

CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK

for 7th & 8th graders and their families



St. Paul's

LUTHERAN CHURCH

2019-2020 School Year

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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What is the Confirmation Commitment that I Make?

Profession of Faith

P Do you this day in the presence of God and of this congregation acknowledge the gifts that God gave you in your Baptism?

R Yes, I do.

P Do you renounce the devil?

R Yes, I renounce him.

P Do you renounce all his works?

R Yes, I renounce them.

P Do you renounce all his ways?

R Yes, I renounce them.

P Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

R Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord?

R Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

P Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

R Yes, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

P Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?

R I do.

P Do you confess the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from the Scriptures, as you have learned to know it from the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

R I do.

P Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

R I do, by the grace of God.

P Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

R I do, by the grace of God.

P Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

R I do, by the grace of God.

Taken from the "Rite of Confirmation" in Lutheran Service Book, p.272ff.

Introduction

Why Confirmation?

Confirmation isn't commanded in Scripture and Lutherans do not believe that it is a sacrament. Why does the church have Confirmation?

1. **Confirmation is a re-affirmation of one's baptism.** It is an opportunity to learn more deeply what it means to be a baptized child of God and publicly confess the centrality of Christ's forgiveness and teaching in one's life.

Jesus says, "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33, ESV)

2. **Confirmation provides further instruction in the sacramental life,** deepening the catechumen's understanding of Christ's gifts and preparing the catechumen for mature fellowship in the Church and the *life* of discipleship.

"Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (1 Corinthians 11:27-29, RSV)

3. **Confirmation at St. Paul's is adult membership in the Lutheran Church.** Confirmation at St. Paul's is *not* confirmation of a generalized Christian faith. *Confirmation is the assent to and promise to practice the Christian faith according to the Lutheran confession for the remainder of one's life.* Confirmands are able to participate in the full life of the church. The only restriction is that U.S. law does not permit someone under 18 to vote.

"Catechumen" and "Student"

In this document and other communications you will see and hear the word "catechumen" and "catechesis." *Catechesis* is a New Testament word for a way of teaching. We typically understand a "student" to be someone who is learning required material. A *catechumen* is certainly a student, but he is more. A *catechumen* is one who is in the process of *having The Faith embedded in one's soul*. The "goal of catechesis is the creation and sustaining of faith in Christ, and how that faith expresses itself in the Christian life," writes Rev. Peter Bender, and "Christians are disciples of Jesus—catechumens—for life, not just for a few years of confirmation instruction." (*Lutheran Catechesis*, 2nd ed. xi)

The goal of catechesis is the creation and sustaining of faith in Christ, and how that faith expresses itself in the Christian life.

Catechesis is an historic method of Christian teaching which finds its center in Christ's forgiveness of sins. In catechesis we use myriad methods to embed foundational Biblical texts and explanations in the memory and then, over time, we gradually unpack further meaning and application. In this context Confirmation is a significant milestone in a *life* of catechesis, for Jesus is always teaching through His Word. As we worship, live and experience the cross we grow in our understanding.

Faith is Caught at Home

Confirmation class is a formal learning environment for young catechumens to learn the Scriptures and doctrines of the faith they are preparing to publicly confess; however, Confirmation instruction is a whole-life process, a *family life*. Indeed, ***the Faith is "caught" at home***; that is, the most fertile soil for growing the faith is found if your family worships together weekly, prays together, talks about the things of faith regularly at meals, and practices Christ's forgiveness in the house. This is a partnership between the Church and the parents. During the course of the year students will be asked to complete various assignments that require conversation at home. Also, parents/guardians are asked to assist their child(ren) with "learn by heart" (memory work) part of Confirmation and confirm that the texts are memorized before the oral exams with the pastors.

Teenagers are Great!

We believe deeply in young teens. They're in the process of discovering their God-given uniqueness. Sometimes they do impulsive things. Sometimes they are remarkably gracious and helpful. Sometimes they need to be kids, but they also want and need to learn personal responsibility, empathy, teamwork, and grit. They are capable of silliness and frivolity; they are also capable of *profound* faithfulness to Christ. Seventh and eighth graders need structure and authority, yet they also need a bit of freedom. Thus, in spite of all the hormones and emotional immaturity we believe that the early teen years are a *great time to ask big questions* under the direction of those who have "walked the walk" for a while. *The teen years are a wonderful time to really begin to understand Christ's forgiveness.*

The teen years are a wonderful time to really begin to understand Christ's forgiveness.

