

Messiah Lutheran Church Confirmation Handbook



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
No One Travels Alone

2023-2024

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Our Mission & Values

Messiah's Mission & Values

The mission of Messiah Lutheran Church is “Connecting all people to a life of hope, rooted in Christ.”

Through this four-year confirmation program, students will learn to root themselves in Christ, grow in faith, connect with others, and learn what it means to live a life of hope in Christ.

The values of Messiah Lutheran Church are worship, learning, relationships, service, and healing.

During their four years of confirmation, students will also learn and grow in these five key areas.

What do we want to accomplish?

Confirmation is not the end of faith learning, but a step into a more mature part of one's faith life. Our goals of confirmation reflect the mission and values of Messiah and exemplify a step in the unfolding growth in faith. After completing the program, learners will...

- **Be able to summarize, in their own words, the life of Jesus Christ.** It is key that we know the story of Jesus and the hope we have in Christ.
- **Be able to illustrate the ways Jesus Christ fulfills the Old Testament and is proclaimed in the New Testament.** To better know who Jesus is, it is important to know how all Scripture tells the story of Christ.
- **Exemplify Messiah's values and a desire to be involved in the life of the church.** Confirmation is not only about gaining scriptural knowledge, but learning to actively participate in the life of the church (worship services, Christian community, Bible studies, service events, etc.).
- **Connect with family and fellow Christians.** Families and friends in Christ have a great impact on faith. It is our goal to give students a faith community to uplift them, as we also teach them to care for one another in love, as members of the Body of Christ.
- **Have a desire to exemplify and proclaim Christ's love.** Sharing the Gospel is a blessing we have as Christians, one we can exemplify through love and service to others every day.
- **Actively pursue reconciliation.** As Christians we are expected to seek the restoration of broken relationships.

Our Strategy

Confirmation leaders will offer students a variety of learning opportunities. Some of our learning strategies include home application, review quizzes, devotions, and experiential learning opportunities. Below is the outline of our strategy for accomplishing the confirmation goals previously listed.

- **5th & 6th grades: Rooted in Christ**

Students will spend two years in Scripture, learning about Christ through the Old and New Testaments. Leaders will provide curriculum that helps students grow in their understanding of Scripture, who Christ is, and the hope we have in Christ, shown throughout all of Scripture.

- **7th & 8th grades: Life of Hope**

Students will add on to their learnings from Scripture as they dive into the Catechism and other resources. Large group teachings will focus on Catechism & faith topics, and small group time will be broken down more specifically. 7th graders will get to know the Catechism more in depth as 8th graders spend time learning more about living faith out and applying learnings to daily life.

- **Experiential Learning Opportunities**

During the year, students will have several opportunities for “hands on” participation in a number of learning experiences. These may include service projects, discipleship events, worship participation, etc.

- **Required Service Hours**

Confirmation students are asked to complete a certain number of service hours depending on their grade. Service hour amounts are listed on page 10.

- **Required Confirmation Projects**

When students are required to teach others about what they have learned, it helps them grow and understand the lessons even more. 6th-8th grade students will be assigned a project to work on throughout the year and present at the end of the confirmation year. More information on these projects will be given at the parent meeting. Project assignments are as follows:

- *6th Grade: Bible Learning presentation

- *7th Grade: Service Project presentation

- *8th Grade: Faith Statement presentation

- **Parental Involvement**

It is crucial that parents actively participate in an adolescent’s Christian education. Parents must have an active role in overseeing your student’s work, taking time each week to discuss class, and sign up to serve or volunteer with youth related events.

Our Prayer

We Pray That...

At the completion of confirmation, students will have a greater desire to grow deeper in a relationship with God and their fellow believers in the church. They will also have grown in their desire to share the Gospel and light of Christ to others through their words and actions. May this time be a stepping stone for students as they spend the rest of their life striving toward a life of greater knowledge and faithfulness in Christ.

