

**CONFIRMATION
HANDBOOK
2009-2010**



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
LA PLATA, MARYLAND**

CONFIRMATION

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Christian learning is a life-long process.
2. Confirmation ministry is the responsibility of the entire Faith Community.
3. Confirmation ministry is committed to a holistic, integrated, liturgical, Biblical, confessional and servant-orientated process of learning. It will build on the strengths of learners rather than focus on the weaknesses.

DEFINITION:

Confirmation is an educational ministry of the Church which helps the Baptized child, through Word and Sacrament, to identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission.

In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther described confirmation as the rite, by which a baptized person renews his or her baptismal vows, publicly confesses his/her faith, and is received into “adult” membership by the congregation. Confirmation is saying “yes” to your baptism. That’s why it is often called “Affirmation of Baptism.”

Baptism is our birth into God’s family. It is a gift of new life offered to us by God. In Baptism, parents and sponsors promise to nurture our faith by participation in worship, teaching the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments, by placing into our hands the Scriptures, and by providing instruction in the Christian faith. The church promises to help parents and sponsors in fulfilling this promise. Part of the fulfillment of the baptismal promise is the decision to be confirmed.

Confirmation is a time of preparation for baptized Christians to publicly profess that they do indeed believe those things promised for them in their baptism. It is a passing of the torch, if you will, from parental responsibility, to personal responsibility for one’s own Christian faith.

We, the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church, commit to joining you
in this passage called confirmation ministry.

PURPOSE:

The ministry of confirmation at Grace seeks to help young people to identify with the life and mission of the Church, as they confess faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ. Confirmation helps our young people to see themselves as the people of God carrying out the mission of the Church.

Confirmation is to help confirmands:

- Personally confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and take personal ownership in declaring, by the power of the Holy Spirit, their own allegiance to Christ.
- Eagerly explore the awesomeness of God and the mysteries of faith.

- Identify themselves as members, as a unique and special part of the body of Christ, as Lutheran and members of a local congregation.
- Regularly participate in public worship and the reception of Holy Communion, engage in personal and group Bible study and its application to life, strive to lead God-pleasing lives and offer services to God by serving others.
- Celebrate the relationships that they have with God as their personal God who loves them graciously, their pastor and other confirmation staff people, their peers participating in the confirmation process, their family and other members of their congregation.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES TAUGHT AND PRACTICED:

- **BIBLE STUDY:** learning to read God's Word for understanding in a personal devotional life and in group study with other Christians.
- **PRAYER:** learning to pray for the needs of others, for personal needs and for the mission of the church.
- **WORSHIP:** learning how God blesses his people through the divine worship service and how they can express praise and thanks to the Lord through a variety of worship forms, including the historic liturgy of the church, learning to make profession of faith with fellow believers, to listen to the exposition of God's Word and to comprehend and apply it to daily living.
- **WITNESS:** learning to express the Gospel of Christ in a winsome and meaningful way and to share what God in Christ has done for them.
- **SERVICE:** learning to recognize the needs and hurts of those in the world around them and to be a part of helping, healing service,
- **COMMUNITY:** learning to relate to other Christians as students, friends, caregivers and teachers.
- **FAMILY LIVING:** learning to be a representative of Christ in the roles of youth, sibling and possible future spouse.
- **LEADERSHIP:** learning to use their God-given gifts and abilities in a manner that strengthens the mission outreach of the church.

DEVELOPMENT OF ATTITUDES – During the developmental years of adolescence, attitudes are shaped that greatly influence a young Christian's life in the church for years to come. Through the proclamation of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit creates faith that results in a love for God and neighbor. The church, through its Spirit-led Word and Sacrament Catechesis, can assist in the development of the attitudes that maturing disciples of Jesus Christ will carry with them throughout their lives. These attitudes include:

- A vision for the church as the Lord's chosen bearer of the message of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- Respect for the pastoral office and for their pastor(s) and teacher(s).
- Respect for parents and other family members, also for the members of the whole family of God.
- Concern for those who are lost in their sins without the knowledge of the hope of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- Compassion for the needy and hurting.
- A desire for lifelong growth in the Christian faith.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend 85% of all classes during the year. If your son or daughter cannot attend class, please notify one of the teachers (telephone or email) ahead of time. If this has not been done, and your child is absent, you will be contacted. If a 2nd year student does not attend 85% of the classes they will not be confirmed. If a 1st year student does not attend 85% of the classes they will not graduate to 2nd year status.

