

Remember the 5-4-3!

Five Principles for Passing on Faith!

1. Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal trusted relationships—often in our own homes.
2. The church is a living partnership between the ministry of the congregation and ministry of the home.
3. Where Christ is present in faith, the home is church, too.
4. Faith is caught more than it is taught.
5. If we want Christian children and youth, we need Christian adults.

Four Keys for Practicing Faith!

1. Caring Conversations
2. Devotions
3. Service
4. Rituals and Traditions

Three Characteristics of Christian Disciples!

1. Authentic
2. Available
3. Affirming

Middle School Youth Ministries

Confirmation Program Handbook 2008-2009

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Faith Formation is an intentional life-long process of equipping people for an ever deepening relationship with Jesus Christ through worship, learning, service, prayer, community and life experiences in order to live out one's baptismal calling.

Family Night for Confirmation:

The 2nd Wednesday of each month is Family Night for Confirmation. On those evenings each month the youth and a parent, grandparent, or guardian of the youth are expected to attend confirmation together. Through conversation, activities and experiences the two of you will share your faith, learn and struggle together with what it means to be a Christian, at any stage in life. We truly think this will be a wonderful way to pass on the faith to the younger generation and to keep your faith alive as an adult. You do not need to have all the answers or any of them for that matter. The important part will be talking with your youth about your faith together. This year, we are looking at the Ten Commandments on Family Night. Great conversations await you and your student!

We will end these evenings at 8:15pm.

Those dates are:

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Oct 8 | Nov 12 | Dec 10 |
| Jan 14 | Feb 11 | May 13 |

Volunteer Opportunities at Retreats:

One of the highlights of Confirmation is the retreats that happen in the fall. For the 7th graders it is the first time they are able to get to know their class and bond together. The 8th graders get to reconnect with their class and the 9th graders prepare for their Confirmation. A big part of this great experience is having enough volunteers to make it a safe, healthy and fun environment. Please consider volunteering to help out at the retreats and be a AAA Christian (Available, Authentic, Affirming). Each retreat is a Friday evening and a Saturday morning.

Adult Participation

Invitation to Large Group:

We invite all adults, parents, guardians, or baptismal sponsors to join the large group in the Great Hall. What we do in that time is to give announcements of upcoming events, celebrate things that have happened and introduce the night's lesson by interactive learning. This year, our primary teachers will be Pastor Ron and Pastor Ruth Ann. We encourage you to talk about the evening's lesson with your student at home and in the car. Your participation will be great encouragement to your children, modeling that you also think Confirmation is important.

Adult Conversational Class:

After the large group experience we will be offering 35-40 minute classes for any adults connected to a confirmand. There will be a variety of subjects taught. These classes will be lead by Kirsten Nelson Roenfeldt. They are informative, interactive and build community by connecting parents with other parents.

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What is Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism?

Fulfillment of Promises:

Confirmation, also known as Affirmation of Baptism, is a rite of passage along the faith journey in Jesus Christ. It is a time of instruction; a time to affirm your Baptism, and a time to declare your intention to continue in the covenant God made with each of us in Holy Baptism. This faith journey began at Baptism when your parents agreed to the following:

“To live with them among God’s faithful people, bring them to the word of God and the holy supper, teach them the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in their hands the holy scriptures, and nurture them in faith and prayer, so that your children may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.” Service of Holy Baptism, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, (Augsburg Fortress, © 2006), page 228

The ministry of Confirmation helps parents fulfill the above promises and offers opportunity to explore, learn about, and grow in the Christian faith as confessed in the Lutheran Church. After completing the instruction program, Confirmation also includes a time for public profession of your faith in Christ.

But it doesn't end there. Confirmation, in contrast to what many think, is not graduation. It does not signal the end of Sunday school and activity in the church. Instead, it is one more step on the journey. It continues the faith walk into which we were baptized, marking the beginning of life in the church as an “adult” when we assume greater responsibility in the life and mission of the Christian community. Faith Formation is a life-long process in living out one's baptismal calling.

Spiritual Growth:

In Confirmation we learn what it means to be ‘Saved by Grace’. We learn about to Whom we belong, who Jesus is, and how faith in Him impacts us. Confirmation helps prepare and support us for life's journey as adult Christians saved by Grace.

Relationship Building:

It is a time to experience God's love by building caring connections with parents, mentors, and peers. It is a commitment of the **whole family** to grow together, support one another and encourage one another to find their trust in a God who loves us, cares for us and forgives us.

