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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

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LETTER TO STUDENTS

Confirmation is about claiming your own faith and owning what you believe. It is about affirming your baptism and the promises of Christ Jesus in your life. At the end of these years in confirmation, you will stand before the congregation and make these baptismal promises:

- 1) to live among God's faithful people,
- 2) to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper,
- 3) to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
- 4) to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
- 5) to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

We believe that these things are what Christians do as a joyful response to the Good News that Jesus died and rose again for our salvation.

Confirmation is about spending intentional time learning the basic, core, and fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith by asking a lot of questions and seeing how we live out our baptismal promises. Confirmation is not the end of religious instruction but the beginning of an adult life of faith in the Church. Experience has proven that little challenge results in little growth. Therefore, we approach Confirmation with a level of seriousness. Confirmation is a program of spiritual discipline (prayer, devotion, serving, worship, etc.). Below are the expectations of Confirmation which will help keep us on track and challenged to grow. They are designed to assist you in growing as a disciple so that by the end of the program you are able to confidently claim the faith you are being raised in as your own.

LETTER TO PARENTS

Confirmation is about finding one's own voice of faith to express doubts and fears as well as affirmations and certainties. It is an opportunity to explore faith and learn why we do what we do as Christians and believe what we believe as Lutherans. This faith formation program is designed to teach the information of our faith, so that each student can learn how their faith shapes who they are. Culminating with Affirmation Worship, each Confirmand stands before God, their parents, and the congregation and claims boldly "this is my faith, and my faith alone" as they answer one pinnacle question: "What do you believe and why?"

In order for this to be possible we are reminded of one very important aspect of faith – it is caught, not taught. The lessons of Confirmation provide the information of what we believe and the language to express why. But faith is caught by children primarily through the actions of their parents. For example, children learn that prayer is important because you pray with them at meals and bedtime. They learn that worship is important because you bring them with you to worship services. They learn that being a part of church is important because they have seen you attend events, Bible Study, sit on committees, etc. When parents are involved with the life of the church and talk about faith at home, their children will come to understand their own faith better and what it means to truly trust in God. As Proverbs 22:6 says: "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray." This verse summarizes the promises you made to God when you brought your child to be baptized. Confirmation is the affirmation of that baptism, a rite of passage in our church where your child claims the faith which they were raised in as their own.

This goal, this purpose of Confirmation will only be successful with your support and involvement. For this reason, we want to encourage parents to be engaged in the Confirmation program along with your children.

There are a few specific needs we have from parents to make our Confirmation program possible.

- 1) The first is to spend time every Wednesday evening on your drive home discussing what was presented at Confirmation that day. And then take the conversation deeper by connecting that evening's topic to your life as a family. Spending just 5 minutes doing this will help you grow closer to God and closer as a family as you share your faith with your child and hear them express theirs as well.
- 2) We need your help to make this program work!
 - a. **Provide \$10 for snacks for the year:** Your kids are hungry after school! This will enable us to have a good variety of healthy snacks waiting for them when they arrive.
 - b. **Assist with special events** such as Service Projects, Fellowship events, weekly dinner, and Lenten Meals.
 - c. **Volunteer as a small group leader, mentor, or prayer partner!**
 - d. **Usher as a family for two Sunday worship services.**
- 3) Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, we need you to pray for your children. Or better yet, pray *with* your children!

2023-24 SCHEDULE

We meet EVERY WEDNESDAY 3:30 until 5:30pm.

3:30 snack and fellowship

3:45-4:55 Small Group Meetings

5:00-5:30 Closing Worship in Sanctuary

5:40-6:15 Family meal is provided in Dining Hall (freewill donations accepted)

Confirmation (and all K-WoW) events are canceled if school is canceled or dismissed early.

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

September 13th – orientation

November 22 – No program

December 27th – No program

January – Eighth Grade Capstone retreat TBD

March 13th – No program

May 5th – Affirmation Sunday

May 8th – Last Day

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Confirmation program is divided into 2 Semesters to encourage yearlong engagement.

- Semester 1 runs September thru December
- Semester 2 runs January thru May

Worship Involvement:

- In-person Sunday Worship reflections – 4 each semester (8 total)
- Wednesday Worship reflections – 4 each semester (8 total)
- Acolyte 4 times during the year for any Sunday worship
- Serve along with family at 2 Sunday worship services as ushers/greeters – 1 each semester (2 total)

Participate in the life of FLC (EPIC Hours):

- This is a great opportunity for the entire family to get involved in the ministry of FLC! We will have prizes at the end of the year for those who turn in the most hours.
- Please note some Sunday Morning Ministries also apply! For example, reading scripture one time on Sunday does not qualify, however operating the streaming or PowerPoint computer does.
- Participation in service events will also be turned into the school and applied to the Golden Bear Paw award!

Prayer Partners:

- Confirmation students are asked to identify an adult member of FLC who they are not related to to be their Prayer Partner.
- The primary purpose of this individual is to hold their Confirmand student in their regular prayers.

- They also have a unique opportunity to meet to talk and pray with their student, be a listening and compassionate ear, send birthday cards, etc. Through various ways and styles unique to their relationship, Prayer Partners have an opportunity to cultivate a relationship with their student that will have a direct impact on that child's life.

COMMUNICATION

Our primary means of communication will be via the email address you provided us on your child's liability forms. We will contact students directly via their school email addresses. When we do, you will receive a copy of any email we send to your child to the address you provide us. We may also send text messages to parents, not to children, with pertinent information – such as in the rare event we need to cancel a meeting, even though the school kept in session.

ABSENCES

Confirmation is a program that requires a high level of commitment that is also run with a high degree of grace. It is expected that all students attend AND participate in every event, but also understanding that life circumstances happen. **If a student needs to miss, please contact the church office in advance** to let us know. Because most students walk to FLC after school, if a child does not arrive by 3:45, a parent will be called to ensure that the child is home and safe. Office phone (leave message): 715-537-3575. Email: Office@FirstLutheran-Barron.org.

LUTHER PARK: Recharge Retreat Weekend

Confirmands will be attending the Recharge weekend at Luther Park on October . The congregation supports this opportunity by paying half of the total cost. Total cost is \$80 per youth, so families are asked to contribute \$40 and FLC will pay the other \$40. Adult chaperones are needed for every six youth. FLC will cover their costs. Please talk to Pastor Ron if you would like to chaperone. Scholarships are available if needed.

CHRIST JAM: Area Synod Youth Gathering

Christ Jam is our Northwest Synod Middle School Youth Gathering. The date for this year's event is TBD. This is a daylong event filled with worship, music, workshops, and games. Details will be sent out when we get them.

LUTHER PARK: summer Bible camp

Confirmands are encouraged to attend Bible camp at least one time. But they can certainly attend all four years! FLC provides a one-time campership of \$200 for every child to attend camp. Scholarships are also available if needed. We will also have a couple fundraising opportunities throughout the year. Date of camp is TBD.

ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans

Students currently in 8th grade are eligible to attend our summer 2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering trip to New Orleans July 15-21st, 2024. An information meeting will be held September 20th at 6:15pm.

If there is interest in planning a 6-8th grade mission trip to either Duluth or South Dakota, please contact Patrice and she would be happy to help coordinate the trip.

8th GRADE CAPSTONE

8th Grade Capstone is where we put it all together and prepare our 8th Graders to affirm their faith. During this time 8th Graders will complete two primary tasks: Faith Statements and Faith Testimonies. The details will be sent in January as we prepare for the Capstone Retreat.