

Saved by Grace

CONFIRMATION MINISTRY

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH



2009-2010

Program Handbook

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God” Ephesians 2:8

Table of Contents

What is Confirmation?	Pg 3
What is Confirmation at Bethany?	Pg 4
Program Requirements	Pg 5-6
Student Responsibilities.	Pg 7
Parent Responsibilities	Pg 7
Congregation Responsibilities	Pg 8
Memory Work	Pg 9
Calendar Dates	Pg 10
Lenten Mentoring	Pg 11
Confirmation Family Style	Pg 12-13
Remember 5—4—3	Pg 13

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.

What is Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism?

CONFIRMATION IS THE FULFILLMENT OF PROMISES:

It is a time for parents of adolescents to fulfill the promises made at baptism in partnership with the whole faith community, the promise 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

CONFIRMATION IS SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

It is a time to 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.

CONFIRMATION IS RELATIONSHIPS:

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.

CONFIRMATION IS 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.

CONFIRMATION IS A STEP ON THE LIFE-LONG JOURNEY

It is NOT a journey toward a “graduation,” but another step on the life-long journey of faith that extends from birth to death, which is why we call this faith formation.

What is Confirmation at Bethany?

- ◆ *Saved by Grace*, the confirmation program at Bethany is a family program. Parents are expected to actively participate.
- ◆ *Saved by Grace* is for 7th and 8th grade youth that begins the fall of 7th grade and ends with the Rite of Confirmation in the fall of 9th grade.
- ◆ Confirmation meets Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 beginning in September to early May.
- ◆ Bethany uses the *Here We Stand* curriculum from Augsburg Fortress. We use music, games, presentations, object lessons and multi-media to allow youth and parents to "experience" the key theme of the evening. Pastors teach these large group sessions.
- ◆ Following the large group presentation, youth meet in small groups of 8 youth to discuss the topic and how it relates to life. They meet with youth of their own age to check-in, share highs & lows and pray together. Each group is lead by one or two guides.
- ◆ Bethany's two year curriculum cycle covers The Sacraments, The New and Old Testaments, Lutheran theology and doctrine, and the Small Catechism.
- ◆ Learning Materials Provided: NRSV Lutheran Study Bible, Luther's Small Catechism, Lutheran Handbook and Taking Faith Home Devotion Sheets.

Saved By Grace Program Requirements

ATTENDANCE: Attend confirmation lessons and worship.

- Attend 80%. That means you can miss 5 Wednesdays before a serious conversation needs to happen about your commitment to confirmation and its place in your life.
- If you are absent for a class, you need to complete the homework found on the web or given to you by your guide within 2 weeks of the absence

FAMILY NIGHTS: Attend Family Nights with at least one parent. Family nights are Oct. 7, Nov 11, Dec. 9, Jan 13, April 14, and May 12.

SUNDAYS: Students are expected to attend worship the Sunday morning program for Middle School.

HOME DEVOTIONS: Parents lead your family in the practice of 4-Key Family Devotions utilizing the Taking Faith Home Devotions.

LENTEN MENTORING: During Lent, youth meet with a Lenten Mentor to discuss faith and life issues. Youth choose their own mentors. See page 11

WORSHIP DIARIES: 10 worship diaries per year/20 total.

- Whatever is not completed one year will be carried over to the next year.
- You may do sermon notes at other churches when visiting

SERVICE HOURS: Complete 24 hours of service.

- Fill out Service Hours Form to reflect on your service experience and make sure your hours are recorded.
- Service hours can be done at church or community events. These hours can be used for school or other activities.

ACOLYTE SERVICE: Acolyte 4-5 times a year.

- Choose your Sundays at the Confirmation Fair and Orientation September 9.
- Two of your Sundays can be at the 9:00 service, the rest must be at 8:00 or 10:30.

MEMORY WORK: Complete all memory work by the end of your 8th grade year. Recite it to your small group guide. See page 9 for a list of memory work.

RETREATS: Grade level retreats are planned to support faith formation in our confirmation ministry.

- 7th grade students attend the Law and Gospel Retreat, October 2 & 3 and learn to acolyte.
- 8th Grade attend the Apostle's Creed Retreat Oct 2 & 3 and the My Faith Retreat Sunday, April 25, 2010.