Taking Responsibility for Discipleship:

It is a time in the adolescent faith journey for intensive nurturing, a time of preparation leading to public profession of Christian faith and for youth to “confirm” their intention to live as a Child of God in the covenant of Baptism:

“Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism: to live among God’s faithful people, to hear the Word of God and share in the Lord’s supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?” Affirmation of Baptism, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, (Augsburg Fortress, © 2006), page 236.

Expectations of Confirmation

At Bethany Lutheran Church

Confirmation is not a sacrament in the Lutheran church nor is it required for salvation. It is a great opportunity for youth and their families to grow in their faith through various lessons, music, service, relationships, and fellowship. When a family registers for the Saved By Grace Confirmation Program, they are asked to participate in a variety of ways. Expectations have been set to preserve the integrity of this ministry of faith formation, aid in the building of Christian relationships, help facilitate the sharing of God's word, and give tools to families to speak about their faith. We expect that you will participate in all of the items included in the following list.

Youth will be expected to:

- * **Bring your Bible and other materials every week**
- * **Pray out loud at beginning of Large group or during small groups**
- * **Complete 10 Worship Diaries per year (20 Total, 10 from Sunday worship and 10 from Wednesday worship)**
- * **Attend 3 retreats (7th, 8th & 9th, one per year of enrollment in ministry)**
- * **Attend the Rocky Mountain Synod Youth Gathering at least once**
- * **Attend Confirmation Camp at Sky Ranch summer after 7th grade year or a Mission Trip summer after 8th grade year.**
- * **24 hours of service work which can also be used for school or other activities**
- * **Recite all Memory work that is required for the program**
- * **Attend 80% of all classes (that means you can miss 5 classes before a serious conversation needs to happen about your commitment to confirmation and it's place in your life). If you are absent for a class, then you need to complete the homework found on the web in a timely manner.**
- * **On Sundays youth are to be in Sunday School or Worship**
- * **Serve the church by acolyting at Sunday services**
- * **Be on time**

Confirmation Family Style

- * Search Institute did a survey of youth in five mainline Protestant denominations to determine the most significant religious influences in their lives. At the top of the list in slot 1 and 2 were mother and father, followed by grandparent and another relative. Church youth group leaders and activities were ranked 10-15.
- * Deuteronomy 6: 5-9 "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 emblem on your forehead and write them on the doorposts of your house and gates."
- * Did you know that when Martin Luther wrote the Catechism he wrote it to be used in your home? It is in a question and answer format so that the children would ask the questions and the parents would tell the youth the answers. It was meant as a conversation tool for parents and children to learn the faith,

What are we to make of this information?

Whether parents know it or not, they are the most influential faith educators in their child's life.

God knew that, and intended for parents to pass the faith on to their children.

Martin Luther understood that, and helped create a tool to facilitate conversation.

Bethany believes in this, and is committed to helping your family talk about faith. This commitment is shown in the family nights each month, and the various Christian Education opportunities held on Sundays and Wednesdays. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities and continue your own faith education.

Memory Work

Why do we memorize?

Good question. Have you ever had a song stuck in your head and you just can't get it out. Or something happens and you automatically think of a quote from your favorite movie? These things have become part of who you are. They have been woven into the fabric of how you think and what makes you laugh. What if when you were scared you could automatically think, "the Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want." Or when your "friends" make fun of you because you choose not to do something with them you could in your heart say, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Maybe those are extremes but you see what we are saying. Memorizing scriptures, our confessions and prayers helps it become part of who you are and where you can turn in times of pain and joy.

When do we have to have it all memorized?

You will have 2 years to do your memory work! Need to have completed by the May of your 8th grade year!

How should we memorize this material?

One way to memorize things is by reading a section four times out loud and say it to yourself four times out loud. If you make a mistake, start over from the beginning. Also, writing things out many times helps. Have someone quiz you. You may have to just keep trying until it sinks in to your memory.

Some of it will be easy, and some of it will be harder for you,
but never give up.

What do I need to memorize?

1. The Lord's Prayer.
2. The Apostle's Creed with Luther's explanations from the Small Catechism.
3. The 10 Commandments in order.
4. The Old Testament books in order.
5. The New Testament books in order.
6. 6 memory verses (3 from the Memory Packet, see page 8, and 3 of your own choosing).