Process Differences between St. Paul's School and Public School

St. Paul's School

St. Paul's school catechumens have the foundational and applied knowledge components built into the curriculum. Indeed, those who attend St. Paul's from the beginning and actually learn their memory work "by heart" (that is, long-term memory, not short term memory) will have most of the foundational knowledge necessary for Confirmation by 7th grade. **7th and 8th Graders have a weekly confirmation class taught by the pastors**, and will use a two-year curriculum (*60-Lesson Catechism Study*) that will be introduced during the week by their religion teacher. Regular memory tests and workbook review will measure progress. (*Workbook costs covered by school fees.*)

Public School

Since public school catechumens do not have this material built into the daily school curriculum St. Paul's attempts to bridge the gap by offering:

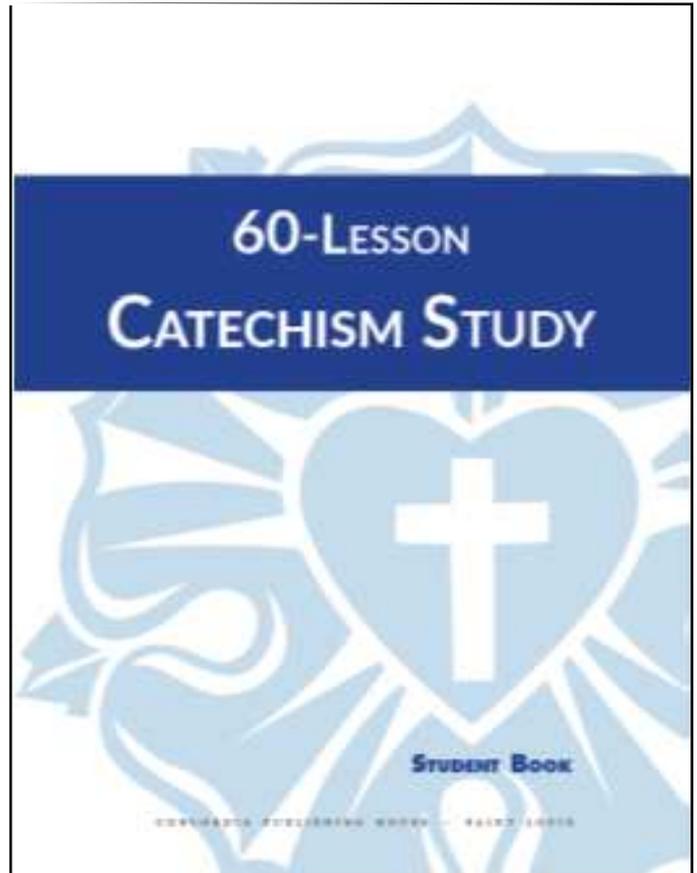
a. Sunday School & Pre-Confirmation (highly recommended)

Our Sunday School begins with preschool, focusing on learning the key narratives of the Bible. The learning environment typically includes large and small group gathering, crafts, and music. The 5th/6th grade Sunday Pre-Confirmation class is specifically tailored to help catechumens develop the Biblical literacy necessary for Confirmation.

b. Confirmation Class (required)

Confirmation Class is **two years of catechesis, beginning in 7th grade**. We use the same *60-Lesson Catechism Study* as at St. Paul's

school; however, a lot of the workbook work and memory work must be done at home. Regular memory tests and workbook review will measure progress.



Cost for the two-year workbook is \$20. If this is a hardship, please speak to one of the pastors.

Our Goal

Our goal is to prepare young people to make confident, public confession of their faith. We will do everything within our power—together—to help them understand the gift of Christ's forgiveness and how that is expressed in worship and life. To that end our practice is pretty simple: teach kids the *Catechism* and help them begin to live it out.

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Confirmation Requirements

7th Grade Prerequisites (Summer 2019)

1. Know by heart (memory) "The Primary Texts of the Christian Faith" (See section at the end of this handbook.)

2. Know by heart (memory) in addition to the "Primary Texts" (noted with an asterisk * on the "Primary Texts" document):
 - a. Ten Commandments: Commandments 1-4 + Explanations.
 - b. Apostles' Creed: 1st Article + Explanation.

Those who wish to participate in spring 2021 Confirmation must **complete the oral test by Sunday, September 8, 2019. Please call the office (262-567-5001) to schedule a half-hour appointment with Pastor O'Donnell or Pastor Scharnell any time before that date.**

8th Grade Prerequisites (Summer 2019)

1. 7th Grade Prerequisites
2. Apostles' Creed, Articles 2-3 + Explanations written test (see Catechism)*
3. Baptism, whole section 1-4 fill in the blank test (see Catechism)*
4. Sacrament of the Altar whole section fill in the blank test (see Catechism)*

Those who wish to participate in spring 2020 Confirmation must **complete the written test by Sunday, September 8, 2019. Please call the office (262-567-5001) to schedule a half-hour appointment with Pastor O'Donnell or Pastor Scharnell any time before that date.** *Oral tests will be given along the way.*

Registration, Worship, & Participation (School Year 2019-2020)

1. Read, Sign, & Return the 2019-2020 "Covenant of Participation" (See sample on last page) by September 8, 2019.
2. Worship and Devotional Life
 - a. 75% weekend service attendance (measured by turning in sermon notes)
 - b. Turn in sermon notes
 - c. Use *Congregation at Prayer* at home. (Found in weekly worship bulletin)
3. Confirmation Class
 - a. Prepare for and attend class (incl. doing assigned homework)
 - b. Public School students: *Sundays* @ 9:15am. There will be weekly workbook material that must be completed by the beginning of class.
 - c. St. Paul's School Students: *Wednesdays* (likely, but it will be one day/week on either Tu, Wed, or Th).
 - d. Missed class work will need to be made up. See catechist.

