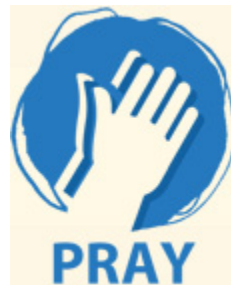
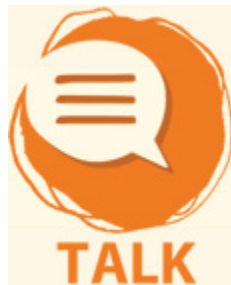


# Martin's Lutheran Church Confirmation Handbook 2023-2024

## Confirmation Ministry for 6<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Grades



Parents and Students,

Welcome to this year's Confirmation Program with Martin's Lutheran Church! This ministry provides a structure for us to live out our baptismal promises and responsibilities as the Holy Spirit grows the gift of faith in our lives. During baptism these words are spoken from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal, "As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with *them* among God's faithful people,  
bring *them* to the word of God and the holy supper,  
teach *them* the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,  
place in *their* hands the holy scriptures,  
and nurture *them* in faith and prayer,  
so that *your children* may learn to trust God,  
proclaim Christ through word and deed,  
care for others and the world God made,  
and work for justice and peace."

Parents, sponsors, and fellow sisters and brothers in Christ, make a promise to support, teach, nurture, and pray for the person and their new life in Christ growing in the Christian faith.

### **Parents and Guardians:**

You have an opportunity to set the tone as you also learn and grow along with your child(ren) by talking with them and working through what they are studying. Listen to what questions they are asking this year. You are the leaders in bringing these conversations, learning, and faith practices into your home as your family grows together and is reminded of the significance of faith.

Adult involvement in the household continues to be the most consistent indicator for nurturing and passing on faith. We acknowledge you as essential to the effectiveness of the goal of our confirmation ministry. Significant studies have shown over and over parents are the most influential factor in the faith life of the child. The leaders of the church do not do it alone, but we are partners with you on this journey. A tradition in this partnership started in the year 1529 when the priest and professor **Martin Luther created and published the Small Catechism as a tool that would help parents teach their children the basics of faith and religious practice in their home through conversation and prayers around the dinner table and before bed.** The church is present to support and help equip you as parents specifically to learn and pass on the faith. The Confirmation program is one way we seek to do this.

The formal journey begins when your child is baptized, and promises are made. Together we pray for the Holy Spirit to cultivate the gift of faith in our children. Your positive influence on your child's faith development by being involved in the life of the church and growing as a disciple yourself through coming to worship, attending adult Bible studies, teaming up with other parents and becoming involved in a ministry that interests you provides the model we hope our youth to follow. Consider being an adult leader on retreats, service projects, or by ushering or serving communion. Your child often learns more from your actions than from your words!

Discussing faith and life issues in your household is priceless. Daily or weekly family devotions with **Christ in Our Home** give a consistent time for these to happen. We introduce and offer resources on the Faith 5 practice and encourage you to do a similar practice at home. **Doing the Faith 5: Share, Read, Talk, Pray, and Bless** is a good evening ritual before bed or a way to check in during supper. Any effort you put forth will be seen as valuable to your child. It will tell them that this is important for them to learn and a practical way to live as a person of faith.

## **Students:**

The Confirmation years are a time where you seek to further develop your faith by engaging in the program offered and being open to the Holy Spirit. You are then presented a time to publicly affirm that you understand the promises made on your behalf during Baptism and will seek to continue exploring and living a life of faith as a disciple of Jesus. And so, we are excited to walk alongside you and your family as you grow in your knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. It is our prayer that these years of intentional instruction will lay a solid foundation for living out the Christian life now and in the years to come.

### **Why am I here for Confirmation?**

To learn, grow, and mature as a disciple of Jesus.