Missed classes are made-up on the last Wednesday of each month, beginning at 7:00 pm in room #116. All required work for the missed classes must be done before the make up class. Call one of the teachers for the class assignment if a student misses a class. The Wednesday make up class only counts for one missed class. If missed classes should become a regular occurrence, a conference will be setup between the teacher(s) and the parent(s). Parents are expected to attend one class out of every month (it is up to the parent to decide which class to attend.) At times, during the year, parents will be informed of specific classes they must attend (i.e. Lord's Supper classes for 8th graders).

CLASS STRUCTURE – 2 YEAR CYCLE

The confirmation program offers all of the traditional catechetical subjects. This cycle of lessons may be seen below. At the end of the two year cycle, every student will have been exposed to each of the following subjects, though not in the same order. The Highlighted classes will be taught this year

10 Commandments

Apostle's Creed

Lord's Prayer

Holy Baptism

Confession and Absolution

Holy Communion

We work with the school calendar to build each schedule year around 25-35 group sessions to include lessons and periodic fun events that we will do as a group.

Fun events are optional and students do not need to attend. However, these events are planned so the students can be evolved with other Christians in praising our Lord Jesus Christ. Three of the events will cost money to attend please see attached special date section. We will also have a Lock in at the church this is a free event that brings the kids together for bible studies, games and movies again see attached special date section from date.

CLASS TIME SCHEDULE

Each Sunday, from 9:30 – 10:45 am, students will have a confirmation class that is structured as follows:

- **9:25 – 10:30** Everyone meets in room #116 for presentation on the topic of the day, discussion on the topic, calendar reminders and accountability for required work (message notes, memory work, etc.)

- **10:30 – 10:45** Parents are dismissed and students gather in large group for High's/Low's and closing prayer.

DISCIPLINE

Studying for confirmation is a choice. Students who choose to be present are expected to act and speak in a way that does not undermine either their own upbringing or another's right and ability to learn. The vast majority of students choose wisely to adhere to this standard.

Good behavior is expected from each person involved in this program. In the rare case where behavior becomes a problem, a word about discipline is in order. Students who are disruptive in class will be asked to leave by the teacher. If asked to leave, the student will immediately leave the class, go to a telephone and call home to be picked up (they may not 'hang out' until the end of class!). Parents will be formally notified of the student's misbehavior. The student may not return to class until a conference has been held and a reasonable solution has been reached. This agreement will be enforced throughout the year.

FINAL INTERVIEWS

Please note that this is not a test!

At the end of the year, 2nd year students ready to be confirmed will schedule an interview time with the teacher(s). Schedules will include, Sundays, Saturdays, and certain after school days. The purpose of the interview is as follows:

- To bring personal closure to the year by reviewing the student's tracking sheet and allowing the student to give any feedback they deem worth mentioning.
- To give the leaders a chance to ask some faith questions of each student, and to personally check in with them about their confirmation experience.
- Help the student to feel good about what they accomplished during a very busy year by giving them feedback from a leader's perspective.
- Help the student to achieve success in making the transformation from a faith they learn to a faith they live.
- At this time students will also turn in their 'Credo' statement.
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The only way to fail is to fail to show up. By meeting semi-privately, we are able to make connections with students that can't be made during class, or might not be made if students choose not to be actively involved in our fellowship. Our meeting face to face will help to facilitate the passing on of our faith tradition. We do not want students to become lost when they come through our church doors, and subsequently become lost in our program. This is an intentional way for us to meet them one-on-one.

Parents are always welcome to accompany their son/daughter to this semi-private meeting, and are welcome to wait for their student until the meeting concludes.

