



Welcome to 9th Grade IGNITE Confirmation!

Greetings 9th grade parents and students! Welcome to your final year of confirmation as we transition to a great year of senior high ministry and embrace adult membership in the church.

Please save the date for our **Affirmation of Baptism** service which will occur this year on **Sunday, April 29th, 2018**.

Remember: NOT a Graduation

Confirmation is not an ending, but an important milestone on a lifelong journey learning of Christian faith development and learning. This marks the beginning of your student owning his/her responsibility for cultivating and nurturing their own personal faith. Clearly, it is not graduation from church involvement. We are not here to make “Lutherans,” but whole-hearted disciples of Jesus who follow Jesus with their passions, sense of vocation, and are ready to serve with their spiritual gifts in the world!

This Spring, these young people will be invited to stand in front of their Faith Lutheran family to publicly “take ownership” of their own faith. We will strive to support them by creating a network around them of personal and trusted relationships. We do this by trying to facilitate meaningful faith conversations among parents, peers, small group guides, mentors and church staff. It is our hope that every family will feel equipped to live out their faith in their daily lives by engaging in meaningful faith conversations, weekly worship, Scripture study, and service together as a family. Using the Bible, technology, games and active learning activities, each week’s meeting will be a new adventure.

We hope to make 9th grade confirmation as meaningful and memorable for students as we can. We take our role very seriously and welcome your feedback and participation in continually improving our program. Please consider joining our monthly “Parent Advisory Team” as we continue to strategize and set goals for pursuing excellence in all of our programming.

Intended Outcomes for our Program

Our mission, here at Faith Lutheran, is “*to learn, serve and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*” The vision of this community is “*to be a dynamic, energized worshipping community where all are growing in our relationship with Jesus Christ, one another, and with those beyond our walls.*”

In order to create a space where “all are growing” both in our relationship with God and one another, we have identified certain programmatic goals, in the hopes of helping both students and their families explore and ultimately “own” their own faith. They are the following:

- To help students discover what it means to follow Jesus as one of his disciples
- To help families form the habit of Sabbath observance - worshipping weekly together
- To help families connect in meaningful, authentic relationships with other Christians.
- To engage students in faith practices like prayer, the study of Scripture, and hearing from God

- To equip students to love and serve their neighbors
- To empower students to identify their own spiritual gifts and to use them in community
- To enable students to articulate and share their faith in a meaningful way.

Small and Large Group Expectations

Ignite Confirmation needs to be a safe place for everyone. We work hard to foster safe environments where kids can find a place to feel accepted and “belong.” We do this by working to build trusting relationships among parents, students, and other caring mentors and adults, who are committed to nurturing your teen’s faith.

To create this trusting atmosphere, we expect the following behaviors:

- Respect for leaders and fellow group members
- Listening and not talking out of turn during group lecture or conversations
- Refraining from cell phone use during small or large group time (phones will be confiscated)
- Reverence and respect for sacred space

We will maintain a safe, accepting atmosphere by refusing to tolerate bullying, gossip, swearing, other foul language, or any kind of aggressive behavior. These behaviors will result in a staff or small group leader contacting you to discuss whether or not your student is a fit for the program.

Faith Lutheran is a house of worship and needs to be treated respectfully. We want everyone to feel safe and welcome in this place, so we have established boundaries to ensure the comfort of all who enter.

- Please walk in the church building
- Please maintain an attitude of reverence when praying and worshipping
- Please refrain from bringing food, gum, or drinks (except bottled water) in the sanctuary

Protocol for Behavior Violations

To ensure that everyone in the group feels safe, we want to maintain appropriate boundaries and behaviors. If behavior becomes an issue, small group leaders will take care of the issue before it becomes a problem.

In the rare case that expectations are not followed, students will be given a warning. Should the behavior continue, students will be asked to leave the room and will have a conversation with church staff. Parents will be contacted, as appropriate.