### **What can I get out of Confirmation?**

- A solid grounding in the basic Lutheran Christian beliefs
- A closer look at the Bible
- Spending quality time with other young people exploring their faith
- A regular pattern of worship
- An opportunity to develop an active prayer life
- An understanding of your own unique gifts and how to use them in service to others
- Recognizing your personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- Confirmation designates you as an adult member of the church

### **What am I expected to do?**

- Engage during meeting times of instruction to learn the basics of the Christian faith as Lutherans
- Attend B.L.A.S.T. or Acts 29
- Attend worship regularly and do Sermon Notes (7<sup>th</sup> thru 10<sup>th</sup>) to promote awareness during worship
- Do Service Hours, Events, and Faith projects both individually and as a group
- Serve for a Lenten Supper
- Participate in the Poverty Activity and Christian Unity worship
- Practice the Faith 5 to build skills and abilities of a mature Christian
- Prepare to share what you have learned and believe with others

### **Why do I have to do all this work?**

The expectations asked of you provide intentional time, space, and practices for you to explore faith and what it means to you. It is a commitment of time and opportunity to ask questions, wonder how faith and life come together for you, and gain abilities in articulating and expressing what you believe.

### **What if I cannot make it to a meeting?**

The expectation is that you make this a higher priority and commitment before you commit to other activities that may conflict. If a conflict with another activity arises see if it can be resolved, if not then communicate to the pastors and leaders ahead of time. When possible, an appropriate plan can be made to read or watch something on your own to cover the material. We publish the schedule for the year early and hope that helps in scheduling other activities around this church and faith commitment. We also understand unexpected things come up, so if you have to miss a meeting, whatever the circumstance, please let us know if you can.

## **Youth Events:**

There will be events to participate in during the year. The expectation is of 2 youth events per year for those in 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade. These are often fun and provide great opportunities to have shared experiences with others who are on a similar faith journey. Listening to and learning from others promotes respect and friendships that can last a lifetime. One day events like 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter qualify as 1 event each. Multi-day events such as the Fall Synod Youth Retreat, Bible Camp, and the ELCA Youth Gathering qualify as 2 events and meet the full expectation. Please fill out a form and turn in to record your attendance at events.

### **Cost:**

There is no program cost. We do ask that 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders bring **\$5 cash** to the Poverty Activity which covers the money given to groups to buy food going to the local food pantry. We also ask that the 11<sup>th</sup> graders pay for the cost of the **Confirmation gowns** we order. The current cost of that rental is **\$30 each**. Please let Pastor Keith or Pastor Mark know, if this or any other cost is prohibitive as we want everyone to feel that they can fully participate in confirmation and the related experiences, activities, and retreat.

## **Behavior and Expectation Policy**

### **A. Rules**

1. Respectful and polite behavior is expected. The Confirmation Covenant has more specific descriptions of what is expected of you.
2. Seating is one person per seat. For example, a loveseat sits two people, not more and not laying on each other. This allows you to be more attentive and shows respect for each other while being good stewards of the more comfortable space we have the privilege of meeting in.

### **B. Discipline -- a warning system**

1. First verbal warning - private discussion with pastor may follow class time if explanation is needed
2. Second verbal warning - a discussion with student and parent
3. Final warning - student needs to leave class and can only return to in person class if the instructors consent in written response to parent's or guardian's request assuring student is accompanied by them or a parent-appointed sponsor during class time, event, or retreat.

### **Contact Us:**

Confirmation is not a graduation; it is a proclamation of faith. Confirmation is offered as a foundation and strength training for your faith journey which as an adult Christian, is a process that lasts a lifetime. Each student and parent will be asked to sign a covenant for showing their commitment to meet the expectations of the Confirmation program at Martin's Lutheran Church.

We also expect a medical and permission form to be filled out that will be kept on file for each child at the beginning of the program year in case an emergency occurs while participating in the program and the child is in the care of others.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact by phone or e-mail Pastor Keith and if he is not available then Pastor Mark. We will usually pick up voicemail and e-mails daily.