Foundational Knowledge (Memory)

1. Luther's Small Catechism
Memory assignments will move the catechumen beyond the pre-requisites and toward mastery of the *Small Catechism*.

* This is just part of what was completed in 7th grade year

Applied Knowledge

1. Confession of Faith (for 8th grade confirmands)
 - a. Work with catechists
 - b. Choose and memorize a Bible verse that speaks to who you are and who you know God wants you to be. This is your "confirmation verse."
 - c. Using the *Confession of Faith Rubric* (See *sample* included in handbook. The official 2019-2020 rubric is handed out in the fall.), write a short essay on your God-given sacramental identity, how God—Father, Son & Holy Spirit—has been, and will be, working in your life.
 - d. Present this confession publicly at a worship service.
2. Service in Church (7th and 8th Grade)
 - a. Confirmands will serve as acolytes (≥ 5x/yr), crucifers (as needed), ushers (≥ 3x/yr), and altar guild support (≥2x/yr) for worship according to a regular schedule.
 - b. Attend the scheduled acolyte training (You only need to be trained once. Training is done in summer and fall).
 - c. The church secretary will publish a schedule and email an on-line "sign up genius" to the home. **If you are unable to serve you are responsible for finding a replacement** and communicate that with the office and they will give you a contact list.

Key Dates for 2019-2020

- Sun., September 8, 2019. Signed "Covenant of Participation" turned in. Pre-requisites completed and tested. Public school confirmation begins.
- **Fri, January 10, 2020. Foundational knowledge deadline for Spring Confirmation.** (End of SPLS 2nd qtr. Catechumens significantly behind are notified that spring confirmation may not be possible.)
- May 3, 2020. Spring Confirmation at 8:00 am service.
- May 20, 2020. 2020-2021 Confirmation Meeting.
- June 28, 2020. Summer Confirmation at 8:00 am service.

Please Note for 2019-2020

1. **5th & 6th Grade "Pre-Confirmation."** Public school students especially will benefit from the special 5th & 6th class that focuses on key OT and NT Bible stories.
2. **Catechists.** Pastors O'Donnell and Scharnell will teach most classes, with assistance from Mr. Mueller.
3. **Parent-Catechist Conferences.** The Pastoral staff will be available at St. Paul's parent-teacher conferences to update parents on the catechumens progress on service, and foundational and applied knowledge.
4. **Confirmation Notification.** Parents and catechumens will be notified by letter in the spring if they have sufficiently met the Confirmation requirements. Those unable to meet the requirements will, in a family meeting with the pastor, develop an alternative confirmation plan.

5. **Confirmation Camp.** To help prepare catechumens to complete the prerequisites the pastors will hold "Catechism Camp" as part of St. Paul School's summer programming. (Mon – Fri, June 17-21, 2019. Contact office to register.)

Why the Deadlines for Foundational Knowledge?

At St. Paul's we want our catechumens to be confident witnesses of Christ and His Gospel. Our catechetical goal is to spend the most of the 8th grade confirmation year working on *Applied Knowledge*. In order to have this more advanced conversation the catechumen must first master and *internalize* the basic vocabulary of The Faith. That's what the texts and explanations (pp.11-39) of the *Small Catechism* are: a basic vocabulary of the Christian faith.

The Primary Texts of the Christian Faith (7th Grade Prerequisites)

(What you need to know at the *beginning* of the 7th Grade year)

Books of the Bible in order (Old & New Testaments)

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Old Testament | <i>Major Prophets</i> | <i>History</i> |
| <i>Books of Moses</i> | Isaiah | Acts |
| Genesis | Jeremiah | |
| Exodus | Lamentations | <i>Pauline Epistles</i> |
| Leviticus | Ezekiel | Romans |
| Numbers | Daniel | 1-2 Corinthians |
| Deuteronomy | <i>Minor Prophets</i> | Galatians |
| | Hosea | Ephesians |
| <i>Books of History</i> | Joel | Philippians |
| Joshua | Amos | Colossians |
| Judges | Obadiah | 1-2 Thessalonians |
| Ruth | Jonah | 1-2 Timothy |
| 1-2 Samuel | Micah | Titus |
| 1-2 Kings | Nahum | Philemon |
| 1-2 Chronicles | Habakkuk | |
| Ezra | Zephaniah | <i>General Epistles</i> |
| Nehemiah | Haggai | Hebrews |
| Esther | Zechariah | James |
| | Malachi | 1-2 Peter |
| <i>Books of Wisdom and Poetry</i> | New Testament | 1-3 John |
| Job | <i>Gospels</i> | Jude |
| Psalms | Matthew | |
| Proverbs | Mark | <i>Prophecy/Apocalypse</i> |
| Ecclesiastes | Luke | Revelation |
| Song of Solomon | John | |

