



Preparing for your Affirmation of Baptism

2023-2024 Confirmation Handbook

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Bismarck, ND

Purpose: Love all, serve all, welcome all as Christ

Lord of Life wants youth to know they are loved and valued as members of this congregation and the body of Christ, so that they can grow to love and serve God by loving and serving others.

This is a program for confirmation that has self-guided, large group and small group components. *

**Special thanks to Rev. Le Anne Clausen de Montes and the Cabinet of First Congregational Church (UCC), Clinton, IA for the idea and model that this is partially based upon.*

As you work through our four years of confirmation (grades 6, 7, 8, & 9), it is our hope that you will feel prepared to make public affirmation of your baptism, deepen your faith, and start you on a journey that will last your lifetime. At your baptism, these responsibilities were entrusted to the adults who surrounded you; parents, sponsors/godparents, and the congregation in which you were baptized.

1. To live with them among God's people
2. To bring them to the word of God and the holy supper
3. To teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments
4. To place in their hands the holy scriptures
5. To nurture them in faith and prayer

These promises were made so YOU could learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made and to work for justice and peace. **

***See ELW (Evangelical Lutheran Worship) page 228 – these are directly taken from the baptismal service.*

When you have completed the expectations of the confirmation classroom program at Lord of Life and portions of this booklet that are yours to do on your own, it will be up to you to further those baptismal promises by saying “YES” to the promises made for you at baptism. HOWEVER, you never have to do any of this alone!

Are you ready to further your faith journey? We hope so! This is not just a checklist so that you can “graduate” from church school it is a way to find out for yourself what you believe and how God fits into your life day in and day out. We hope you will fall deeply in love with God and know that God loves you deeply!
Greetings and gratitude,

Thank you for being part of the Lord of Life Lutheran confirmation program!

Parents, bringing your child to confirmation is fulfilling part of those baptismal promises you made for your child, to bring them to the house of God and to teach them the faith, way to go! It is our goal to create an environment of learning and experiencing God at work in our world today. Growing in faith is a lifelong process and God is already growing in each of us. This year's confirmation program may look a little different with our emphasis not only on classroom learning but also in experiencing God's presence out in our community and world. Parents, we ask that you engage your child in this program so that you can support and encourage them along this journey.

Students, we will be engaging you with the core foundation of our faith, through the Scriptures, Creed, Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. We will also walk with you in your questions and wonderings about God. Your small group leaders will be with you each week to build trusting relationships and a sense of community where you belong, are valued, and loved. We ask that you participate in the activities and events planned for confirmation, this will provide you with the most growth in faith.

God's love for us is so vast and inclusive, our God is not far off but very near. Jesus Christ came that we might be awakened to God's never-ending love and the Holy Spirit has been given to us to guide, inspire and transform us.

We are honored and blessed to have the opportunity to grow together in learning about God's love for us through Jesus Christ.

Pastor John Streccius

We will as a church and in our education programs strive to live with our purpose and guiding principles in all that we say and do.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND

Adopted by council on July 18, 2023

Purpose: Love all, serve all, welcome all as Christ.

Guiding Principles:

Watch us at our best and you will see us:

- **Deepening our faith** as we learn and grow together to become more like Christ.

“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” Ephesians 4:15

- **Loving and caring** for one another by being Christ to each other.

“Love one another just as I have loved you” John 13:34

- **Welcoming and listening** by creating respectful space for diverse people to explore faith together.

“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

- **Connecting to our neighbors** by building meaningful relationships and partnerships.

Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.” Romans 15:2

- **Giving generously** by joining God at work among and around us.

“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:8

- **Sharing Christ’s love** through word and deed.

“Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:14

Goals of the confirmation program:

- to share the Love of Jesus with each student,
- encourage them to share that love with others,
- learn about serving others in God's name,
- create relationships with other faithful people,
- encourage youth to take part in the life of the church and our community
- To be ready to proclaim their faith through the promises that will be made at their Affirmation of Faith (Fall of 10th Grade Year)
 - 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
 - To strive for justice and peace in all the earth

Scope of Learning:

- The Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, the creeds, and the Lutheran Sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion)
- Become familiar with the history of the Lutheran Church, the Reformation and Martin Luther
- Embrace the concept of Grace through Faith
- Be able to talk about forgiveness, being forgiven and forgiving others
- Have a working knowledge of the Bible, Old and New Testaments

Four Year Sequence

6th Grade Fall

- Getting to know the Bible
- Hebrew Scriptures (The Old Testament)
- Finding the Key OT stories
- What do each of the 4 Gospels say about the Birth of Christ
- Attend LYO in October

6th Grade Spring

- New Testament Overview
- Scripture messages about Trusting God
- Luther's Morning and Evening Prayer (What's prayer got to do with it?)
- Lenten Focus (changes each year)
- Jesus' Death and Resurrection
- Who is Saul/Paul?
- Choose a "life verse" – Paint a rock for the rock garden

7/8 Fall 2023 – Old Testament (YEAR A)

- Creation
- Exodus
- 10 Commandments
- Attend LYO in October

7/8 Spring 2024 – New Testament (YEAR A)

- Lenten Focus (changes each year)
- Acts – Living in Community
- Attend Church of the Cross in July (7th Grade Year)
- Attend an ELCA church camp of your choice (8th Grade Year)

7/8 – Fall (YEAR B)

- Lutheran History
- Grace
- Forgiveness
- Attend LYO

7/8 – Spring (YEAR B)

- Psalms
- Lord's Prayer
- Attend Church of the Cross in July (7th Grade Year)
- Attend an ELCA church camp of your choice (8th Grade Year)

9th Fall - New this year is that we will have a 9-12th grade Wednesday program that follows the ELCA Youth Gathering Focus for the trip next July. All grades are welcome to attend, the focus for 9th grade will be about developing a faith that endures rather than things to memorize. There will be areas of focus that may include the following:

- Prayer/spiritual practices
- Baptism
- Holy Communion
- Attend LYO

9th Spring

- Creed
- Service to others
- Winter Retreat
- Create and execute individual service projects

9th Grade Spring and Summer

- Mentor/mentee program
- Grace/Faith/Bible
- 5 Promises

Special notes for 2023-2024

6th Grade students will have a class separately from the older students. 7th and 8th Grade students will be in Year A together. The 9th grade will meet separately along with other high school students as they prepare to attend the ELCA Youth Gathering. **PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED SYLLABUS FOR COMPLETE DETAILS**

In addition to classroom learning and small group time there will be other expectations and opportunities for learning and growth. This is where your journey is all about you and your interests and time. Some of the following activities will be done together in class, some in small groups and some will be done at home with your parents or guardians. Remember you have 4 years to complete this work!

Worship Leadership

Assist Leaders with any of these tasks a total of 6 times over 3 years

- Serve as a greeter
- Serve as an usher
- Serve as a reader
- Serve as an assistant minister
- Participate in choir (rehearsals and worship)
- Assist Altar Guild in Communion Duties
- Play an instrument or sing a solo

In the boxes below write what you did to assist with worship and what you learned or experienced.

Congregational Life

- Attend a Council meeting
- Help with our Little Food Pantry
- Assist with Church School
- Assist with VBS
- Attend a committee meeting
- Accompany a Pastor on a member visit
- Help with Coffee Hour
- Help with a Fellowship Event
- Help the Quilters tie quilts or pack and ship
- Help the Property Team with a project or yard work

Complete 6 of these tasks – you may repeat up to two

In the boxes below write what you did to participate in the life of our congregation and what you learned or experienced.

Community Service

Complete 3 tasks from this list (these may be done as a small group and your small group may have other ideas for service, talk to one of the pastors for any ideas your group may produce!)

- Learn about LIRS or LDR, write/share a reflection
- Learn about Bismarck Global Neighbors, write/share a reflection
- Visit and learn about/or serve at Ministry on the Margins, write/share a reflection
- Visit and learn about/or serve at Heavens Helpers, write/share a reflection
- Visit the Dream Center, volunteer, if possible, write/share a reflection
- Participate in the Out of Darkness Walk for Suicide Awareness & Prevention, write/share a reflection
- Participate in another fundraising event/walk, write/share a reflection
- Visit and Learn about the Dakota Humane Society or Furry Friends Animal Rescue, write/share a reflection

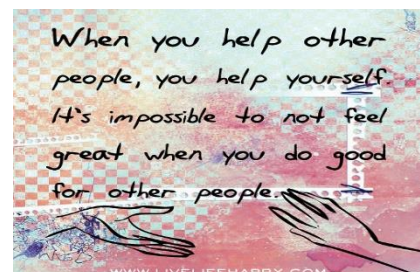
In the boxes below write what you did to learn about service and something you learned or experienced.