What We Expect from Students

In order to create a positive Christ-centered environment, it is necessary to ask for cooperation from all involved. Unfortunately, the negative behaviors of a few can ruin the entire experience for others. Confirmation is not just head knowledge, it is about learning how to live as a Christian. As a result, we are also concerned with students' behaviors and attitudes in and out of church. We live in a world that is tolerant of sin and yet we expect students to realize they are different because they have been called out of sin. They are *chosen*.

Exclusive cliques or relationships, negative attitudes, disrespect, inappropriate or destructive behavior, and rebellious spirit destroy community, and are not acceptable.

Come Prepared to Learn:

- Bring required materials and a positive attitude each week.
- Remain with your class at all times.
- Keep up with all classroom assignments and requirements.
- Share in discussions.

Respect Other Students:

- Speak well of others. No put-downs or jokes at someone else's expense.
- Include and welcome others; avoid cliques.

What We Expect from Students-cont.

Respect Adult Leaders:

- They will respect you in return. God commands it with a promise.

Respect Property:

- Clean up after yourself. Take responsibility for messes made or damage done.
- Take care of church facilities better than you would your own property.
- Take care of personal textbooks and materials.

Share in Discussion:

- One person talks at a time.
- Talking with your friends is great—just not during class time.

Consequences:

Confirmation teachers (Pastor, DCE, etc.), along with small group leaders, will deal with any misbehavior using disciplinary measures. They will confront students in love and proceed in the following ways.

- Strike One: A verbal warning
- Strike Two: Parents/guardians receive a phone call
- Strike Three: At least one parent/guardian must accompany student to class and other youth activities until both attitude and actions indicate student has matured enough to manage their own behavior

What to Bring:

- A writing tool
- Bible
- Catechism (for 7th & 8th graders)
- Confirmation folder/binder given on first night (for those returning students, please continue to use last year's binder including last year's notes)
- Any other books/resources given by leaders

What Not to Bring:

- Hats are not allowed in the Sanctuary
- Food and drink is not allowed in Sanctuary
- Clothing or materials that are suggestive, vulgar, or disrespectful
- Cell phones can only be used before or after confirmation

Confirmation Requirements

A. Attendance

Wednesday Night Confirmation: In person participation is required at all Wednesday night confirmation classes. Students need to be in their large group rooms for Confirmation at 6:15 p.m. Confirmation ends at 7:30 p.m. **Students must be picked up no later than 7:45 p.m.**

Absentee Procedure: Students are expected to be at all Wednesday classes as learning is experiential and group focused, so it is difficult to make up a session. But, we understand that life happens, and students are likely to have a few absences. If this happens, students are expected to notify small group leaders and Madi ahead of time and ask what they can do to prepare for the following Wednesday. Confirmation is about learning how to be a disciple of Christ. This needs to have priority over extracurricular school activities including sports. Allowing students to regularly skip class communicates a negative message about one's priority of faith.

If more than 3 Wednesday night confirmation classes are missed, a meeting will need to be scheduled with Madi to discuss the plan going forward.

Worship Attendance: Student are expected to attend Worship 75% each month. Worship is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. If you are out of town on vacation please worship there. Like skipping confirmation class, skipping church communicates a strong, negative message to your children. Worship during Wednesday Advent and Lenten Services is expected since it is a continuation of the confirmation class period. Again, extracurricular activities are not a good reason to skip worship.

Sunday School Attendance. Students are expected to attend Sunday school 75% as well. The expectation is that the student will attend faithfully from September to the end of May, unless illness or family concerns prohibit.

Attendance will be taken on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, so please notify leaders ahead of time if you know your student will be gone

C. Experiential Learning Modules

To help students identify with the mission of Messiah Lutheran Church, and to discover the joys of Christian servanthood and discipleship, students are asked to participate in the following modules:

Required Service Hours

Students are asked to complete hours of volunteer work each year (the year counts as September to May). All volunteer service is to be done for someone else, and done without pay. Parents are expected to track hours and enforce its completion. A form to help in doing this will be handed out after confirmation begins and is to be turned into Madi before May 1st.