Church office (701) 347-4289

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## 2023-2024 Martin's Confirmation Program Schedule of Expectations

- 6th Grade:** This 4-week course, **Jan 10<sup>th</sup> – Feb 7<sup>th</sup>**, will cover an **Overview** of all topics. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes which cover the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and the life of Martin Luther. Attend the Christian Unity Worship at St. Leo's Catholic Church on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm.
- 7th Grade:** This 5-week course, **Oct 25<sup>th</sup> – Dec 13<sup>th</sup>**, will cover the **Ten Commandments**. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes, 15 B.L.A.S.T. sessions Sunday morning, turn in 15 sermon notes, and attend 2 youth events during the year. Give 3 hours of service to the church and 3 hours to the community. Take part in the Poverty Activity November 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm and serve on assigned week for a Lenten supper.
- 8th Grade:** This 4-week course, **Sep 27<sup>th</sup> – Oct 18<sup>th</sup>**, will cover the **Apostles' Creed**. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes, attend 15 B.L.A.S.T. sessions Sunday morning, turn in 15 sermon notes, and attend 2 youth events during the year. Give 3 hours of service to the church and 3 hours to the community. Do a **Faith Project**. Take part in the Poverty Activity November 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm and serve on assigned week for a Lenten supper.
- 9th Grade:** This 4-week course, **Jan 10<sup>th</sup> – Feb 7<sup>th</sup>**, will cover the **Lord's Prayer**. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes, attend 15 Acts 29 sessions Sunday morning, turn in 15 sermon notes, and attend 2 youth events during the year. Give 3 hours of service to the church and 3 hours to the community. Take part in the Poverty Activity November 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm and serve on assigned week for a Lenten supper. Attend the Christian Unity Worship at St. Leo's Catholic Church on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm.
- 10th Grade:** This 5-week course, **Oct 25<sup>th</sup> – Dec 13<sup>th</sup>**, will cover the **Bible** relating to life. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes, 15 Acts 29 sessions Sunday morning, turn in 15 sermon notes, and attend 2 youth events during the year. Give 3 hours of service to the church and 3 hours to the community. Take part in the Poverty Activity November 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm and serve on assigned week for a Lenten supper.
- 11th Grade:** This 4-week course, **Sep 27<sup>th</sup> – Oct 18<sup>th</sup>**, will cover a **Review** of all topics. Expectations are to attend scheduled classes, write a **Faith Paper**, and have a meeting with the pastor to recite the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments.

### Volunteer Service Hours

Each 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade student is expected to participate in a total of 6 hours of service during the year with **3 hours in service to the church** and **3 hours serving the community**. If you have any questions on appropriate ways to volunteer, contact either Pastor Keith or Pastor Mark. This can be one of the most fulfilling experiences of this discipleship training. Filling out and turning in a form to Pastor Keith is needed to record your completed hours. Students learn they really make a difference in the world with faithful serving.

#### Suggested Church Service Opportunities

- Volunteer to serve at the Annual Church Dinner
- Volunteer to help with Vacation Bible School
- Volunteer with Giving Tree of Hope Project

- Rehearse to sing or play in the band or bell choir for worship
- Volunteer to work the soundboard or run the PowerPoint for worship (Contact Evan Anderson)
- Volunteer to usher (Contact the Brad Parkhouse and come 15 minutes before worship)
- Volunteer to mow church lawn/help with cleaning and landscaping
- Volunteer to read Scripture on Sunday morning
- Volunteer to set up, serve, and clean up communion (Contact Kristen Hackmann)

#### Suggested Community Service Opportunities

- Volunteer to help at the Rural Cass Food Pantry
- Volunteer to serve your neighbor by raking leaves, shoveling snow, clean gutters, put up storm windows etc.
- Volunteer for Special Olympics
- Bake some cookies and bring them to a non-relative neighbor or someone in a nursing or retirement home
- Volunteer to help serve a meal at MICAH Mission Homeless Shelter in Moorhead
- Volunteer at Good Samaritan Center in Arthur or Bethany Homes or Eventide in Faro.
- Volunteer to deliver flowers following Easter or Christmas Services
- Volunteer at the Treehouse
- Volunteer with Feed My Starving Children during their Mobile Food Pack

#### **The following are not acceptable for Service Hours:**

- Service time done during school hours or already part of a school project or sports team event.
- Fundraisers
- Anything you are paid to do
- Lenten Suppers, the Poverty Activity, and the Christian Unity Worship are already part of Confirmation expectations so are not counted toward the 3 Community and 3 Church service hours.

