



**Parent Handbook**  
**St. Philip's Lutheran Church - ELCA**  
7th, 8th, and 9th Grade Confirmation  
2018-2019

## **Table of Contents**

Welcome - 2

What is Confirmation—introduction, supplies & offering - 3

Student Responsibilities - 3

Parent & Leader Responsibilities - 5

Discipline Policy - 6

Acolyte Information - 6

Contact Information - 7

Dear Parents of Confirmation Students,

In our opinion, confirmation is about nurturing faith-making Christian disciples. It is our hope that through our confirmation program, these special young people will come to know a number of things listed in order of importance:

1. They are loved--By God, by their church family, and by us.
2. They have a God and Savior they can talk to at any time and at any place about anything.
3. They have been given a Bible--the living document that tells the story of God's love for God's people.
4. They have a Small Catechism written by Martin Luther that will help them to understand who they are as Lutheran Christians and what we believe and why it makes a difference.
5. They are called to use the gifts they have been blessed with for worship, witness, and service.

The purpose of our confirmation program is to help youth understand what it means to be a baptized child of God and a disciple of Jesus Christ. Confirmation should be a time when the confirmands, along with their parents, family, and parish, make a concentrated effort to know more about our Christian faith in the midst of life, the Bible and its application into that life. Expressing that faith as a Lutheran Christian is also a focus for all involved.

Through confirmation we (St. Philip's Lutheran Church) are assisting you in fulfilling your baptismal promises:

In Christian love you have presented this child for Holy Baptism.  
You should therefore, faithfully bring them to the services 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 a godly life until the day of Jesus  
Christ.

Do you promise to fulfill these promises?

You are needed to nurture the faith of these young people. Genuine faith in Christ makes all the difference in the world. Especially during these times of uncertainty, it is so important that we remember what we know is true. You may not realize it, but any pastor does; the quality of the confirmation experience is primarily dependent upon the quality of commitment by the parents. Your motivation and spiritual energy are crucial to the effectiveness of confirmation. We hope that you will make the time to sit in on classes and participate. We are looking forward to a great year. If, at any time, you have questions or concerns about our confirmation program, please talk to us about it. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

Your Servants in Christ,  
Pastor Gregory Geier and Sarah Bennett

## Confirmation is...

Confirmation is a special part of the faith formation journey at St. Philip's Lutheran Church and most churches of the Lutheran tradition. Confirmation is a unifying program of learning that lays groundwork for building adult faith, and the ability to speak about one's faith. The goal of confirmation ministry is to acquaint our 7-9th grade young people with Jesus Christ and to establish, encourage, and strengthen active discipleship in Him. Staff, small group leaders, and parents all take part in this faith formation process which culminates in the fall of 10th grade when our students make an informed and public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord—this is called a 'statement of faith'.

We encourage you to make confirmation a top priority, a weekly commitment that enables your son or daughter to develop greater relationships with other confirmation students, their leaders, and the pastors. Your positive attitude and encouragement set the tone for how your student approaches Wednesday nights at St. Philip's.

The year ahead promises to be exciting, challenging, and life-forming as you take part in St. Philip's confirmation program of worship, service, education, retreats, relationship-building, and more. We look forward to growing with you.

### **Every Wednesday, every student needs to bring:**

- Bible (7th graders will be given a student Bible)
- Writing utensil
- Notebook (have a dedicated confirmation notebook)
- Folder (this will contain important assignments and information)

*\*A great way to keep these things contained would be a designated tote bag or backpack\**

A few extra Bibles are available, but students are encouraged to make notes in their Bibles, which is best done with personal books. Assignments will be sent home, so please check in with your student about possible family-interaction pages.

### **Offering:**

Each week, offering money will go to the charity of the group's choice, i.e. Lutheran World Relief or Hastings Family Service.

### **Student expectations:**

Worship

- We encourage families to attend worship together weekly. Sermon discussion will take place during confirmation.
- Engage in worship—volunteer to greet, lecture, usher, and other service-based worship activities.

### Classroom Attendance

- Attend confirmation class on a weekly basis. We understand that extenuating circumstances arise.
- Please don't send students who are too ill for school. Also, please remember that just because there is now an option to Zoom in to confirmation class, if your student is sick, they are not obligated to attend class virtually. When you are sick, you need to rest.

### Eat before class

- Students who are hungry have a hard time paying attention.

### Parents are encouraged to attend one or more classes each year

- A sign up will be made available.

### Students who miss confirmation will have make-up work.

- This make-up work can be picked up the Sunday following the missed class.
- Make-up work might be a worksheet, discussion time during the education hour, or an assortment of other learning activities to keep students on the same topics.

### Service Hours & Projects

- Students are asked to have 12 dedicated service hours over the course of each confirmation year.
- These service hours can be done through St. Philip's, or within the community.
- Service hour forms are located on the welcome center. They need to be filled out, signed, and turned into the confirmation leaders before they are 'counted'.
- Examples of service opportunities at SPLC
  - Leaf Raking (organized in the fall)
  - Feed my Starving Children
  - Acolyting
  - Lectoring, Ushering, Greeting (family needs to sign up through the worship and music committee)
  - Sunday School classroom help (this is a very fun year-long commitment)
  - Funeral assistance (students and families can volunteer to set up for, serve during, and take down funeral hospitality)

**NOTE:** Please keep in mind that some of these service options are not possible right now due to COVID regulations. We hope that students will be able to acolyte, etc. soon, but for the time being we may have to get creative when it comes to service hours. There are still many opportunities! This is a great opportunity to reevaluate how the church can best meet the needs of our communities.