In the case of extreme behavior (especially when a student’s safety is in danger) the student will be immediately removed from the situation and brought to a staff member. Parents will be notified immediately.

If there are persistent behavior challenges with a child for more than two weeks, church staff will meet with the student and a parent to discuss a success plan and whether or not the confirmation program is the right fit for your child.

Confirmation is Voluntary

The rite of confirmation is not a magical or religious rite that has any power in itself. It is a voluntary act of publically professing one's faith. Our program is meant to help equip parents to follow through with the promises they made at baptism: to bring their child to worship and to receive the sacraments, to teach them to read Scripture, the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, and the 10 Commandments, and to help their child grow in faith that they might trust God, care for others, and work for justice and peace.

While parents are encouraged to create the expectation that their student will attend classes and complete the requirements, they cannot ultimately force their student to "affirm" their personal faith. While this program is our best attempt to nurture your student's faith journey, it may (or may not) culminate in your student choosing to confirm their faith. Students are encouraged to confirm their faith when they feel ready, and it is meaningful to them. If a student chooses not to "affirm" their faith at the end of 9th grade, our prayer is that they will continue to explore their doubts and questions and may choose a future opportunity to publically profess their faith. Owning one's faith is a critical piece of faith development and should not be "forced" as if part of some empty, religious ritual.

9th Grade Requirements:

Requirements have been simplified this year, but include 7 final monthly sessions to reconnect with one's guide and small group and to complete the awesome Alpha DVD-based Curriculum entitled, "Life: Is this It?"

A. 2 Faith Service Projects (done in conjunction with small group)

B. Once/Month "Alpha Class" (*2nd Wednesday of the Month*)

The Alpha DVD curriculum, facilitated church staff and volunteers, is a curriculum designed to help students apply their faith to real life in meaningful ways. These 7 sessions explore topics critical to creating "Sticky Faith" through the high school and college years. The final 7 sessions are mandatory, and attendance will be taken. They will generally meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6:00-7:30pm in Steiner Hall each month (with the exception of September 20th, when our "Meet and Greet/Orientation" (mandatory for a parent and students) will be the 3rd week of the month.

Attendance is Mandatory for these final 7 sessions with confirmation guides and small groups. Dates and Topics are as Follows:

September 20th - Meet and Greet/9th-Grade Orientation for Guides, Parents, and Students

October 11th - Life: Is This It?

November 8th - Jesus - Who Is He?

December 13th - Faith - How Can I Have Faith?

January 10th - Prayer- How Do I Pray?

February 14th - Bible - How Do I Read the Bible?

March 14th - God- How Does God Guide Us?

April 13th-15th - Holy Spirit Retreat at Green Lake Bible Camp! Come make your confirmation stoles and discover your spiritual gifts to prepare for your big day! NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEETING IN APRIL BECAUSE OF RETREAT!

C. "I Believe" Paper – Due January 7th , 2018

Each member of the class will be asked to write a 2-3 page paper that describes how their faith has developed and what their own faith means to them. Guidelines for writing the paper will be sent out to students.

D. Council Interviews – Tuesday, February 20th @ 630pm

This is simply a gathering with five or six members of the class sitting down with a member of the church council for caring conversation.

E. 9th Grade Confirmation "Spiritual Gifts" Retreat - Fri April 13th- Sunday, April 15th @ Green Lake

This is a time for students to make stoles, explore their spiritual gifts, learn what is going to happen on the Confirmation day, and have some fun.

Parents will be responsible for collecting and recording their own students' progress which is due March 1, 2018.

Other FUN Opportunities! (NOT Required, but Encouraged for 9th Graders!)

Students need to be able to have moments that they can take the faith that they have been learning about and apply it and live it out. 9th Graders are welcome to these events, and can use these to fulfill missed 7th and 8th grade required "Faith Apps."

Option 1: Attend the National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas June 26th to July 2nd - Cost: \$900 to cover flights, hotel, and registration. Cost reduced to \$600 by fundraiser participation.

