

CONFIRMATION GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Confirmation is the process by which a baptized member of St. Paul Lutheran Church receives instruction, encouragement, and involvement in the Christian faith in order that he/she might be able to publicly confess that they are followers of Christ.

In order for the individual to understand the Christian faith, there are various opportunities incorporated into this time of instruction to learn and grow in the faith. The following outlines the expectations of St. Paul Lutheran Church in order to grow in the Christian faith and move towards public confirmation of what was confessed for them at their baptism.

Since the confirmation program seeks to foster continued spiritual growth and full participation in the life of the church, the “curriculum” for confirmation at St. Paul goes beyond the confirmation classroom and includes activities in the areas of (I) Instruction, (II) Worship, (III) Service, and (IV) Fellowship.

All of the following are offered in the spirit of Christian love as we encourage positive Christian growth. In order to be clear about expectations, the parents, confirmand, Pastor, and the Board of Lay Ministry, will agree upon an individualized contract specifying what will be expected.

I. **Worship** – Worship is the central and most important activity in the life of the Christian. We receive God’s gifts and become participants in His story when we gather weekly in the Divine Service.

- A. **Participation:** Confirmands are expected to be in worship every week. Gathering together to receive God’s love, forgiveness, life, and salvation in Word and Sacrament at church is as necessary for the spiritual life as oxygen is to the body. (This is true of all Christians, not only confirmands. Parents are the most influential teachers!). If unable to attend services at St. Paul for a particular weekend, please notify the pastor in advance via phone, text message, or email.
- B. **Sermon Reports:** Sermon Reports are to be turned in to your teacher at the beginning of the next confirmation class after worship service. 5th & 6th Grades need 16 total (1st 8 by January 3) and (2nd 8 by April 17th). 7th & 8th Grades need 20 total (1st 10 by January 3) and (2nd 10 by April 17th). Upon occasion attendance at other Christian churches is permissible. The bulletin from that service with a brief summary of the sermon written by the individual is expected.

II. **Instruction** – In order to grow in the Christian faith, learning the basics of Biblical and Christian teaching is essential.

- A. **Confirmation Class:** Attendance at all confirmation classes is required. If an individual is not able to attend Confirmation Class the teacher should be notified in advance so that makeup work can be arranged. In addition to class attendance, the following requirements are necessary for successful completion of the course:
 - 1. **Weekly Assignments:** Each week, students will be asked to complete a portion of the workbook as well as memory work from the Bible, Small Catechism, or hymnal.
 - 2. **Essay:** Students will write a 2 page essay on a selected topic. More detailed instructions will be given on this. First draft will be Due March 16, 2016.
 - 3. **Individual Confession & Absolution:** Each student will meet with the pastor in the weeks prior to Confirmation for individual confession and absolution as taught in the Small Catechism. This is an opportunity to hear God’s forgiveness spoken to *you* personally and can be repeated as often as desired throughout a Christian’s life.
 - 4. **Electronic Device Policy:** Mobile phones must be turned OFF (not silent) for class. If the student wants to use another electronic device for note taking or a Bible app, the teacher must first give permission.

- B. **Sunday School:** Confirmands are required to attend Sunday School every week. Sunday School is held from September 27, 2015 through May 22, 2016. Sunday School classes offer a fun additional opportunity for growth in knowledge of the Scriptures and the Christian faith.

III. **Service** – We are called to be servants both inside and outside the Church. We desire to encourage service through participation in service projects.

- A. **Community Service** – 6 Hours of community service is required every school year. Any willing service without compensation for people outside of your immediate family qualifies. A service worksheet should be filled out for each project. Any questions should be addressed to your teacher. Examples of community service are: volunteering at the Dubuque Rescue Mission or the Dubuque Food Pantry, raking lawns, shoveling snow, other yard work, babysitting, assisting with a neighborhood cleanup, or visiting the hospitalized or elderly. Scout activities and service projects at school are also appropriate for community service.
- B. **Congregational Service** – 6 hours of church hours in order to encourage the confirmands to see their important role in the Body of Christ, the following opportunities for congregational service are presented. Confirmands will serve as acolytes *and* must choose at least one additional service area:
1. Vacation Bible School
 2. St. Paul Fair Booth
 3. Musician: Use of musical talents for worship: is always welcome but also fulfills this requirement. If interested, ask the pastor.
 4. Setup or cleanup at church functions (e.g., waffle breakfasts, Valentine's dinner, Easter brunch, and other meals or events).
 5. Special projects: Ask the pastor. The cleaning of the building, care of the grounds, and care of the altar and sanctuary are all done by volunteers, who would love young helpers.

IV. **Fellowship** – Being a part of a Christian community is essential for growth as a follower of Christ.

- A. **Junior High Youth Group** participation is encouraged of all Confirmands. Activities and projects will be communicated by the leaders.
- B. **Other groups:** Confirmation prepares young Christians to be full participants in the life of the congregation. Therefore, regular participation in any "adult" group (e.g., altar guild, LWML, Men's Bible study) at St. Paul is also appropriate and encouraged.

The Board of Lay Ministry asks for our understanding and support as we undertake the most important of all tasks: the education of our youth in life everlasting and His ways in this world.
Approved by the Board of Lay ministry and the Board of Education.

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONFIRMATION
COVENANT COMMITMENT 2015-2016**

Parental Covenant

I,/we _____ the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____ desire him/her to complete the requirements of Confirmation instruction at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Dubuque. I promise to help the confirmand in my care to complete this process by praying for him/her, helping as needed with the classes, verbally supporting his/her efforts in learning, and being a Christian example for him/her to follow. I am willing to assist with Confirmation by volunteering to assist with the program.

I, together with my confirmand, pledge to fulfill the expectations outlined in the above guidelines.

Signed _____ Date _____

Confirmand Covenant

I, _____ desire to complete the requirements for Confirmation instruction at St. Paul Lutheran Church. I promise, with the help of my Lord and Savior, my parent/guardian, and instructors, to strive to do my best in growing as a follower of Christ by learning the material that is presented. If I am struggling in any area, I promise to ask for help from my parent/guardian or instructors. My desire is to grow in the Christian faith that I may publicly confess my Christian faith before my family, church, and God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, it is my desire to serve God always.

I, together with my parent(s)/guardian, pledge to fulfill the expectations outlined in the above guidelines.

Signed _____ Date _____