



Confirmation Handbook 2023-2024

St. Michael Lutheran Church

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What is Confirmation Class?

- Confirmation Class is a way the church helps parents teach the faith to their youth.
- Confirmation Class is a way for youth to learn what we believe as Christians about God, His Word, and the world around us.
- Confirmation class focuses on the six chief (main) parts of Martin Luther's catechism.
- Confirmation is the beginning of the road for youth to take responsibility for their life of faith.

Confirmation is not a sacrament in that it is not instituted by Christ and it has no physical element to which God has attached His Word and promise of grace and forgiveness. Even so, Confirmation is an ancient rite of the church that affirms one's infant baptism. The instruction that leads up to it is important for Spiritual growth and development toward more mature faith, and it helps in preparation for worthy reception of the Lord's Supper.

Purpose

Confirmation Class is designed to help families instruct young people in the basics of the Christian faith as set forth in Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism an explanation of life taken from the Bible. The curriculum helps create a heart for Christ and for people, and equips students to live a life of service to God and their fellow man. We strive to go beyond simply gaining knowledge to the point of helping young people have a more personal relationship with God and apply Biblical teachings to their everyday life. We seek to accomplish this purpose in a fun and creative way by journaling, reciting important Bible and Catechism passages together, having a large group presentation of the main topic, and then following that up with breakout group discussion.

Why should my youth go to confirmation class and be confirmed?

Some churches stress the importance of everyone making a choice for Jesus. In the Lutheran church, our understanding is that God chooses us, giving us faith as we hear the Good News of what Jesus has done for us. And for many of us, this Gospel and the resulting faith came through the sacrament of baptism. Confirmation class gives youth the understanding of what God has already done for them. It helps youth see that what we believe as Lutherans is in fact taught in the Bible. When youth are confirmed, they are publicly saying they believe what they learned in confirmation class is biblical; are affirming the faith God gave them in their baptism; and are publicly promising to stay in the Christian faith all their lives.

What do we believe and teach in confirmation class?

Confirmation class is a three year program in which we learn the six chief parts of Luther's catechism.

Year A - Ten Commandments and Law/Gospel

Year B - Lord's Prayer, the Bible, and the Reformation

Year C - Baptism and the Creeds (**THIS YEAR**)

Every year, we include special sessions on the Lord's Supper in preparation for attendance at Holy Communion. Since all confirmands must take this instruction at some point in the three years of their instruction, we now include these Lord's Supper lessons as part of the Confirmation classes during Lent.

Expectations

So that the above purpose might be met, it is expected that students will . . .

- **Worship** our Triune God faithfully, regularly receiving His gifts of grace and forgiveness, and giving Him the praise that He is due;
- **Commune** regularly and faithfully at the Lord's altar (after completing instruction and at a time agreeable to their parents and pastor);
- **Participate** in church Sunday School classes as able;
- **Attend class** sessions regularly and cheerfully, inform the teacher in advance whenever unable to attend, and make up any missed work;
- **Actively participate** in class by listening carefully, responding appropriately, and giving undivided attention to the various class activities (pastors may restrict use of cell phones or other electronic devices as needed);
- **Enjoy regular fellowship**, Bible study and service events provided by youth ministry;
- **Memorize** and internalize sections of Scripture and the Small Catechism as assigned;
- **Take part in special events** such as Confirmation Camp and Concordia Youth Gathering (at CUAA). Youth should go to at least one camp throughout the three years (these events are so much fun that we are sure that you will want to go to more);
- **Participate in service events** throughout the school year, including such things as acolyting in worship throughout the year;
- **Complete** three years of instruction (or equivalent as determined by confirmation leaders);
- **Complete the writing project** on the topic of "Being a Christian" (in the 3rd year);
- **Read a portion of this essay/project** to the congregation on the day of confirmation;
- **Have an Oral Examination** to demonstrate what they have learned to their family, and to the congregation (completed in the 3rd year, a study guide will be provided for preparation); and
- **Participate in a family conversation** with the pastor at the end of the third year of instruction.

After the students have been confirmed, it is our desire that they would be . . .

- Active members of the Lutheran Church, worshiping and communing regularly
- Responsible stewards of their time, talent, and treasure, cheerfully giving a first-fruit proportion of their income to the Lord's work,
- Active participates in Bible study, both corporately and privately,
- Witnesses to their Christian faith as the Holy Spirit provides opportunity to tell other people the Good News about Jesus.

What's the role of a parent/guardian in confirmation?

- Be active in confirmation class from 6:00 pm - 6:30 pm. By being aware of the class topics you can have family talks about the topics.
- Review with youth the key Bible verses and portions of Luther's Small Catechism.
- Work with Pastor Maske to schedule when it is best to have your youth acolyte or serve in other capacities.
- Encourage faith growth and development in your youth.

Absence policy

Attendance is key in our confirmation process. Students are expected to be present for all classes and events, communicating to Pastor Maske in advance any absences or special circumstances that impede attendance. If students are absent from class it is up to the parents to teach their students the information that they missed.

If the number of absences during the year exceeds four, the pastors may require the participant to repeat the year.

Inclement weather policy

If Portage Public Schools (and thus also St. Michael Lutheran School) is closed or dismissed early for inclement weather, the class or event on that day will be cancelled. If the weather gets bad in the afternoon on days in which schools were not closed in the morning, the church will send out an email by 4:00pm to let families know that class is canceled.

Materials needed

- Luther's Small Catechism*
- Confirmation journal*
- ESV Bible (*if you do not have one, see Pastor Maske*).
- Something to write with

* They will be gifted to your student along with a confirmation class binder of information and a canvas bag in which to put everything. Please bring the bag with all these items to class every time.

Main communication is through email. Please contact Pastor Maske at dmaske@mightymessengers.org with any questions that you may have.

If Pastor Maske is gone for his Navy Chaplain duty (as is expected for part of fall 2023), contact Pastor Toman at jtoman@mightymessengers.org.

What is the Confirmation Class Schedule?

Wednesday Evenings

- 5:45-6:05 Greeting/Attendance and Journal Time ...in the Sanctuary
6:05-6:10 Prayer... in the Sanctuary
6:10-6:35 Lesson from the Pastor and Memory Practice... in the Sanctuary
6:35-7:55 Breakout Group Time, ending with separate dismissals...
 8th grade in the Youth Room
 6th-7th girls in a classroom
 6th-7th boys in a classroom
6:55-7:00 Closing Prayer (together in gym or communication center)
7:00 Pick Up Time

Adjusted Wednesday Schedule for Advent and Lent

In Lent and Advent, Confirmation class starts at 5:30 to account for the special congregational worship services that occur from 6:30 to 7:00 in the sanctuary:

- 5:00-5:30 Meal in the Gym (typical weeks, optional for Confirmation youth)
5:30-5:45 Greeting/Attendance and Journal Time ...in the Sanctuary
5:45-6:05 Lesson from the Pastor and Memory Practice... in the Sanctuary
6:05-6:25 Breakout Group Time
6:25-6:30 Time to find families and get ready for worship
6:30-7:00 Worship in the Sanctuary