JOURNALING

Journaling is a home devotional part of the confirmation curriculum. This is a required part of the confirmation curriculum and is meant to be done at home with the student and a parent. This is a time when the parent can share their faith with their son or daughter, build faith, and find out what is happening in the confirmation classes at church. A topic is assigned with the curriculum for each week. Each journal entry must be signed by the parent.

SERVICE COMPONENT

Martin Luther insisted that we are saved by faith alone. This is true. But Luther also understood that faith will be accompanied by evidence (WORKS!) of that faith in your life, hence Community Service.

We have decided to change the service component for this years conformation class by dividing it into two parts that must be completed my both first and second year students. The first part is the normal community service work we do every year it is described in part 1 section. The second part is a group service events involving students, parents, and teachers of the Confirmation Class this is described in part 2 section. Second year students who have not completed these service components will not be confirmed on Confirmation Day. First year students will not be graduated to second year level.

Part #1

Community Service is a work that **reflects your faith**. Each student will be responsible for 15 hours of community service. For many students, service is a way of life. For others, service to others will be a way that we each can become more like the person of Jesus Christ.

What each student does is up to him or her. There are, however two rules about community service which may not be broken, bent, or abridged in any way. They are:

1. Whatever the student chooses to do may not be part of a regular 'chore' requirement. This type of service is to be over and above the work we do every day.
2. Whatever the student chooses to do may not be compensated. Community service is free.

Community service may be done in small groups or individually. Each student is to keep a log of time spent and things accomplished. Each time a project is completed, the student is to fill out his/her log listing the date, the project, and the time required to

complete it. The completed log is turned in to the teacher for recording which then becomes part of the student's file. Without a log, there will be no credit given for community service. *Also, please remember that (1) service hour is equal to (1) clock hour! A maximum of 4 hours may be completed for a single service event.*

Part #2

We will not require students and one parent to attend 5 Confirmation Group Community service events. These group events are very important in providing both the students and parent a chance to work together in the name of Jesus. These community events will be broken down into nine different Sunday's you must make 5 of these events.

List of Sunday's are:

September 27th 2009

October 11th 2009

November 1st 2009

November 15th 2009

December 13th 2009

January 24th 2010

February 7th 2010

March 14th 2010

April 11th 2010

We have decided to support the Sunday service at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home that is provided by Grace Lutheran Church. We will meet at the veterans home at 1:30pm this helps us set up for the 2:00pm service. The students and parents will be there about one hour which gives them an hour of community service adding up to 5 hours of community service.

Martin Luther insisted that we are saved by faith alone. This is true. But Luther also understood that faith will be accompanied by evidence (WORKS!) of that faith in your life, hence Community Service.

SERMON NOTES

Each student in confirmation is expected to complete 12 sermon notes during that year. Sermon notes may be taken in other churches in town, on vacation, during mid-week services, on holidays. **Anywhere a preacher is preaching, sermon notes may be taken!** Students who find themselves in other churches (while visiting relatives, on vacation, at a friend's for the weekend, etc.) may receive sermon note credit by simply returning a bulletin from the service which they attended **that is signed and dated by the student.**

Some students have parents who are divorced and accordingly spend some time 'here' and some time 'there' with each parent. If attending church while with one parent is not possible, under the circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to speak with their teacher(s) to work out an acceptable, alternative number of sermon notes for them.

WEEKLY WORK

Weekly work may be assigned according to each class. The student is required to have his/her work done for the next class period. Each completed work assignment **MUST** be signed by the parent before turning in. All weekly work must be completed before 2nd year students will be confirmed and 1st year students will not be allowed to start their second year.

WORSHIP SERVICE – ACOLYTE

Students are required to acolyte in worship services according to the assigned rotating schedule. Mandatory training is scheduled for all students.

Students should arrive no later than 10 minutes prior to the worship service.
Students should check-in with the head usher for that particular worship service.

If and when students cannot be present for their assigned acolyte service, it is their responsibility to find a substitute. Please refer to the acolyte list of phone numbers that will be disseminated on paper.

Attire for acolyte duty should be nice, clean and presentable, and should not include any of the following dress:

Girls:

- **No** tennis shoes.
- **No** jeans.
- **No** Skirts and dresses higher than the knee.
- **No** spaghetti straps.
- **No** bra straps should be seen at any time.
- **No** halter tops.

