



2022-2023 Handbook

6th Grade – 8th Grade

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." – Matthew 22:37-39

**Faith Journey Lutheran Church
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What is Compass?

Compass is Faith Journey Lutheran Church's (FJLC) three-year Confirmation program that prepares each student for their Confirmation Day, or Affirmation of Baptism. Students begin Compass the fall of their 6th grade year, attending through their 8th grade year. Our Confirmation Service takes place the afternoon of Reformation Sunday, which is the LAST Sunday in October every year. This means students will be confirmed the FALL of their 9th Grade year.

Compass is designed to give each student an understanding of the faith into which they were baptized and will confirm. The students, along with their faith mentors, will come together and worship, ask questions, explore their faith, and build relationships with each other and God.

On Confirmation Day, they will stand before the congregation and in God's presence. They will renounce the devil and sin; they will confess their faith in the words of the Apostle's Creed, and make the following promises:

1. To live among God's faithful people
2. Hear the word of God and Share in the Lord's supper
3. Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed
4. Serve all people following the example of Jesus
5. Strive for justice and peace in all the earth

What is the goal of Compass?

We have three primary goals in Compass:

1. We will provide guided faith discussions to prepare students for their Confirmation Day- We will provide examples of how to grow in their faith through studying the Bible and the words of Martin Luther by giving them the tools, challenging them to live out their faith, and not only to ask but wrestle with the big questions. We will do this while assuring them of God's amazing grace and unfailing love.
2. We will provide a loving and safe environment where Christian life is modeled by adult leaders- We will strive to engage kids through music, skits, games, service, conversation, and fun. We will work to bring the knowledge of God's love from their "church" lives to their daily lives, thus, encouraging confirmands to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that will hold them in the ups and downs of life.
3. We will partner with you as parents to fulfill the promises you made at your child's baptism- to bring them to the services of God's house, to teach them the Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, and to provide for their instruction in the Christian faith, that they may lead Godly lives. We will strive to be your best ally in these adolescent years, while helping to deepen your relationships with each other and with God. We will provide tools to connect Compass with your home through the "Parent Cue" phone app.

Who is the confirmation Small Group Leader (SGL)?

Compass lessons are taught by Faith Journey Lutheran staff and pastors during Wednesday evening worship. In addition, each student will be assigned to a same gender "Small Group" divided by grade. Groups are made up of 3-7 kids and a small group leader(s). The small group leader is not the teacher, but rather, a mentor and facilitator who leads the small group time while facilitating conversation and modeling the Christian life. These leaders are typically parents of Compass students.

Compass Rotations

1. **Small Group Nights** begin with Large Group Time, where the lesson will be taught, songs will be sung, announcements will be share, and FUN WILL BE HAD! We then break into our small groups to process what we just learned in the context of our lives. Small group nights are vital to the growth of our students' faith as they build relationships with their faith family.
2. **Impact Nights/Servant Events** will be a time for our entire church family to join together several times a year for a service project to impact our community and world. Service in the Lord's name is an important part of Christian life. These projects/events will be planned and organized by church staff. Anyone is welcome to participate in these and families of our students are highly encouraged to join us on these evenings. We will begin with worship with the service project following. Attendance is required at both worship and the service project. If your child misses an Impact Night, we encourage you as a family to arrange for a time for your child to serve either at church, in your neighborhood, or in the community.

Summer Bible Camp

An integral part of Compass is participation in summer adventures in Christ. Students are required to attend Bible Camp TWICE before getting Confirmed. These are not only opportunities for fun and fellowship but, also, serve to bring your child closer to God through Bible study and prayer. We attend Metigoshe Ministries in Bottineau, ND, and the church provides transportation for at least 2 different weeks each summer. In addition to Bible Camp students will, on occasion, be given opportunities to attend mini mission adventures.

Advent/Lent

Compass will continue meeting but look a bit different during Advent (between Thanksgiving and Christmas) and Lent (the 6 weeks prior to Easter). ALL students will be expected to attend worship during these times. During Advent and Lent students may be assigned various roles in worship. In addition, please keep in mind we will continue to serve meals during Lent, which will require group participation as well.

Lutefisk Supper

Our Annual Lutefisk Supper is a phenomenal time for our congregation to join together and serve our community. Our Women of Faith group plans, coordinates, and schedules this wonderful event. All current Compass students will be required to work the Lutefisk supper TWICE (two separate years) before getting Confirmed. This year it is on Saturday, October 15th. Students will sign up for this during Compass in September.

Note: There will be other occasional service opportunities throughout the year. Plenty of advanced notice will be given and you will receive correspondence about such opportunities. At times, sermon note credit may be received for those who choose to participate. Rachel Fay will communicate when this is an option.

Retreats

6th Grade Retreat: There will be a REQUIRED retreat on **Sunday, February 12th**, for all students and SGLs. The students will learn what this confirmation process really is. They will start to breakdown the promises they will make on their confirmation day; they will be encouraged to ask questions, explore, challenge, and grow in their faith all while having a little bit of fun. It will also be a bonding opportunity for Small Groups. Additional details will be sent out prior to the retreat. Please mark your calendars! This will be an all-day retreat.

7th Grade and 8th Grade: There will be a REQUIRED retreat on **Saturday, February 11th**, for all students and SGLs. The students will take a deeper dive into the promises they will make on their confirmation day; they will have discussions, play games, and continue to be challenged and grow in their faith. It will also be a bonding opportunity for Small Groups. Additional details will be sent out prior to the retreat. Please mark your calendars! This will be an all-day retreat.

