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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

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## LETTER TO PARENTS

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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. It is summed up: "What do you believe and why?" Culminating with Affirmation Worship where each Confirmand stands before God, their parents, and the congregation and claims boldly "this is my faith, and my faith alone."

No program can have such an impact on any person's life without the support of their parents. We are convinced that *parents can make the largest impact in their children's faith formation*. Basically, we have your children for about 2 hours a week, you have them the other 168 hours of the week. 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." That is the entire point of Confirmation! These three years are about intentional faith formation. Confirmation is about learning what it means to be an active member of a faith community. And it is about claiming the faith which your children were raised in as their own. This will only be successful with your help and support. For this reason, we want to encourage parents to be engaged in the Confirmation program along with their children. We want to encourage you to pray with your children. Participate in Confirmation events and discuss them afterwards with your children. Encourage your children to be involved in the life of your church outside of Confirmation events. Let them learn their priorities from the way that you prioritize Christ in your life.

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 snacks:** choose a month during the school year that will work best for you to assist with our program by providing a supply of snacks for after school fellowship.
  - b. **Assist with special events** such as SWYG, Halloween Party, Turkey Dinner, Highway Cleanup, End of Year Picnic;
  - c. **Help with weekly congregational dinners by:**
    - i. Serving meals, please arrive at the church by 5:30pm
    - ii. Clean up following the meal
    - iii. Or help with supervising our youth.
- 3) Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, we need you to pray for your children. Or better yet, pray *with* your children!

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## *LETTER TO STUDENTS*

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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 three years, 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.

These three years of Confirmation are 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 this faith as your own.

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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Each family is asked to contribute \$20 to assist with program costs.

Sign-up to receive email updates on our website! [www.firstlutheran-barron.org](http://www.firstlutheran-barron.org)

### MEALS:

We offer a simple meal every Wednesday during the school year following Confirmation class at 5:30. We ask that families contribute to the cost of this meal by paying **\$2 per meal**. Meal punch cards are available for purchase for \$20 to cover the cost of 10 meals for your student. We will keep the cards safe here at the church and charge the student one “punch” per meal.

### SWYG:

Second Wednesday Youth Group is exactly that. The second week of every month we will gather for fellowship, games, and group activities that focus on building relationship with one another and with God.

### SCHEDULE:

3:30 snack and fellowship

3:45-5:15 Confirmation events

We meet EVERY WEDNESDAY unless there is no school.

Confirmation events are also canceled if school is canceled or dismissed early due to weather.

### EXPECTATIONS

#### Worship Involvement:

- Attend 18 regular worship services and turn in Worship reflections – 9 each semester (18 total)
- Acolyte 3 times during the year for Sunday worship
- Serve at 1 Sunday Jubilee Worship service

#### Congregation Involvement:

- Attend 5 EPIC events and turn in 5 EPIC reflections
- Participate in monthly Congregational Life service opportunities

#### Prayer Partners:

- Each student will be partnered with an adult member of the congregation who will pray for them throughout the year.
- Meet with prayer partner in the months of Sept, Nov, Jan, and March.

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*CALENDAR*

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DATE	EVENT
5-Sep	Orientation
12-Sep	SWYG
19-Sep	Session 1
26-Sep	Session 2
3-Oct	Session 3
10-Oct	SWYG
17-Oct	Session 4
19-20 Oct	Luther Park Recharge
24-Oct	Turkey Dinner
31 Oct	Halloween Party
7-Nov	Session 5
14-Nov	SWYG
	Thanksgiving Break - No Confirmation
21-Nov	
28-Nov	Session 6

5-Dec	Session 7
	Christmas Caroling
12-Dec	
19 Dec	Christmas Party
26 Dec	No Confirmation
2-Jan	Session 8
9-Jan	SWYG
12 Jan	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat
16-Jan	Session 9
23-Jan	Session 10
30-Jan	Session 11
6-Feb	Session 12
13-Feb	SWYG
20 Feb	Session 13
27 Feb	Session 14
2 Mar	Christ Jam
6 Mar	LENT ASH WED

13 Mar	LENT
20 Mar	LENT
27 Mar	LENT
3-Apr	LENT
10-Apr	LENT
17-Apr	NO CLASS
24-Apr	ANDERSON PARK
27 Apr	Rehearsal
	AFFIRMATION SUNDAY
28 Apr	
1-May	Service Project
8-May	Final SWYG
16-22 June	High School Mission Trip
23-28 June	Luther Park Bible Camp
21-24 July	Hometown Mission

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*ABSENCES*

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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 an event please contact Pastor Ron to see what will be missed and if makeup work is needed. We are reminded in the grace of this approach that what is “fair” is not always what is “equal.” Our goal is not for perfect attendance and busy work. Our goal is to form disciples and grow in faith. Just as each student is beginning their journey on different levels and advance at different paces, so too are the challenges different for each student to grow in their relationship and love for the Lord.

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## *WORSHIP INVOLVMENT*

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Worship is our weekly gathering to celebrate all that our Lord has done for us, receive needed encouragement for the week, and be inspired by His Holy Word. It is expected that all members of First Lutheran Church attend worship on a regular basis, therefore it is also expected that Confirmands attend worship regularly as well. In addition to gathering for worship, Confirmands are also asked to serve in many different roles of our Worship Ministries (acolyte, usher/greeter, communion assistant, reader, multi-media, sound, video, etc.)