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THEN...

Create and lead your own service project with the help of our congregation. Present your experience in May of your 9th grade year.



Financial Stewardship

Complete the following:

- Learn how to read a church budget and ask questions
- Learn how churches receive and use money
- Learn about pledges, offering and tithes
- Learn about budgeting, with Money Matters and the Share, Save, Spend, Invest Model (Thrivent)
- **In the boxes below write what you learned or experienced for each item.**

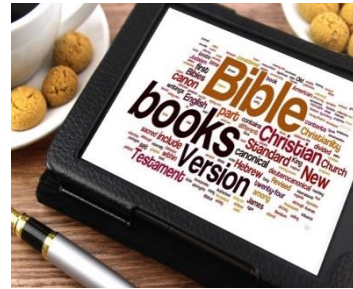
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Foundations of Faith

For learning about the Bible and our Lutheran Faith, we will work on these together as a confirmation group the most. We will use our time together in large group to go through these things. Remember we have 4 years to complete these!

- God
- Jesus (Life and Ministry)
- The Holy Spirit
- Salvation
- Forgiveness
- Grace
- Worship
- Sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion
- Old Testament
- New Testament
- The Ten Commandments
- The Creeds
- Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer
- Psalms



Lutheran Theology & History

Before you are confirmed, we expect that you will know:

- The difference between the Old and New Testaments
- How to find a Biblical passage and how to cite one.
- Who was Martin Luther?
- What does Protestant mean?
- What was the Reformation? When did it start?
- The difference between Law and Gospel?
- What makes a sacrament a sacrament?
- What is a denomination? Give examples of other Christian denominations.
- Lutherans Sing! What did Martin Luther say about singing?



In the boxes below write a few words about what you learned about the above topics.

Understanding the Wider Church

Complete 6 of these tasks:

- Explore the ELCA and Synod Websites
 - www.elca.org and www.wndsynod.org
- Find and read one of the ELCA's social statements
- Learn about the ELCA colleges and seminaries, tell the Pastors about one of each
- Learn about synods and regions in the ELCA
- Learn about Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Federation, and Lutheran World Relief (how does LOL support these organizations?)
- Attend a non-Lutheran worship service then write/share a reflection (you can use Faith-in-Action notes)
- Participate in a synod event (Lutheran Youth Gathering, Synod Assembly, or a camping experience – the pastors can help you find something to attend)

In the boxes below write what looked up and what you learned or experienced.

Living a Life of Faith

Complete these tasks:

- Stump the Pastor: Bring in two questions that you think are difficult to answer (you have 3x5 cards in your folder, you can do this anytime you wish).
- Interview a family member about their faith journey and ask questions (use the Faith in Action form).
- Interview a non-family member about their faith journey and ask questions (use the Faith in Action form).

In the boxes below write what you did as well as what you learned or experienced.



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Prayer and Devotional Life

Complete at least 4 of these tasks:

- Visit and Walk the Labyrinth at University of Mary (this could be a small group activity?) or find another walking and praying activity (there are even finger labyrinths!)
- Learn about different ways to pray
- Try Centering Prayer (the pastors have information on this)
- Try Lectio Divina (the pastors have information on this too!)
- Read/Pray with a printed resource, like a daily devotional – check out Christ in Our Home – these are available at church
- Read/Pray with an online resource or app, like “Pray as you Go”
- Learn and pray Luther’s morning and evening prayers

In the boxes below write what you did to expand your prayer life and what you learned or experienced.

Final Preparation

YOU ARE ALMOST FINISHED!

Before your Affirmation of Faith in the fall of your 10th grade year you will...

- Meet with one of the pastors to talk about what you have learned and what you believe.
- Meet with your mentor at least 4x before you affirm your faith to discuss faith and grace in daily life (more information about this will be given to you in your 9th grade year).
- Celebrate that you are now considered a full member of the congregation, able to vote and take part as a leader in the church.
- Continue growing in faith. It is a lifelong journey.