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are

challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. Faith Lutheran has a wonderful tradition of attending this event every 3 years, and this year Pastor Christine, along with parents and students will fly to Houston for this awesome week of spiritual growth and fun! You cannot leave this experience being uninspired! A 1:5 ratio of adult leaders is needed!

Option 2: Attend the 7th-12th Grade (Middle and High School Combined) Youthworks Mission Trip to Milwaukee - July 29-August 3rd - Cost: \$350

You'll have the opportunity to serve alongside some great organizations that are working to support the Milwaukee community. One of these is Scott Christian Community Center, which houses a food pantry and clothing giveaway service. Another organization you'll serve alongside is Gingerbread Land, a neighborhood beautification organization. You may also serve at elder care centers or a soup kitchen. In the evenings, you'll have the opportunity to participate in a church service, go to the beach of Lake Michigan and hear from a community friend who works with teenagers and adults growing up in the inner city.

Option 3: Attend Camp Wapo or Green Lake for TIM TEAM (Teens in Mission) - Dates Unavailable - Cost: \$425

TIM Team is a leadership development opportunity for Senior High youth. TIM Teamers will spend time at both Ox Lake and Wapo during the 6 day experience. TIM Teamers will have lodging at Ox Lake, as well as experiencing the Low / High Ropes Challenge Course. During the week, much of each day is spent at Wapo interfacing and participating as leaders amongst the younger youth from their congregation.

Option 4: Serve as a SPARK (Sunday/Wednesday School) Teacher/Shepherd

Students are encouraged help lead the children of Faith in Sunday School. You will report to Mary Toufar for this. Must complete two terms - Sep - Dec and Jan - May.

Option 5: Travel to Guatemala with a Parent/Mentor with Common Hope. Every year, Faith leads 3-4 four annual trips to Guatemala with our international ministry partner, Common Hope. This is a wonderful week of building relationships and serving alongside our Guatemalan neighbors as we experience their culture, lifestyle, and love for Jesus. This year, we are receiving applications for upcoming trips occurring January 14th-21st, 2018 as well as a Spring Break trip on March 24th to 31st, 2018. Students must register with a participating adult. Cost - \$2,200 (Fundraising Opportunities).

Option 6: Independent Study – To be completed by March 1

This is an opportunity for students and parents to come up with something that they have a passion for or want to learn more about. Students must introduce a proposal to Ally for approval before beginning the project. The study must have at least 10 hours involved in a project and must demonstrate Faith Lutheran's mission statement: To Learn, Serve and Share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

If it is a one-time project, it could include a budget, recruiting, promotion, research, participation, wrap up and more. There is a reflection form that students must complete to be able to get credit.

Some ideas could be, but are not limited to:

- Making Tie Blankets for homeless
- Starting a small group Bible or book study for other peers or younger students
- Doing a food drive for the food shelf
- Collecting school supplies for families
- Creating an event at an assisted living home

****All 9th Graders are ALSO encouraged to join us for *Wednesday PM High Youth Group!!!!*** Open to all 9th – 12th Grade students. Students can come discover how they can learn how to be for God and for others through word, service, fun and fellowship. Friends are always welcome! 9th Grade students must attend at least three times a month to get credit.

Wednesday Evenings @ 8:00pm in the Youth Room starting Sep 17.

Other Key Dates -

- **Confirmation Pictures** - Wed Apr 25 - 700pm - 730pm

This is a time for students to come and get formal pictures taken in their robes and stoles.

- **Confirmation Walkthrough** - Wed Apr 25 - 730pm - 830pm

This is a time for students and parents to walkthrough the Confirmation service.

- **Affirmation of Baptism/Rite of Confirmation - Sun Apr 29 - 1pm & 4pm**

This is the day that we all get to celebrate the student's desire to affirm their faith and become full and active members of the church, the Body of Christ!