

Confirmation Handbook 2017 2018

WELCOME TO CONFIRMATION 2017—2018!

Welcome to the confirmation ministry of St. Martin's Lutheran Church. Your congregation cares about you, that you experience the story of Jesus Christ, and that you are a vital part of his Body, the Church. Confirmation is part of our care for you.

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

Our Lutheran Church describes it this way:

“Confirmation is a pastoral and educational ministry of the Church which helps the baptized child, through Word and Sacrament, to identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission.”

For us at St. Martin's, this means that confirmation is more a process of growth than one event. It takes place over several years through faith formation, which starts with Sunday School and culminates with a concentration in the middle school years on the confirmation curriculum. Worship attendance and service projects are part of being confirmed in faith.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

When our children were baptized, we made the following promise in these or similar words:

In Christian love you have presented these children for Holy Baptism. You should, therefore, faithfully bring them to the service of God's house and teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. As they grow in years, you should place in their hands the Holy Scriptures and provide for their instruction in the Christian faith, that, living in the covenant of their Baptism and in communion with the Church, they may lead godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ.

As parents, encouraging and supporting your students in our confirmation program is a fulfillment of these baptismal promises. Recent studies have also shown that **as parents you still have a profound influence on the faith life of your children, even more so than the pastor.** We at St. Martin's believe that there needs to be a strong partnership between the home and congregation for the faith formation of children and youth.

So, **as parents you play an important role** in the confirmation ministry of our congregation.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation classes are held on Wednesdays. They will be from **6:00 - 7:30 P.M.** (Note the earlier starting time.) We will be studying the Bible, our Lutheran heritage, doing missions - service projects, and having small group time. Each of these is an important component of faith formation.

WEATHER POLICY

If school has been released early or called off due to weather, there will be no confirmation class. If weather becomes bad after school hours, attempts will be made to contact students, or you may call the church (798-2777) to see if classes are cancelled.

IN ADDITION

Students will be required to attend 18 Sunday worship services throughout the year. During Lent, confirmation will begin at 5:00 and end at 6:25, just in time to enjoy the soup supper and head to evening worship at 7:00 P.M.

CONFIRMATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS 2017-2018

The confirmation program at St. Martin's is designed to encourage students to experience several aspects of the Christian life. The Wednesday evening classes, along with worship attendance and missions - service projects, make up the requirements of the confirmation program.

CONFIRMATION CURRICULUM

This year we will focus on reading and discussing Bible stories, beginning with the Exodus story and culminating with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The emphasis is to improve biblical literacy, so students can recall key stories of the Bible.

CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS (in addition to class attendance)

- I. WORSHIP ATTENDANCE (must attend as a family as often as possible – 7th and 8th grade students will complete 18 worship outlines, signed by a caring adult that attended worship with the confirmand.)
- II. MISSIONS - SERVICE PROJECTS (20 hours total for 7th and 8th grade students – to be recorded by families and turned in upon completion.)
- III. FAITH STATEMENT
All 8th grade students will be writing a statement of faith. Parents are encouraged to assist their confirmation student with his/her faith statement for the Affirmation of Baptism. There will be two work nights for students to receive additional help from their small group leader and Pastor Kirsten. Faith Statements are to be submitted for publication by Friday, April 20. Confirmation Sunday will be Sunday, April 29.

WORSHIP

Worship attendance is vital to being a Christian. We believe God comes to us in the Word and Sacrament and "where two or three" are gathered in the name of Jesus. God created us to be in communion with God and one another.

You are required to attend worship services throughout the confirmation year. Please complete the worship outline form and discuss the service together.

Parents, you will be responsible for getting your student to church and initiating discussion of the form completed during worship.

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Here at St. Martin's we believe that "church" is more than what happens in our building. Home is church, too. Family devotions are extremely important when it comes to nurturing the faith of our children. Part of our confirmation ministry is to encourage and enable families to develop a devotional life. It may be helpful to set a weekly time/place for those to happen. In addition to these set times for devotions, other practices such as meal time and bed time prayers are also great ways of encouraging a devotional life. This is also a great time for sharing highs and lows from the day.

The biggest challenges of developing a devotional life are taking that first step and feeling insecure about biblical knowledge. Use this "requirement" as a way to take that first step. Blame the pastor for making you do devotions! Also, remember that we are all learners, and we gain understanding from each other, child and adult alike.

“Best Practices in Children’s Faith Formation” - John Roberto and Katie Pfiffner

http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/best_practices_-_children_faith_formation.pdf

Best Practice 1 – Effective faith formation with children respects the way children learn today by offering learning activities that are experiential, image-rich, multi-sensory, interactive, engaging, and varied in learning style.

Best Practice 2. Effective faith formation with children provides opportunities for children to experience and imagine how their personal story is intertwined with the Bible and Christian tradition.

Best Practice 3. Faith formation with children provides an environment that allows children to encounter the living God directly. (*Sunday worship, ritual and sacraments, and retreat experiences*)

Best Practice 4. Effective faith formation with children embraces the lifecycle milestones as opportunities for nurturing the faith of children and their families in the congregation and at home.

Best Practice 5. Effective faith formation engages children and their parents in programs that involve the whole family in learning together.

Best Practice 6. Effective faith formation provides opportunities for children to practice their faith through hands-on participation in the life, ministries, and activities of the congregation.

<https://milestonesministry.org/history-of-the-four-keys/>

Four Key Faith Practices - Caring Conversations, Devotions, Ritual and Tradition, Service

2017—2018 CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

September 20	6:00	Kick-off night
September 27	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
October 4	6:00	Small Group Night
October 11	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
October 18	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
October 25	5:30	Trick-or-treating for the Hungry Missions - Service Project
November 1	6:00	Small Group Night
November 8	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
November 15	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
November 22	NO CLASS	Thanksgiving Eve Service - 7 P.M. – at St. Francis
November 29	6:00	Mission – Service Project
December 6	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
December 13	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
December 20	5:30	Christmas Caroling / Party
December 27	NO CLASS	Christmas Break
January 3	NO CLASS	Christmas Break
January 10	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
January 17	6:00	Small Group Night
January 24	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
January 31	6:00	Mission – Service Project
February 7	6:00 Class	Bible Lesson
February 14	NO CLASS	Ash Wednesday 7:00 Worship
February 21	5:00 LENT	Bible Lesson
February 28	5:00 LENT	Mission – Service Project
March 7	5:00 LENT	Small Group Night 7:00 Worship
March 14	5:00 LENT	Bible Lesson 7:00 Worship
March 21	5:00 LENT	Mission – Service Project 7:00 Worship
March 28	NO CLASS	Holy Week
April 4	6:00	End-of-the-year wrap-up, final night for everyone except 8 th graders
April 11	6:00	Work Night(s) for 8 th graders' Faith Statements
April 18	6:00	Work Night(s) for 8 th graders' Faith Statements
April 20		Faith Statement due – emailed to church office
April 29	9:00 Worship	Affirmation of Baptism – Confirmation Day