### **Faith Papers Guidelines for 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Class of 2023**

1. Choose a Bible verse that has become meaningful to you. Write the Bible verse and explain why this verse is meaningful to you in your faith journey.
2. In your own words talk about what you've learned in Confirmation these past five years. Here are some examples: You can share your understanding of the Gospel and what that looks like in your life. Share a time you experienced God's love and grace. What story of Jesus is meaningful to you? How have you come to understand the good news of Jesus as the Word of God, and the gift of salvation? I believe... The 10 commandments made an impression on me because... The Creed has taught me that...
3. What people have influenced your faith journey thus far? Write about how and in what ways. For example: My parents/grandparent/uncle/God parent/teacher/coach/friend influenced my faith when...
4. In the future, how do you see living out your commitment to God in your daily life? For example: While at college I plan to continue in my faith by... I hope to get married, have a family, and live out my commitment to God by... While working I plan to budget and give financial contributions to support the ministries of... When part of my sports team I hope to live out my faith by... I plan to serve others by... I see myself worshiping each week and studying the Bible by joining the faith community of...

**Write at least two paragraphs, for each section listed above.** Please write this paper from your heart, as it is the affirmation of your faith journey. It is recommended that you work on these papers with your family, but what is ultimately written in this faith paper is yours and not someone else's.

These will be displayed in the church entry for all people in the congregation to read the week before Confirmation Sunday, your Affirmation of Baptism celebration, on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Please use the computer (if you have one) to print them out so that others can easily read them. If not, use your BEST handwriting. Take time to really say what you think and how you feel.

***Please turn in your Faith Papers by Wednesday, October 18th, 2023, to Pastor Keith.***

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact by phone or e-mail Pastor Keith and if he is not available then Pastor Mark. We will usually pick up voicemail and e-mails daily.

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### **Faith Project Expectations for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Here are some expectations for students to express their faith journey through the **8<sup>th</sup> grade Faith Project**. These projects will be put on display in the church for all to see how you have grown and wish to demonstrate your own personal faith. The purpose of the project is for you to reflect upon your faith journey. Since this is a personal journey, there are many ways to complete this task. Remember, the purpose is not just to make something, but to create something that has spiritual meaning to you. We hope that you take the time to really think about this project. The final date to turn in completed projects is **Wednesday October 18<sup>th</sup>**. Remember you have freedom to consider how to communicate your faith in this project.

Here are just a few ideas and remember your project can be **ANYTHING** that represents your faith journey.

- Scrapbook including birth, baptism, communion, retreats, or any other spiritual events
- Personal narrative highlighting your Confirmation journey
- Video interview family and friends about faith
- Video of your own faith journey
- Create a symbol of your faith and explain what it means to you (In the past students have used wood, plaster, clay, fabric, or anything else you can think of!)
- Journal, draw, or paint where you have seen God active in your life
- Find a Bible passage and explain what it means to you
- Write a poem connected to a faith experience
- Create a photo album of things around town that represents your faith
- Collage pictures that express something meaningful to you and your faith
- PowerPoint of your faith journey

**Faith Interview:** Develop a list of questions that seek to learn about the Christian faith and its importance from another person. After making a list of questions, ask someone who you know and interview them on their faith journey. Maybe this would be a grandparent, aunt, uncle, coach, baptismal sponsor, or someone in your life who

can speak honestly about the faith and why Christianity is important to them. The interview might be a video or just audio to help you remember their comments or you might take good notes so you can write up a short paper about what you learned from their personal story and how it relates to your own.