Wednesday Evenings will look like the following:

Worship begins at 6:30. Worship is required for all youth in Confirmation. It is a great alternative to Sunday's if for some reason you can't make it on the weekend. It is a different service with upbeat music, youth led in a variety of ways and the sermon will be tied to the confirmation theme for the night. It also gives you a chance to sit with your friends, hear the sermon in a more intimate and laid back fashion and take communion. We invite families to come and share this experience together.

After worship (around 7:05) large group will begin in the Great Hall. **Parents are invited and encouraged to attend this time.** Youth will sit in their small groups with their guides and be introduced to the lesson for the night, or another topic of devotion. We will go over announcements for the month and talk about other upcoming events. The evenings lesson will also be introduced during this time.

Around 7:20 small groups will be dismissed into their meeting areas to go over the evening's lesson more in-depth and sharing with one another how God is interacting in their lives.

When small groups are dismissed a conversational class begins for parents. Topics are to assist you in the faith journey of yourself and your student.

At 8:00 class is over, parents and youth can meet up. The easiest place to meet or to park is in the south eastern parking lot near the car drop off area. (On Family Nights we will end at 8:15)

Curriculum

Since small groups are composed of 1st and 2nd year students our curriculum works on a two year rotation. **Year One** covers the Old Testament and parts of Small Catechism. **Year Two** looks at the New Testament, the rest of the Small Catechism and worship. For 2008-2009 we will be in year two.

Once youth complete these two years they move onto the Sr. High group. We expect they attend Sr. High Sunday School at 9:00, attend the freshman retreat and then the Affirmation of Baptism Service, usually the second weekend in October.

Bethany will supply the following tools for the ministry:

Study Bible, Caring Adults to journey with the youth, all curriculum and materials needed to carry it out. **You are to bring your Bible every week to class. It is your text book, your map quest on your journey of faith.**

Saved By Grace Program Dates for the 2008-2009

Confirmation Class:

Wednesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm

Sept. 17, 2008- May 13, 2009

No Class: Nov. 26. Dec. 17, 24, 31, Jan. 7, Feb. 25 and April 8

Sunday School: Spotlight

Sundays 9:00-10:15am

Starting September 7, 2008

7th Grade Retreat:

September 19-20, 2008, at Bethany Lutheran Church

Running 6:00pm -10:00pm Friday, 8:00am- noon Saturday

8th grade Retreat:

October 17-18, 2008, at Bethany Lutheran Church

Running 6:00pm -10:00pm Friday, 8:00am- noon Saturday

Middle School Youth Gathering

Registration Due: October 26th

Date: January 16-18, 2009

Lenten Mentoring Program

Mandatory Parent, Mentor, and Confirmand meeting on Wed.,
February 18, 2009

Need mentors' name by Dec 1, 2008

Sky Ranch Confirmation Camp:

The Bethany week will be July 27th-Aug 1st, 2009. Registration information will be out in November and we must register by December 31st.

Lenten Mentoring Ministry

What is it?

The Lenten Mentor Ministry pairs individual confirmands with individual adults in the congregation and beyond in order to discuss faith and life issues and experience the Lenten journey together.

What is the purpose?

Lenten mentoring is intended to:

- ✧ Expand each confirmand's circle of trusted adults in the congregation who will care about them and listen to them.
- ✧ Enable each confirmand to learn and see how another adult (besides one's parents) lives out the Christian faith
- ✧ Offer each confirmand a personalized learning opportunity during the period of Lent
- ✧ Involve broader adult participation in the Confirmation learning process and the lives of youth

How does it work?

Confirmands will ask an adult to be their faith mentor during Lent by **DECEMBER 1, 2008**, and complete the Mentor Information Sheet and return it to the Confirmation Office. On Wednesday, February 18, 2009, the faith mentors, confirmands, and the confirmand's parents meet for an orientation/kickoff to the program. Then during the Lenten season each confirmand/mentor pair will meet for a "guided discussion" on faith and life issues. Mentor pairings may meet after the Wednesday Lent worship service or at another mutually agreeable time that has been cleared by the mentor's parents.

Who can be a Mentor?

Each confirmand is free to choose any adult to be their mentor who is:

1. an active member of Bethany Lutheran Church or another Christian congregation;
2. at least 21 years of age; (unless an older sibling)
3. not their parent or relative; (unless an older sibling)
4. someone they see as a good example of a Christian life style;
5. someone with whom they feel comfortable having "guided discussions" ;

Examples might be: the parent of someone in your small group, a former Sunday school teacher, a friend of your family, a neighbor, etc.