



CONFIRMATION PARENT HANDBOOK

St. Peter Lutheran Church

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Inside you'll find all of the information that you need to know about our Confirmation Ministry. From attendance questions to sermon notes, an explanation of "What is Confirmation" to ways parents can be involved, it's all inside.

2024-2025 Confirmation Year



ST. PETER
LUTHERAN CHURCH
DUBUQUE, IOWA

Dear Parents,

Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism is a very important step in the faith life of a young person. This is their chance to Affirm the Baptismal promises that you made for them, and Confirm their faith in Jesus Christ. We'll spend three years together reading through the Bible, spending time in small groups to build trust and friendships, worship together, play games, ask tough questions, and grow together.

Life is busy, and our schedules often tug us in different directions –sports, extra-curricular activities, homework, and a social life...not to mention getting enough sleep! All of those things are important in the development of a child, and so is having a strong faith life. Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.” Setting the faith foundation now will help guide them and give them something to lean on for the rest of their life.

My hope is that our ministry can come alongside you and your family and support you, encourage you, and equip you with the tools you need to grow closer to God and to each other. We firmly believe the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:38-39, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, no anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” We hope and pray that, through the Confirmation ministry, you and your child can come to know on an even deeper level the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Peace in Christ.

Pastor Nichole



The Basics

What? Confirmation is a three-year ministry of faith formation that leads up to a service of Affirmation of Baptism. When the students were baptized, you made promises for them to be raised in the church, to be taught the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the 10 Commandments, and other important promises. Confirmation will prepare them for the Affirmation of Baptism Milestone where they will have the chance to affirm the promises you made for them, and make them their own promises to God and each other.

Who? Middle School students, grades 6-8.

Where? St Peter Lutheran Church, 3200 Asbury Rd, Dubuque, IA 52001

When? On Wednesday evenings (per the Confirmation Ministry calendar) from 6-7:30pm.

We will gather for dinner from 5:30-6:00pm.

Cost? The fee for Confirmation is \$25/student for the year. The cost will help to offset curriculum/food/activity costs for the year. Scholarships are available, contact Pastor Nichole.



What is Expected of Students?

Attendance: Students should attend Confirmation on Wednesday nights during the school year. Students are asked to miss *no more than 2 weeks in a row*, with *no more than 6 absences total* for the year. Students will be expected to attend Summer Confirmation Camp at least one time during the 3-year program.

Worship Notes: Research has shown that notes taken by hand helps with deeper processing of information and retention of the information.¹ We encourage students to complete worship notes, and will keep track of how many each student has completed. Towards the end of the year, whichever grade has the most worship notes will get an ice cream party. Students will do at least: 6th grade-10 worship notes, 7th grade- 15 worship notes 8th grade- 20 worship notes. Worship notes should be submitted to the tray in the back of the sanctuary.

Acolyte Responsibilities: All middle school students will be added to a rotating list of Acolytes. Students will be scheduled to be an acolyte periodically throughout the year (families can mark a Saturday or Sunday service preference), and if a conflict arises, families should find a sub for their student.

Participation: Students should participate in Large and Small Group activities and discussion. We recognize that participation may look different from student to student. As long as a student is engaged in the topic and in the group, in their own way, then they are participating.

¹ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0956797614524581>



What is Expected of Parents?

1. **Bring them to church.** Step one: complete. You are fulfilling the promises that you made at their baptism by bringing them to Confirmation! The Bible encourages parents to invest in their children's faith in God, too. Deuteronomy 6:5-9 says,

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. **Recite them to your children** and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. [emphasis added]

Bringing them to church (and Confirmation) will give them an opportunity to continue to learn God's word and grow in their faith – and you will, too, through them!

2. **Prayer.** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." Please commit to praying for your child, their small group leaders and volunteers, and our church. *If you would like resources on how to pray, contact Pastor Nichole.*
3. **Encouragement.** Encourage them through your words, and through your actions. Kids are watching, and learning through what you say and do. So, similar to #1, encourage your children to go to Confirmation (and the fun extra things we offer), and come to church *with them* – showing them how important church is. Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another..."



What about Special Events and Summer Activities?

Special Events: Our fun events that happen each month are designed to do a few things:

1. They are designed to give students a safe place to have fun and be themselves.
2. Help students build a deeper relationship with their peers.
3. Be opportunities for our students to invite friends to a non-threatening church activity.

Special events are not mandatory, and are offered to help strengthen our ministry.

Summer Activities: Summer activities are also not mandatory for Confirmation. We want to offer students a continuity of ministry throughout the year. Offering evening gatherings, fun events, trips, and camps are a way for us to keep our ministry going, and our relationships strong.

Retreats

Each year there will be at least one weekend retreat *option* for students. Students are encouraged to sign up for the retreats at an additional cost. Students will also be expected to attend Summer Confirmation Camp at least one time in the 3 year program.



Discipline

In the event that a student has disciplinary issues that are distracting from group discussion, activities, relationship building, or trust, the follow steps will be taken:

- 1st time: student will be removed from large or small group by a pastor, and they will talk through the issue at hand with the student. Parents may or may not be contacted.
- 2nd time: student will be removed from large or small group by a pastor, and they will talk through the issue. Parents will be contacted, and an additional meeting may be set up between the pastors, parents, and/or student.
- 3rd time: student will be removed from large or small group, parents will be contacted, and parents will be asked to pick up the student from Confirmation.
- 4th time: student will be removed from large or small group, parents will be contacted, parents will be asked to pick up the student from Confirmation, and the student will be suspended from the Confirmation ministry until an action plan can be made between the pastors and the parents and student.

Dress Code

There is no official dress code for our Confirmation ministry. Parents are asked to work with their students to find clothing that is appropriate for church. If the Confirmation ministry is partnering with an organization that has a dress code, we will endorse the dress code from that organization (e.g. close toed shoes at a food shelf, clothing that does not promote tobacco, drugs or alcohol, etc.).



Ministry Cancellation

St Peter will follow the Dubuque Community School District - if daytime classes are canceled, we will cancel Wednesday night activities. Other cancellations may happen for different reasons (e.g. inclement evening weather), and the following actions will be taken:

1. An email will be sent to families notifying them of the cancellation.
2. A notice will be posted to our front doors.

If you have any questions or concerns for a cancellation, or concerns on a night that isn't canceled and you're concerned that it should be, contact Pastor Nichole or the front office. We'll be happy to give you clarification, or listen to your concerns and take them into account.