YOUTH GATHERING: Attend the Rocky Mountain Synod Youth Gathering at least once, either your 7th or 8th grade year. Many students go as 7th grade and want to attend again.

CONFIRMATION CAMP: Attend Confirmation Camp at Sky Ranch the summer after 7th or 8th grade. Getting away for a week to spend time with God and each other in a beautiful setting creates memories that last a life time.

FAITH STATEMENT/PERSONAL BIBLE VERSE: Youth write a personal statement of faith at the My Faith Retreat in the spring of their 8th grade year. They also choose a Bible verse that has personal meaning.

INTERVIEWS: Each youth meets with one of the Pastors, faith formation Staff or small group guides to discuss confirmation and their faith at the My Faith Retreat.

CONFIRMATION DINNER OF HONOR: The night before your Affirmation of Baptism in the fall your 9th grade year.

SPECIAL NOTE: Confirmation is not a sacrament in the Lutheran church. It is not required. It is an optional series of lessons, music, service, relationships and fellowship. Expectations have been set to preserve the integrity of this ministry of faith formation, the sharing of God's word and the building of Christian relationships. Therefore, when a family registers for the Bethany Lutheran Church Confirmation ministry, the responsibilities and expectations are no longer optional.

As with any set of expectations involved in a church function, the purpose of completion is not to finish, but to learn from the experiences that lead up to completion. Nothing is absolute, and special arrangements can always be made, but we need and expect the cooperation and support of parents and guardians in helping us enforce our requirements, thereby helping us reach our goal of well-educated youth who are genuinely excited about Christ and the church.

Please feel free to discuss any questions or problems with one of the Pastors or with Joni Grundman, the Faith Formation Minister of Family Ministry.

Student Responsibilities

- ✓ Attend Confirmation class weekly and bring Bible
- ✓ Actively participate in small group
- ✓ If absent, complete homework within two weeks
- ✓ Attend Sunday mornings, either worship or class
- ✓ Acolyte as scheduled
- ✓ Participate in 4-key Home Devotions with your family
- ✓ Select an Adult Mentor by December 1
- ✓ Attend scheduled retreats, camps and gatherings
- ✓ Be faithful to the terms of your Confirmation and Small Group Covenants
- ✓ Pray for this ministry and your involvement in it. Be an example of Christ in the World

Parent Responsibilities

- ✓ Worship with your family regularly and participate in the parent class on Wednesdays during your youth's small group time.
- ✓ Attend Family Nights for confirmation
- ✓ Encourage and support your child's attendance at confirmation, retreats, gathering
- ✓ Get your child to confirmation on time
- ✓ Get your child to church to acolyte on their scheduled days or help them find a substitute.
- ✓ If your child is absent, remind them to finish their homework and turn it in promptly
- ✓ Lead your family in 4-Key Family Devotions on a regular basis
- ✓ Support the program by volunteering in some capacity
- ✓ Seek support in the nurturing of your child's faith development.
- ✓ Pray for this ministry and your involvement in it. Be an example of Christ in the world.

Congregation Responsibilities

- ✓ Present the best ministry possible to actively involve adolescents and their parents.
- ✓ Encourage families to communicate and share faith in their daily lives, challenge them, uplift them, and motivate them.
- ✓ Train small group guides and program volunteers.
- ✓ Value each student and respect the diversity of each individual in their emotional/physical development, their faith journey and their backgrounds.
- ✓ Model faithful behavior by being a AAA adult - authentic, affirming and available.
- ✓ Greet and acknowledge confirmands and their families.
- ✓ Meet and get to know the parents/guardians of the confirmands
- ✓ Pray for the Confirmation Ministry, parents, students and program. Be an example of Christ in the world.



Memory Work

WHEN DO WE HAVE TO HAVE IT ALL MEMORIZED?

You will have 2 years to do your memory work! You need to have it completed by May of your 8th grade year! Two years goes by fast however, try to get as much done during 7th grade, you'll be glad later!

WHO DO I RECITE MY MEMORY WORK TO?

Recite it to your small group guide. Keep record in the back of your memory book. We keep records too, but sometimes we make mistakes. It is always good to keep track yourself

WHAT DO I NEED TO MEMORIZE?