As we teach students the significance of growing in faith throughout our lives, the number of service hours required will increase each year to reflect that. The number of hours required for each grade are listed below:

***5th Grade:** 5 hours (At least 1 hour of community service)

***6th Grade:** 10 hours (At least 3 hours of community service)

***7th Grade:** 15 hours (At least 5 hours of community service)

***8th Grade:** 20 hours (At least 7 hours of community service)

Messiah Service Hours

Opportunities at church include, but are not limited to, acolyte, projection tech/sound board, praise team, Lenten meals, and/or help with the Food Shelf.

Acolyte times will be assigned to students at the beginning of the confirmation year, as it is a requirement of the confirmation program. These also count towards service hours. If one cannot acolyte or usher on the day they are assigned, they will need to find someone else to cover for them on Realm.

Community Service Hours

Opportunities outside the church may include assisting with Feed My Starving Children, Camp Omega, volunteering yard work, or babysitting without pay. You need a certain amount of hours of service in the community, listed above.

Required Confirmation Projects

As listed on page 6, 6th-8th grade students are asked to show their learnings through the following projects which they will present at the end of the year:

***6th Grade:** Bible Learning presentation (Present a story from Scripture through a creative means such as a drawing, collage, Lego build, etc.)

***7th Grade:** Service Project presentation (Present on an hour or a couple hours of service that were meaningful)

***8th Grade:** Faith Statement presentation (Present the faith statement you wrote & read in service)

Faithful Discipleship

Confirmation Retreat

There is an annual confirmation retreat each year in January held at Camp Omega that is focused on a particular theme. This is a retreat where students grow spiritually, grow in their relationship with others, and experience the great MN outdoors. The dates for this year are yet to be determined.

Summer Mission Trips & Servant Events

Eighth graders getting confirmed the following fall are expected to attend the summer service trip in Fargo, North Dakota at the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Dates to be determined.

Registration and Fees

Registration

Please turn in student registration and the following documents before September 20th:

- *A completed Registration Form/Photo Release (Realm Sign-up)
- *A completed Annual Permission/Waiver Form
- *A completed Parent and Student Covenant
- *The annual \$40 registration fee per child

Make check payable to “Messiah Lutheran Church.” If there is a financial concern, please contact DCE Madi Patrow to set up an appointment to discuss. No one will be turned away for financial reasons.

Parental Involvement

Parents teaching by example is critical for students. We ask each parent to lead by example through weekly worship, Bible study, and service involvement. Your son/daughter is a special gift from God to you. Talk about your faith and life in Christ with them and ask about what they are learning in confirmation class. This will help strengthen you as a family and the faith of your child.

Also, please indicate on the registration form ways that you can help with confirmation throughout this year. Your participation will give your child an opportunity see you being involved in their life and their faith development.

Other Information

Bringing Friends

Friends are welcomed and encouraged at all classes and events. Visitors, however, must follow the same expectations and rules as the rest of the class. Make sure they understand all rules before coming to class or events. Please introduce your friend to the teacher and then to the class so that they feel part of the family here at Messiah.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items will be placed in the area located on the coat rack closet nearest to the main office in the Narthex. Please put your name on your books and binders so that if they are found, we can let you know that we have your materials.

Snow Days/Class Cancellations

Class cancellations due to bad weather will be determined by church staff no later than 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon. Cancellation notices will be on Messiah's website (messiahonline.org) and posted on Realm.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not to be used during confirmation time. If a student is caught talking or text messaging on their phone during confirmation class, it will be taken from them and returned at the end of the night to their parent.

Special Education Needs

If your student has any special education needs, please let Madi or your student's teacher know, as well as indicating it on the registration form.

Misplaced Workbook or Other Materials

If you happen to misplace your workbook/materials or lose it, you will be expected to purchase new ones.

Confirmation Contact Information

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