Attend 18 regular worship services and turn in 18 Worship reflections (9 each semester)

- Sunday or Wednesday services between September and May
- If you attend worship at another congregation, bring in a bulletin from that worship service signed with your name and date on it and attach it to your Worship Reflection.

Acolyte 3 times during the year for Sunday worship

- Sign up on our website on the Confirmation page

Help with 1 Sunday Jubilee Worship service

- Serve as Usher/Greeter, reader, PowerPoint, or Communion Assistant
- Serving as an acolyte at this service does not count

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## *CONGREGATIONAL LIFE*

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Confirmands are challenged to be involved in the life of congregation in the following ways. The responsibilities will rotate by grade on a monthly basis. Please sign up on your grade's assigned month.

### **WEDNESDAY WORSHIP MINISTRY**

Confirmands are asked to help lead the Wednesday worship services in the capacity of acolytes, ushers, communion assistant, PowerPoint operator.

### **WEDNESDAY HOSPITALITY**

Students will be asked to help prepare, serve, and clean up following our Wednesday evening meal.

### **SUNDAY WORSHIP MINISTRY**

Our youth are being asked to help lead the Jubilee Worship services which take place on the third Sunday of the month in the capacity of greeters, ushers, communion assistants, and serve coffee following worship.

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## *EPIC EVENTS*

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Experiential, Participatory, Image-driven, Conversational (E.P.I.C.)

**E**xperience is where our faith is put into practice.

**P**articipation is how a person's faith identity is formed.

**I**nteraction with others helps shift information from short-term to long-term memory.

**C**onversation helps students apply what they have learned to their lives by listening to others as well as sharing their own story.

These events are your opportunity to grow closer to members of the congregation that you may otherwise not have the chance to get to know, as well as begin to understand the responsibilities of active members of the church.

### **Students are expected to turn in 5 EPIC reflections.**

- We have 3 already scheduled.
  - o Luther Park's Recharge Retreat on Oct 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>.
  - o Turkey Dinner on Wednesday Oct 24<sup>th</sup>
  - o Christ Jam on Saturday March 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Students are expected to attend 1 additional event each semester (2 total).
- If students are unable to attend the above scheduled events they may make up the event as described below.
- For the most part any ministry event and Bible study gathering can be considered an EPIC event. Suggested EPIC events are: attend Church Council meeting, help with 1 quarter of Sunday School, service events, serve at the Cupboard and Closet for 1 one hour shift, any ministry event of our congregation that meets the above description.

The hours spent on EPIC projects can be turned into the school and applied to the Golden Bear Paw award!

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### *LUTHER PARK: Recharge Retreat Weekend*

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Confirmands are encouraged to attend the *Recharge* weekend at Luther Park. The date for this year's Recharge is **October 19-20**. The congregation supports this opportunity by paying \$40 of the \$80 cost. Families are asked to contribute the remaining \$40. Scholarships are available if needed, please see Pastor Ron.

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### *CHRIST JAM: Area Synod Youth Gathering*

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Confirmands are encouraged to attend our Northwest Synod Middle School Youth Gathering being held at Bethany Lutheran in Rice Lake on **Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**, 2019. This is a daylong event filled with worship, music, workshops and games. The cost is \$40. Scholarships are available if needed, please see Pastor Ron.

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*LUTHER PARK SUMMER BIBLE CAMP*

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Confirmants are encouraged to attend Bible camp during the summer of their 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Grade year. But they can certainly attend all three years! This year, we plan to attend Luther Park's "Pathfinders" the **week of June 23rd through 28**. We will stay in cabins and experience the wide variety of fun and activities that is available at Luther Park. Pathfinders get to experience the heart pounding excitement that is the High Ropes course. Along with swimming, games, and developing community with your new and old friends, you will get to experience amazing and creative Bible Studies, worships, campfires, and meaningful small group discussions. The cost of camp is \$395. Our congregation will pay \$200 toward this cost and other fundraising opportunities are available to defray the remainder of the cost.

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*8<sup>th</sup> GRADE SUMMER MISSION TRIP*

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This year's eighth grade class is invited to attend our High School Mission trip traveling to Lake Traverse Reservation in Sisseton, South Dakota from **Sunday, June 16 through Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>**. The cost of the trip is \$400 with a nonrefundable \$50 deposit due by September 19<sup>th</sup> and \$50 monthly payments thereafter, or a total cost of \$450 after that date. Individual fundraising opportunities including flower bulb sales, Silent Auction, Cinnamon Roll sales, Traveling BB Tournament Concessions, etc are available to help defray the cost of the trip. Students will be given individual credit against their trip cost for the amount they raise for these projects.

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*HOMETOWN MISSION*

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We are planning our own "Hometown Mission" experience to take place beginning **Sunday evening, July 21-Wednesday, July 24, 2019**. This will be a three-day service event with projects around our own community along with a three-night lock-in here at our own church.

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*8<sup>th</sup> GRADE CAPSTONE*

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The Capstone portion is where we put it all together and prepare our 8<sup>th</sup> Graders to affirm their faith. During this time 8<sup>th</sup> Graders will complete two primary tasks: Faith Statements and Faith Testimonies. The details will be sent in the spring. But mark your calendar:

- Public Witness Celebration will be on Wednesday April 24<sup>th</sup>
- Affirmation Sunday will be April 28<sup>th</sup>!