Confirmation Retreat for 2023 Confirmands: As Confirmation Day is Reformation Day (the last Sunday in October every year), the Confirmation retreat will take place **October 7th and 8th 2023**. The students will make their stoles, have their final interviews, and practice for Confirmation Day. Parents are expected to attend Sunday morning with their student. This retreat will cost \$80 per student (as always, financial hardship scholarships will be available).

Absences

Absences are to be reported to your child's Small Group Leader (SGL), not the church/Rachel Fay. If the SGL has not received a call by the time Compass starts and your child is absent, they will contact you. You will be given contact info for your SGL in the fall.

Bibles

Every student should bring their Bible to every Small Group Night. There are multiple translations of the Bible. FJLC uses the NRSV, but you are welcome to bring and use any translation of your choosing. Please let Rachel know if you DO NOT have a bible and we will be happy to get one for you!

What is expected of each student?

- **Attend Compass.** Students are required to participate each Wednesday (September – May) from 7 pm - 8:30 pm. Again, ALL Absences should be reported to the student's SGL PRIOR to each Wednesday.
- **Participate in Small Group Nights and Impact Nights.** Be a vocal and vital member of your Small Group. You will be with this group for three years; remember to help and support each other.
- **Complete Weekly God Moments.** EACH WEDNESDAY, when students arrive at Compass, they are to complete a God Moment they hand in to their SGLs.
- **Complete Sermon Notes.** You are required to complete **Eight Sermon Notes** each year you are in Compass - one for each month of the school year.
 - Completed notes should be placed in the mailbox labeled SERMON NOTES. Make sure you are writing **legibly!**
 - At least **one sermon note** must be from a different church each year of Compass (so 3 altogether) using the FJLC Sermon Note template OR the other church's Sermon Note. Be sure to attach the bulletin (if one is provided) from the service attended.
 - Sermon Notes may be taken at Sunday Worship Services, Wednesday Evening Worship Services (6 pm), and at Special services including but not limited to: Wednesday Lent Services, Wednesday Advent Services, and holiday Worship Services.

Exceptions to this will be indicated on the Compass Calendar

Any exceptional circumstances that prevent regular worship attendance should be discussed with Rachel Fay.

- **Complete THREE Faith Projects.** Each year in Compass students will complete a Faith Project. The first project is to interview a family member about their faith. The second project students will interview a faith mentor in their life that is not a family member. The third and final project is a personal faith inventory. Templates and details for all projects will be provided at a later date.
- **Attend Retreats.** See details outlined in the retreats section on page 4.
- **Attend summer camp/mini mission adventures.** Being able to grow in your faith outside the walls of our church is a wonderful experience we want for our youth. All students are expected to participate in summer camp/adventure TWICE before getting Confirmed. The camp/adventure dates have not been selected yet for 2023, so watch for that this winter.
- **Continue the conversations at home** by utilizing the 5 steps detailed on page 6 and the Parent Cue phone app.

What is the role of the parent?

- **Make Compass attendance a priority for your child.** For your child to learn and grow in the faith they will confirm, they need to be present at Compass. Please instill in your child that attendance at Compass is not optional.
- **Make worship a priority for your family.** The purpose of Compass is to prepare your child to confirm their Lutheran faith. Worship is central to what it means to be Lutheran. Sermon notes are meant to engage your child in the worship service and can also provide your family with opportunities for faith-related conversations.
- **Commit to continuing the conversations at home.** Here are five steps to help you continue this conversation. We encourage each family to try and do these at least once a day.

1. Share Highs and Lows
2. Select and read a verse or passage from the Bible
3. Talk about your day and the Bible verse
4. Prayer
5. Bless one another

In addition to these 5 steps, the “Parent Cue” phone app is another great resource. The app provides simple cues throughout the week to help you connect with your kids.

Tying church to home is a vital part of your child’s faith journey and will most certainly be a blessing to your family. These conversations help to keep communication open in the tough years of adolescence and beyond. **START TONIGHT!**

- **Be in contact with your child’s Small Group Leader and be involved in their small group.** Parental involvement is vital in Compass and in your child’s faith journey. Parents are welcome to attend Compass anytime and strongly encouraged to join on Impact Nights. SGLs will be contacting you, so be sure to check your email regularly.

We thank you for the privilege of being a part of your family’s faith formation through *Compass Ministry*!

Faith Journey Lutheran Compass Covenant

Church's Role

We will be the best educators and Christian role models that we can be. We will encourage all participants in Compass to grow and learn in the name of Jesus. We will partner with parents to be a positive influence in the lives of young people. We will strive to provide the best program possible, so we can all grow together in faith.

Student's Role:

- Show respect for your SGL, other students, adults, and property
- Be respectful during worship and all other Compass activities
- Give your best effort - Participate in activities with an open mind and good attitude
- Confidentiality is of utmost importance – what's said in your group stays in your group
- Worship and completing sermon notes are a requirement for Compass
- Each Wednesday while attending Compass, they will complete a God Moment.
- Cell phones will be collected by your SGL at the beginning of Compass each Wednesday. Students are to BE HERE NOW, cell phones will be returned at the end of the night.
- iPods, ear buds, electronic games, or any other electronic devices are not allowed at confirmation. There will be no warning given, and they will be taken until contact with your parents on Thursday during business hours
- Continuing the Conversation at home as a family is a part of Compass and is a required element of our program. See the Handbook for suggestions to do this.
- Inappropriate language is not acceptable
- Roughhousing is not allowed
- Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance will result in immediate contact of law enforcement and parents
- