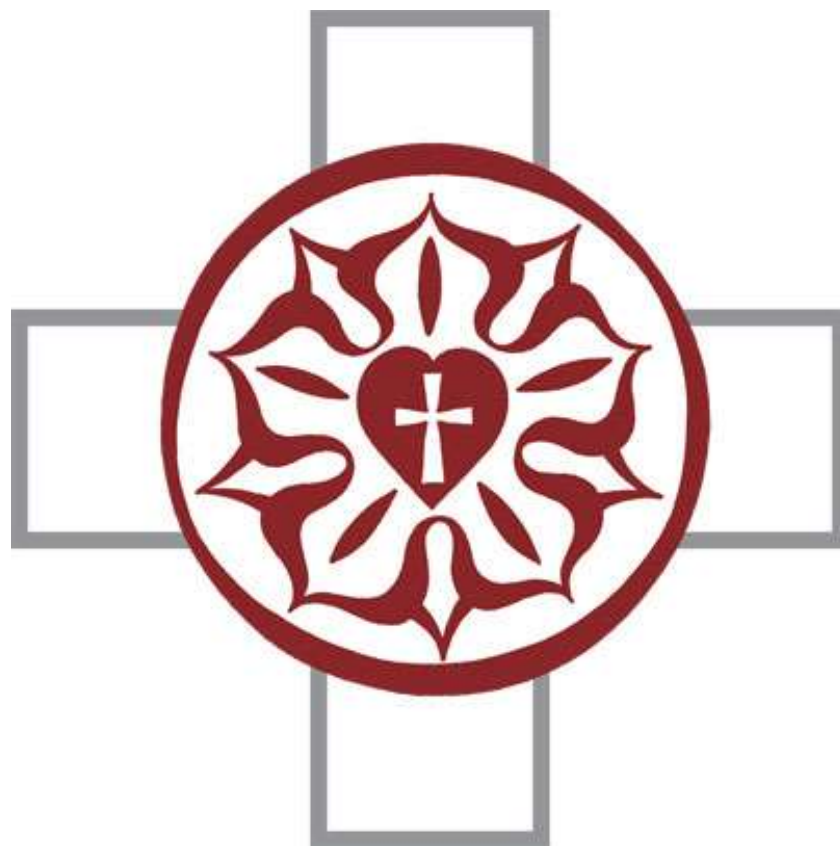
Misplaced Workbook

If you happen to misplace your Confirmation Workbook or lose it, you will be asked to buy a new one. Please see the church office manager to order a new one.

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Our Mission

What do we want to accomplish?

Confirmation is not the end of faith learning, nor is it a rite of passage for young Lutherans. Rather, Confirmation is a public rite of the church preceded by a period of instruction in which baptized Christians learn about the confession, life, and mission of the Christian Church. The Rite of Confirmation provides an opportunity for the individual Christian, relying on God's promise given in Holy Baptism, to make a personal public confession of the faith and a lifelong pledge of fidelity to Christ.

Therefore, our goals of Confirmation reflect a step in the unfolding growth in a life of faith. After completing the Confirmation program, the catechumens (learners) will

- **Be able to publicly confess their faith with their members of the body of Christ.** Each confirmand will make a public confession of faith during the Rite of Confirmation at the conclusion of their Confirmation program.
- **Be able to summarize, in their own words, the life of Jesus Christ.** As members of Christ's body, it is important that we know the story of Jesus' life.
- **Be able to illustrate the ways Jesus Christ fulfills the Old Testament.** To better know who Jesus is, it is important to know the Old Testament and how it points to Jesus Christ.
- **Grow in a desire to be involved in the life of the church.** Confirmation is not concerned only with scriptural knowledge, but also hopes to foster a desire in the confirmands to be actively participating in the life of the church (gathering with other Christians, worship services, bible studies, service events, youth group, etc.).
- **Show an interest in family life.** Families have the greatest impact on faith in young people, so it is our goal to help families come together in a growing faith.
- **Show concern for the wellbeing of fellow Christians.** As members of Christ's body, we are expected to care for one another in love.
- **Grow in a desire to invite others into the life of the church.** Members of the church should be inviting others to join the body of Christ.
- **Actively pursue reconciliation.** As Christians we are expected to be seeking the restoration of broken relationships, not only with those around us, but also with God through regular Confession & Absolution.

Parental Involvement

The importance of parents teaching by example cannot be overstated. We ask each parent/sponsor to lead by example by participating in **weekly worship, Bible Studies, and service involvement** with your child(ren). Your son or daughter (or grandchild) is a special gift from God to you. Talk about your faith and life in Christ with them; inquire about what they are learning in their Confirmation class. This will help to strengthen you as a family and the faith of your child.

Please know that the students will have Memory Work and a Prayer Journal Reflection assignment **every week**. Please ensure that your student is prepared to recite their memory work and that they have completed their Prayer Journal assignment.