10 Commandments (by number)

1. You shall have no other gods. (+ explanation)
What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.*
2. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. (+ explanation)
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.*
3. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. (+ explanation)
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.*
4. Honor your father and your mother. (+ explanation)
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.*
5. You shall not murder.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Conclusion: He says: "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments." (Ex. 20:3,7,8,12-17)

Apostles' Creed (by article)

The First Article

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.*

The Second Article

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

The Third Article

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

The Lord's Prayer (by petition)

Introduction: Our Father who art in heaven.

1. Hallowed be Thy Name.
2. Thy kingdom come.
3. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
4. Give us this day our daily bread.
5. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
6. And lead us not into temptation.
7. But deliver us from evil

Conclusion: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Key Texts for Baptism (Matt. 28:19: Mark 16:16)

Matthew 28:19

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:16

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Key Text for Holy Absolution (John 20:22-23)

John 20:22-23

The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Words of Institution of The Lord's Supper

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread,
And when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said:
"Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you.
This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper,
And when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying,
"Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."(Mt 26; Mk 14; Lk 22; 1 Cor 11)

8th Grade Prerequisites

(What you need to know at the *beginning* of the 8th grade year)

1. 7th Grade Prerequisites

Plus:

2. Apostles Creed: Artides 1-3 + Explanations written test (see Catechism)²
3. Baptism: Parts 1-4 fill in the blank test (see Catechism)
4. Sacrament of the Altar: all questions and explanations fill in the blank test (see Catechism)

Non-Member Confirmation Class Memory Requirements for St. Paul's Lutheran School Students

All memory work for Confirmation has already been done—in many cases multiple times—from Kindergarten through 6th grade in the St. Paul's school curriculum. All 8th grade pre-requisites for 2019-2020 were covered during the 2018 school year.

7th Grade

- ***Prerequisites must be memorized by the beginning of the school year*** (see (pp. 8-10)
- Additional requirements will be assigned in class during the school year.

8th Grade

- ***Prerequisites must be memorized by the beginning of the school year*** (see (pp. 8-11)
- Additional requirements will be assigned in class during the school year.

² Items 2-4 are just part of what was completed in 7th grade year



St. Paul's
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Confession of Faith Rubric

2015-2016

Sample. Final rubric may be slightly different.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|
| Evangelical | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Final |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|-------|

100 pts total

85 pts needed for class; 85 needed for confirmation at St. Paul's

How is God working in my life?

A. Content

1. Is the catechumen's name stated? (1 pt)
2. Is the Confirmation Verse written? (1 pt)
3. Does the confession reflect the Trinitarian shape of the Christian life? (That is, does it confess the truth that God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is active in creation, redemption, and sanctification in the catechumen's life? Turn to Creed and explanations in the Catechism.) (25pts)
4. Does the confession reflect how the catechumen is called by the Gospel, and enlightened and sustained by Word and Sacrament? (That is, does the confession show the eternal gift of Baptism and the ongoing importance of receiving the Word of God in worship, pastoral care, and The Lord's Supper? Again, see Catechism.) (25 pts)
5. Is the confession humble and thankful? (That is, given that this is a confession of faith and not a graduation address, is it boastful, or is it more about what God has done and does, even through the catechumen?) (25 pts)
6. Is the Confirmation Verse an add-on, or is it clear that this verse has personal meaning and weaves its way through the confession? (20 pts)

B. Delivery

7. Is the catechumen's name stated clearly for all to hear? (1 pt)
8. Is the Confirmation Verse read clearly for all to hear? (1 pt)
9. Is the confession in full delivered so that hearers can understand what is being said? (Practice out-loud. Pause at periods and commas. Enunciate. Reading a confession in the sanctuary is different than reading to yourself in front of the mirror. Read more slowly and carefully.) (1 pt)



CONFIRMATION

Covenant of Participation

2019-2020

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6, ESV)

I have read the 2019-2020 *Confirmation Handbook*, understand the requirements, and commit—prayerfully, with the help of God—to this covenant of participation.

SAMPLE

Catechumen

Date

Parent 1

Parent 2

Date

Date

Mr. Ben Mueller, Teacher

Pastor

Date

Date