Boys:

- **No** tennis shoes.
- **No** jeans.

Teachers Information

Please contact the teachers if you have any questions or concerns.

Pam Gingerich

Home Phone: 301-609-8626

Email address: psgingerich@aol.com

Bill Meier

Home Phone: 301-274-3218

Email address: wgmgoarmy234@earthlink.net

Toni Meier

Home Phone: 301-274-3218

Email address: eagleswing177@earthlink.net

RESOURCES AND FEES

The resources used in class are for the entire two years of confirmation. A resource only needs to be purchased once, except for required supplies needed for every year.

Concordia Study Bible	Free
Luther's Small Catechism	10.00
"Partners in Learning" curriculum	15.00
Required Supplies	10.00

Please add up the fees necessary and write out a check for the total amount (write the check to *Grace Lutheran Church* and write *Confirmation* in the notes section of the check. **Please hand your check to one of the teachers otherwise it will not be recorded in the appropriate records.**

Special fees will be required for 8th grade students who will be confirmed (gowns, stoles, etc.) Parents will be notified in advance.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class Time and Location

Confirmation students will meet in Trailer 310 on the assigned Sunday's from 9:25 – 10:45 am. Please make sure you are prompt.

Calendar Year

The confirmation year revolves around the following class periods. The following dates will help you plan ahead of time.

September

Sunday September 20th 2009

Sunday September 27th 2009

Wednesday September 30th 2009 Make Up Class

October

Sunday October 4th 2009

Sunday October 11th 2009

Sunday October 18th 2009

Sunday October 25th 2009

Wednesday October 28th 2009 Make Up Class

November

Sunday November 1st 2009

Sunday November 8th 2009

Sunday November 15th 2009

Wednesday November 18th 2009 Make Up Class

Sunday November 22nd 2009

December

Sunday December 6th 2009

Sunday December 13th 2009

Sunday December 20th 2009

Wednesday December 30th 2009 Make Up Class

January

Sunday January 10th 2010

Sunday January 17th 2010

Sunday January 24th 2010

Wednesday January 27th 2010 Make Up Class

February

Sunday February 7th 2010

Sunday February 14th 2010

Sunday February 21st 2010

Wednesday February 24th 2010 Make Up Class

Sunday February 28th 2010

March

Sunday March 7th 2010

Sunday March 14th 2010

Sunday March 21st 2010

Sunday March 28th 2010

Wednesday March 31st 2010 Make Up Class

April

Sunday April 11th 2010

Sunday April 18th 2010

Sunday April 25th 2010

Wednesday April 28th 2010

May

Sunday May 2nd 2010

Sunday May 9th 2010

Sunday May 16th 2010

****** Sunday May 23rd 2009 This is Confirmation Sunday all students must attend the Confirmation Service.**

Special Dates

October 10th 2009: This will be a trip to Lancaster PA, to attend a showing of *In the Beginning*: a spectacular staging of the biblical account of creation, Sight & Sound opens the original production, *In the Beginning*. Be there as the Garden of Eden appears before you - the waters, vegetation, and animals of the newly created world enveloping the Millennium Theatre! Experience God's pleasure at his most awesome creation, Adam and Eve, and the complete beauty of their unbroken relationship with God.

Cost of tickets:

Adults: \$54.00

Teens: \$28.00

Additional Cost: Each individual going needs money for Lunch and Dinner. They also must have money for snacks at the show if they want.

Cut of time for seats: We need to have seat information collected by September 16th 2009.

Departure time; this will be announced after we receive the seat information on the 16th.

January 15-17, 2010: Youth Quake is a junior high event in Baltimore with other Lutheran youth groups from around the east coast. We have attended this event for the last three years and the youth have enjoyed the event. They stay in the conference center and hotel at Hunt Valley, Md.

Cost of event:

Before 10/21/09 \$134.00

After the cost is \$149.00

The kids will also have to have money for two dinner, two Breakfast, and two lunches. They will also need money for any souvenirs they may want.