

First Lutheran Confirmation



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Dear Inquiring Parents of 7th and 8th Graders:

First, I would like to thank you for exploring this faith community and especially how we “do” Confirmation! We are glad you are here! Confirmation learning, as we have come to understand it, is a time for our young people to continue building on the Christian foundation they have been given and on what the Holy Spirit has already been doing in their lives. This year of Confirmation learning, what we call “Dinner+Learning,” will be a year of conversational learning, faith formation, and relationship building.

Confirmation learning (or catechism) evolved throughout history of the Christian church and today is no different. But sometimes evolving means going back, picking up ancient traditions in order to make something modern more meaningful.

When your child was baptized, three groups of people made promises regarding her or his faith journey: you as a parent, your child’s sponsors/godparents, and the church. You promised to teach your child the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and the Ten Commandments and to place in her or his hands the holy scriptures, among other things. This means that your youth’s faith formation through learning is a communal effort, it means we grow in our faith together as a community of disciples.

This year of preparation is twofold, one: for your youth to affirm her or his baptism and God’s work that has already been going on since baptism, and two: to help you fulfill your baptismal promise to your child. Confirmation, here at First Lutheran, is more about building relationships, with parents and youth sharing and growing in faith together, rather than just learning useless Lutheran teachings. This is a growing experience for your youth and for you as the parent. This ministry expects the commitment of both youth and parents (or other adult) because some of the most important learning happens in hard and awkward conversations around faith and God. It is for this reason that parents will be asked to participate in this year of Dinner+Learning.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Justin Eller

Summary

Confirmation is for 7th and 8th grade students. They will gather one Wednesday a month from 6-8pm at First Lutheran Church with their parents (or other adult of parents choosing) for dinner and confirmation sessions with Pr. Justin. Younger and older siblings of confirmation students are also invited to dinner.

Goal & Objectives

By the end of this experimental year of confirmation, youth and their parents/mentors will have:

- deepened their relationship through conversations around issues, topics of faith from a Lutheran perspective.
- grown in their knowledge and understanding of Lutheran Worship & Liturgy, the Sacraments, Daily Prayer, and key Lutheran understandings of Justification, Grace, and the Cross.
- shared meals together and with other confirmation families, building relationships between parents, between student, and between parents and students.
- explored various aspects of discipleship and begin to articulate their beliefs.
- made connections between faith, discipleship, church and everyday life.

Confirmation Overview

- *Shared-responsibility:* parents (or other adults that the parents choose) will take the primary role in leading conversations with their youth on the confirmation topic assigned.
- *Methodology:* We will use a method of asking questions and telling stories to dive into the material and explore its meaning to us today. Dinner+Learning assignments and information are accessible online. Most of the student assignments will be submitted electronically through Google Forms. We will walk through the website together during the first orientation session.
- *Discussion:* Parents and youth may discuss the reflection questions at the time of their convenience, so long as the conversation takes place before the scheduled monthly confirmation family meals (see date in the following sections).

Monthly Confirmation Family Dinner + Learning

- Ten sessions of “Dinner + Learning” (one a month) from **August to May** from **6:00-8:00pm** will be required of confirmation students and at least one parent (or other adult chosen by the parents). Siblings of confirmands are invited to the meals. See the schedule below.
- Monthly Confirmation Family Dinner + Learning will include: eating and getting to know other Dinner+Learning families, Bible study, Questions, comments, observations, insights from the material covered by youth-parent, Learning/processing for the evening with activities (parents meet with Sharon, youth will gather with Pr. Justin), and Gather all together for a closing prayer.

SCHEDULE for Confirmation Family Dinner + Learning

(Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00 pm)

YEAR A	YEAR B
Aug: Welcome, Orientation, Ice-breakers, Expectations	Aug: Welcome, Orientation, Ice-breakers, Expectations
Sep: Introduction to the Bible	Sep: Introducing the Small Catechism
Oct: Introduction to the Small Catechism	Oct: Introducing Worship & Liturgy
Nov: Ten Commandments: 1-3	Nov: Holy Baptism
Dec: Ten Commandments: 4-6	Dec: Holy Communion
Jan: Ten Commandments: 7-10	Jan: Confession & Forgiveness
Feb: Apostles' Creed: History, Article I	Feb: Justification by Faith
Mar: Apostles' Creed: Articles II & III	Mar: The Cross
Apr: Lord's Prayer: Introduction, Petitions 1-4	Apr: Grace
May: Lord's Prayer: Petitions 5-7, Doxology	May: Daily Prayer

Expectations of 7th & 8th grade CONFIRMANDS

- Regular worship attendance
- Complete 10 Confirmation Worship Notes for 7th graders and 16 for 8th graders (REQUIRED)
- Participate as worship assistant (reader, communion assistant, assisting minister) (REQUIRED)
- Participate in Middle School Learning (strongly encouraged)
- Confirmation Retreat at Camp Carol Joy Holling in Ashland, NE with Pr. Justin and Sharon at the beginning of 7th grade (for new confirmands) and 9th grade (for those soon to be confirmed). (REQUIRED)
- Participation in each of the Confirmation Family Dinner + Learning sessions. (REQUIRED)
- Be open to having conversation with your parents about the Confirmation questions and doing the confirmation work at outside of Dinner Learning sessions.
- Weekly home assignments. (REQUIRED)

Expectations of 7th & 8th grade *PARENTS (or grandparents/guardians/mentors)*

- Take seriously the important role of parent, guardian, or mentor in the faith life of your child(ren).
- Participation in each of the Confirmation Family Dinner + Learning sessions. (REQUIRED)
- Work with your student to on the parts that involve you. Prepare yourself for conversations with the provided parents resources.
- Be open to having conversation with your student about the Confirmation questions even when you do not have an answer.

Missed Dinner+Learning Gatherings

Students and parents are required to attend all D+L gatherings. Students are forgiven one (valid) missed gathering out of the 10. Valid reasons for missing: things like extreme illness or hospitalization, family wedding, a funeral, previous planned family trip. Valid reasons do not include events like sporting events, dances, recitals, homework, or other extracurricular activities. Please be in conversation with Pr. Justin as soon as possible if you are going to miss a Dinner+Learning session!