The student is not required to show you what they wrote in their Prayer Journal (but can choose to do so), as this is a way they can confidentially communicate with their pastor(s) without judgement on assigned topics

Just know that their overall grade in class is a reflection of the completed memory work and Journal reflection assignments. If their grade is lower than an "A," it's time to ask them why and what assignments they are missing.



Faithful Worship: Students are expected to participate in a worship service every week. Worship is a necessary part of life of a disciple because Christ called us to participate in community with others. As part of regular worship, we also expect families to discuss each worship experience (not only the sermon, but the hymns and liturgy as well) to encourage deeper thought and reflection about worship life.



Our Strategy

How do we plan to accomplish our mission? Throughout the year our pastors will offer students a variety of learning opportunities. Some of our learning strategies include home application, review quizzes, devotions, and experiential learning opportunities.

- **Bethlehem Lutheran School (5th & 6th Grade)**

Students will learn how the scriptures present a single study of God working to save His creation. This will be done working through the Old and New Testaments during the Religion Class each school day. The students will also be introduced to Martin Luther's Small Catechism and the Six-Chief Parts of Christian Doctrine as outlined in the catechism.

- **Bethlehem Lutheran School (7th Grade)**

Students will study the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Confession & Absolution/Office of the Keys, and the Sacrament of the Altar, as outlined in Martin Luther's Small Catechism. They will see its significance for them today and why these things are an important part of their faith as a light unto their path in a dark world. They will also study various vocations within the life of the congregation.

- **Bethlehem Lutheran School (8th Grade)**

Students will study the Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as outlined in the Book of Concord and the Lutheran Confessions.

- **Public-School Confirmation (6th Grade)**

Students will learn the story of the Old Testament, the creation of the world, the story of God's people, and how it points to the life, ministry, and salvation work of the Messiah for the forgiveness of sins.

- **Public-School Confirmation (7th Grade)**

Students will learn the story of the New Testament and the life, ministry, and salvation work of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. They will also learn about the Holy Spirit's work in the sanctification of the early Christian Church.

- **Public-School Confirmation (8th Grade)**

Students will study the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, Confession & Absolution/Office of the Keys, and the Sacrament of the Altar, as outlined in Martin Luther's Small Catechism. They will see its significance for them today and why these things are an important part of their faith as a light unto their path in a dark world. They will also study various vocations within the life of the congregation.

Experiential Learning Opportunities

Students learn from participating in active learning environments. During the Confirmation program, students will have several opportunities for "hands on" participation in a number of experiences:

- Faith expressed through volunteering and serving at Youth Group events
- Faith expressed through discipleship events (Youth Group, Bible Studies, etc.) to build Christian friendships and Christian growth
- Faith expressed in worship participation and service opportunities

Parent Involvement

Research shows that, in most cases, parents remain the top influence in shaping and forming adolescents. In faith formation, it is crucial that parents actively participate in an adolescent's Christian education. In order for your student to gain the most out of Confirmation, parents/Confirmation sponsors are expected to partner with the pastors. Please play an active role in overseeing your student's work and assignments. Take time to discuss each week's class with your student. Quiz them at home on their memory work to ensure that they are prepared to recite their memory work in class with the pastor each week. Ask your student how they would apply what they have learned from the catechism/God's Word to their life.

Parents should notify sports coaches of these expectations when a conflict in schedules arise

B. Memory Work and Prayer Journal Assignments

Bethlehem Lutheran School Religion Class: Each Monday (or first day of the week if Monday is a holiday) will be recitation day. The assigned memory work will be recited, either by writing it down and turning it into the pastor, or by verbal recitation. Prayer Journal assignments will be turned in each Thursday. All grades in class will reflect completion of each of these assignments (memory work recitation & Journal assignment).

Public School Confirmation Class: Each Wednesday at the beginning of class instruction time, each student will recite their assigned memory work, either by writing it down and turning it into the pastor, or by verbal recitation. Prayer Journal assignments will also be reviewed in each class.

C. Experiential Learning Modules

To help confirmands identify with the life and mission of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, and to discover the joys of servanthood, worship, and discipleship, confirmands are asked to participate in the following modules:

Faithful Service: Students are asked to volunteer during church and youth group sponsored events and community projects.

Bethlehem Confirmation Vocation

Opportunities at church include, but are not limited to, acolyting, ushering, serving as the cross bearer for processions, and helping with Advent and Lenten meals.

Community Service

Opportunities outside the church with the youth group may include community-based projects and events, volunteering to do yard work, or babysitting for those in need. Watch the bulletin for additional ways to serve.

Faithful Discipleship: Students are asked to participate in the church youth group that meets a couple times a month during the school year.