**Favorite Bible Passages:** With the help of your parent or another adult, go through the Bible finding important passages of scripture. Make a list of the Bible favorites that you think every student in Confirmation, or every member of our congregation would be familiar with during the course of their life. Make a bookmark that you can use in the future that lists these scriptures. Don't forget to make many more that you can share with others.

**Christian Symbols:** Use the Internet, library, or a resource from a pastor as you try to find as many of the important symbols that you can of the Christian faith. Draw and illustrate these symbols and write a short statement about the meaning of each symbol.

**Artistic Expressions:** Use a medium of interest such as poetry, painting, drawing, cartooning, crafts, sewing, quilting, needlepoint, woodworking or some other to express your Christian faith. After you finish your project, write a few comments on an index card to express in a written way the project that you created. An example would be that if you create a special cross, you will write a statement in your own words expressing what the meaning of the cross is to you in your Christian faith.

**Scrapbook Page:** Create a memory page of your own faith journey. Include a picture of your home congregation, baptismal date, baptismal or first communion pictures, favorite Bible verse and a short statement of faith.

**Music, Speech or Drama:** Learn a Christian song and prepare to sing it in Confirmation or at church, write a speech that expresses your Christian faith and give it as a testimony, or put together a skit or drama with other students that would communicate your love for God and the church.

**Basics of Faith:** Use *Luther's Small Catechism* and after studying it thoroughly, write a statement that would communicate many of the essentials of the Christian faith as they are expressed in the Lutheran tradition. Or go to the library or onto the Internet and find out as much as you can about Martin Luther. Make a collage that would communicate who he is and how he influenced and continues to influence the world and the Lutheran Church through his teachings.

Remember, these projects are due Wednesday, **October 189<sup>th</sup>**. If you have ideas for your project but do not see them as a choice, please talk to Pastor Keith or Pastor Mark.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact by phone or e-mail Pastor Keith and if he is not available then Pastor Mark. We will usually pick up voicemail and e-mails daily.

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**2023-2024 Confirmation Participant Information and Medical Form**

Youth's Full Name (first, middle, last): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) First and Last Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent cell to call/text: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth's cell to call/text: \_\_\_\_\_ Youth's E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Baptism date: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Person & phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my child permission to participate in Confirmation activities at Martin's Lutheran Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my child permission to participate in Confirmation activities sponsored by Martin's Lutheran Church that are not at the church.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my child permission to be driven by an adult from Martin's Lutheran Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my child permission to be driven by other Confirmation parents to church and Confirmation sponsored activities like retreats, service events, fellowship events, etc.

Authorization for Medical Treatment of Minors:

I/We, as the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the above-named minor, hereby authorize a representative of Martin's Lutheran Church to act on my/our behalf in obtaining and authorizing unexpected medical, dental, surgical and/or hospital care for the minor in my absence from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# CONFIRMATION COVENANT

## **The Confirmand's Covenant:**

### **I agree to**

- Attend and actively participate in every scheduled Confirmation class
- Come to Sunday Worship on a regular basis
- Be involved in volunteer service within our congregation and community
- Keep my cell phone and other electronic devices on silent during class
- Show respect to all adult leaders, other students, and the gathering space and to demonstrate positive and polite behavior whenever I am involved in a church function

## **The Parent's Covenant:**

### **I agree to**

- Pray for my child(ren), the other confirmands, and the leaders
- Openly share my faith with my child(ren)
- Worship regularly with my child(ren)
- Be involved in their discipleship and faith development
- Notify a pastor directly or the Church Office at (701) 347-4289 if my child(ren) will not be attending class

## **The Pastor's Covenant:**

### **I agree to**

- Pray for confirmands, parents, and leaders
- Openly share my faith journey
- Be involved in discipleship and faith development while supporting the welfare of the students.

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**Confirmand signature**

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**Date**

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**Parent or Guardian signature**

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**Date**

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Mark Halaas  
Interim Senior Pastor  
Martin's Lutheran Church

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Keith Walka  
Associate Pastor  
Martin's Lutheran Church