#### Memory Work (from the Bible and Luther's Small Catechism)

- We ask for 'best effort' with memorization. This is not an easy skill for everyone, but we will work with students through study and games to meet these goals. Please encourage your student, and help them learn these throughout the year.
- 7th Grade: All ten commandments and their meanings
- 8th Grade: The Lord's Prayer and meaning
- 9th Grade: The Apostle's Creed and meaning

#### Worship Notes (Available on the Welcome Center and confirmation webpage)

- All students need to complete 12 worship 'notes' over each confirmation year. These notes are meant to encourage active listening during worship.
- Sermon notes can be done for any Sunday service, or for the Wednesday services during Lent. If worshipping outside of SPLC, please feel free to do sermon notes for that worship time as well.
- An online form version of worship notes will be available for students watching worship services from home.

#### Mentoring Program (Lent)

- All students will participate in the mentoring program during Lent.
- Students are in charge of finding and asking an adult to be their mentor (family friends, former Sunday school teachers, etc).
- Over the course of Lent, each mentor pair will study and discuss from a provided packet.
- Mentors will be security checked, and will need to have their information on file at St. Philip's. More info to come.

#### **Parent/Guardian Expectations:**

Attend worship regularly with student, including Lenten services & Holy Week.

Transport or arrange transportation for student, so they are on time for class, large group events, the retreat, etc.

Assist confirmand in completing assignments, memory work, makeup work, and other requirements as needed.

Attend parent-student events, service projects, and meetings.

Attend service projects with confirmand as you are able. Sign up to drive students or provide supplies as needed for projects.

Communicate concerns or special needs of confirmand to the confirmation leaders or pastors to enable them to provide the best possible program for each student.

Attend class with your student at least once per year—see signup sheet.

**Confirmation Leader Expectations:**

Share their faith and commitment to Christ and the church.

Provide the opportunity for all students to learn and grow in faith.

Collect and keep record of service hours, projects, attendance, and sermon notes for each student (allow for 2 weeks, if you would like to check totals).

Encourage student participation in large and small groups and in the church family.

Establish relationships with each student to encourage, nurture, and support each child in faith.

Maintain open, consistent communication.

**Discipline Policy:**

After a long day at school, sometimes going to more school can be challenging. Please encourage your student to be respectful to the teachers and each other, use appropriate language, and to clean up after themselves. In the event of behavior issues, teachers will verbally correct the student. If a student's disruptive behavior needs further addressing, parents will be called in to confer with the teacher, student, and pastor to find a positive solution. Every effort will be made to maintain safe, positive, and loving environments for every student and the teachers.

**Acolyte Information (for when we are able to acolyte again):**

- Arrive 15 minutes before the service starts. Please wear appropriate "dress up" clothing and shoes. No flip flops or brightly colored (neon) shoes. Nice dress shoes are the best.
- Put on a robe and waist rope tie found in the closet in the sacristy. The robes are in the closet opposite the sink. Ropes are optional, you may choose not to wear them.
- Pick up a bulletin & your sermon notes form and put it on one of the front seats.
- Ask the sound system person to get you a candle lighter. They are stored on hooks inside the sound booth.
- Ask the worship coordinator or usher to light your wick. They will tell you when to move forward down the aisle, usually just before the pastor enters. Pause for about 3 seconds before you step up toward the altar out of respect for God. Light the two altar candles and the large Christ candle to signal the beginning of worship. Push the wick out about one inch after lighting the candles to avoid it getting stuck inside from the melted wax.
- Put your candle lighter under your seat during the service-do not block row behind you.
- For communion:
  - Check to see two baskets have been put on the bottom shelf of the communion cart.

- Go forward to take communion when the pastor calls forward the communion assistants.
- Get your basket and stand in front of the center aisle next to the wine server.
- When your center section is done move to the outside of the outer section when/if the wine server moves to serve the outer sections.
- Set the basket back on the shelf and take your seat when your section is done being served.
- During the last song come forward with your candle lighter. The pastor may signal to you.
- One of the acolytes will light their wick and carry the “light of Christ out to the world”. The other acolyte will extinguish the candles. If there is only one acolyte, extinguish all the candles.
- Return your candle lighters and hang your robes and ropes back in the sacristy closet.
- Extra wicks are kept in the sound booth. Extra matches are found in the roller cart and in the Welcome Center cupboard.

*Thank you for your service to the glory of the Lord!*

## **Contact Information**

### **Staff:**

Pastor Gregory Geier

Phone: 651-437-6541 Email: [pastorgeier@splchastings.org](mailto:pastorgeier@splchastings.org)

Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministries Sarah Bennett

Phone: 651-829-9182 Email: [sarahb@splchastings.org](mailto:sarahb@splchastings.org)

### **Church Office**

651-437-6541 or [listak@splchastings.org](mailto:listak@splchastings.org)