Fellowship Events

- Beach Party in September
- Bethlehem Gala Auction in September
- Christmas Caroling in December
- Bethlehem Trivia Night in March
- Joint Youth Group events with other Youth Groups in town (TBD)

Confirmation Expectations

A. Attendance

Bethlehem Lutheran School Religion Class: All students will abide by the attendance policy outlined in the Bethlehem Lutheran School Student Handbook.

Public School Wednesday Afternoon Confirmation Class: All students will participate in all Wednesday afternoon Confirmation classes. Students need to be in the Century Room by 3:30pm and ready for group instruction. Confirmation ends at 4:30pm.

Absentee Procedure: Students are expected to be at all Confirmation classes because the learning is experiential and group focused, so it is difficult to make up a session. But we understand that life happens, and students are likely to have a few absences. If this happens, students are expected to notify the pastor ahead of time and ask what they can do to prepare for the following class. Confirmation is about learning how to be a disciple of Christ. This needs to have priority over extracurricular school activities, including sports. Allowing students to regularly skip class communicates a powerful and negative message.

Worship Attendance: Students are expected to attend worship each week with their families. Worship is scheduled for 5:30pm on Saturdays (with Bible Study at 4:15pm), 8:00am and 10:30am on Sundays (with Bible Study at 9:15am), and at 6:00pm on Wednesdays. If you are out of town on vacation, please find a local church to attend (preferably a church in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod). **Your pastor(s) can assist you in finding a congregation to attend at your destination**

Skippping church communicates a strong message to your children. Worship during Wednesday Advent and Lenten Services is expected since it is a continuation of the Wednesday confirmation class period. Again, extracurricular activities are not a good reason to skip worship. This year there is an expectation that students and their families will attend services to receive God's Word and Sacraments.

Saturday or Sunday Bible Class Attendance: Students and their families are expected to attend either Saturday or Sunday Bible Class each week.

Pastors Niles and Hanson and the church elders will be monitoring and checking attendance records. They will reach out to families who are not fulfilling them and have a dialogue with them.

Our Prayer

We pray that

At the completion of Confirmation, students have a greater desire to grow deeper in a relationship with God and their fellow believers in the body of Christ. May this time be only a steppingstone for students as they spend the rest of their life striving toward a life in Christ, hearing His Word and receiving His gifts of His body and blood for the forgiveness of their sins each week.

What We Expect from Students

To create a positive Christ-centered environment, it is necessary to ask for cooperation from all involved. Unfortunately, the negative behaviors of a few can ruin the entire experience for others. Confirmation is not just a head knowledge; it is about learning how to live as a Christian. As a result, we are also concerned with students' behaviors and attitudes in and out of church. We live in a world that is tolerant of sin and yet we expect students to realize they are different because they have been called out of sin. They were *chosen*. Exclusive cliques or relationships, negative attitudes, disrespect, inappropriate or destructive behavior, and rebellious spirit destroy community, and are not acceptable.

Come Prepared to Learn:

- Bring the required materials and a positive attitude to each class.
- Remain with your class at all times.
- Keep up with all classroom assignments and requirements.
- Share in discussions.
- Have memory work ready to recite.

Respect Other Students:

- Speak well of others. No put-downs or jokes at someone else's expense.
- Include and welcome others; avoid cliques.

Respect Adult Leaders:

- Whether at Youth Group, in class, or at church, all adult leaders and pastors are to receive your respect.
- They will respect you in return. God commands it with a promise.

Respect Property:

- Clean up after yourself. Take responsibility for messes made or damage done.
- Take care of church facilities better than you would your own property.
- Take care of personal catechisms, Bibles, workbooks, journals, and other materials.

Share in Discussion:

- One person talks at a time.
- Talking with your friends is great—just not during class time (unless directed to do so by your teacher).

Consequences:

The Adult Leaders, Pastors, and other Confirmation Team Leaders will deal with any disciplinary measures. They will confront students in love and proceed in the following ways:

- **Strike One:** A verbal warning
- **Strike Two:** Parents/sponsors will receive a phone call
- **Strike Three:** At least one parent/sponsor must accompany the student to class and other youth activities until both attitude and actions indicate student has matured enough to manage their own behavior.

What Not to Bring to Each Class:

- Hats are not allowed in the Sanctuary
- Food and drink are not allowed in the Sanctuary
- Clothing or materials that are suggestive, vulgar, or disrespectful
- Cell phones can only be used before or after Confirmation instruction

What to Bring to Each Class:

- Pencil/Pen (all grades)
- Holy Bible (all grades)
- Luther's Small Catechism (BLS 7th Grade & Public-school 8th Grade)
- Confirmation Workbook (BLS 7th Grade & Public-school 8th Grade)
- Prayer Journal (BLS 7th Grade & Public-school 8th Grade)
- Book of Concord (BLS 8th Grade)