1. The Lord's Prayer.
2. The Apostles' Creed
3. The 10 Commandments in order.
4. The Old Testament books in order.
5. The New Testament books in order.

7TH GRADE ONLY

The 23rd Psalm

10 memory verses (3 from the Memory Packet and 7 of your own choosing)

8TH GRADE ONLY

Luther's Explanations of the Three Articles of the Apostles' Creed

6 memory verses (3 from the Memory Packet and 3 of your own choosing)

See the Memory Work Booklet for more information.

Saved By Grace Dates for the 2009-2010

Confirmation Class:

Wednesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm

Sept. 9, 2009- May 12, 2010

No Class: Nov. 25, Dec. 16, 23, 30, Jan. 6, Feb. 17 and March 31. There is no regular class on these Wednesdays, however we ask that you attend worship on Thanksgiving Eve, Ash Wednesday and during Holy week.

Family Nights:

Oct. 7, Nov 11, Dec. 9, Jan 13, April 14, and May 12

Sunday School:

Sundays 9:00-10:15am

Starting September 13, 2009

Confirmation Retreats:

7th & 8th Grade: October 2 & 3, 2009 at Bethany Lutheran Church

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

8th Grade: Sunday, April 25, 2010 at Bethany Lutheran Church. 2:00p.m. - 5:00p.m.

Middle School Youth Gathering:

Registration Due: October 28th

Date: January 15-17, 2010

Lenten Mentoring Program:

Mandatory Parent, Mentor, and Confirmand meeting on Wed., February 10, 2010

Need mentors' name by Dec 1, 2009

Sky Ranch Confirmation Camp:

The Bethany week will be July, 11-16 2010. We must register by December 1st.

Lenten Mentoring Ministry

WHAT IS IT:

The Lenten Mentor Ministry pairs individual confirmands with individual adults 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 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 ask an adult to be their faith mentor for Lent by **DECEMBER 1, 2009**. Complete the Mentor Information Sheet and return it to the Confirmation Office. On Wednesday, February 10, 2010, the faith mentors, confirmands, and their parents meet for orientation. 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 any Christian congregation;
2. at least 18 years of age; (unless approved)
3. not their parent or 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, godparent or grandparent etc.

Confirmation Family Style

Whether parents know it or not, they are the most influential faith educators in their child's life. God knows this and intends for parents to pass faith on to their children. Martin Luther understood this as well and created a tool to facilitate conversation, the Small Catechism. Here at Bethany, we also believe this and are committed to helping your family talk about faith. This commitment is shown in the family nights each month, family ministry program, 4-Key Family Devotions and the various Christian Education opportunities held on Sundays and Wednesdays. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to equip yourself and continue your own faith education.

Invitation to Large Group:

We invite all adults to join the large group in the Great Hall. During that time, we give announcements, celebrate happenings and teach the main lesson. Pastor Ron and Pastor Ruth Ann, and Caitlin Trussell, our new pastoral intern will be teaching. 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.

Parent Class:

Immediately following the large group experience is the parent class for all parents of confirmands. The class runs concurrent with small group time. A variety of subjects will be taught by Caitlin Trussell, Pastoral Intern. They are informative, interactive and build community. A place for you to connect with other parents of youth.

Family Night for Confirmation:

Once each month we have a Family Night. On those evenings each youth with at least one parent, grandparent, or guardian are expected to attend confirmation together. Through conversation, activities and experiences you will share your faith, learn, and struggle together with what it means to be a Christian. 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 Lutheran Theology on Family Night. Great conversations await you and your student! On October 7th is a special presentation of the Bonhoeffer drama followed by discussion.

We will end these evenings at 8:15pm.

Those dates are:

Oct7

Nov 11

Dec 9

Jan 13

April 14

May 12

Parent Team Volunteer Opportunities:

It takes Christian adults to raise Christian youth. The church cannot provide a dynamic program without you. We ask parents to prayerfully consider how you can use your gifts in this ministry. We ask each parent to volunteer for one aspect of the program. We can all share the load and keep it light for everyone. Please consider volunteering and be an AAA Christian (Available, Authentic, Affirming). See the Parent Team Form for a description of all the volunteer opportunities available to you!

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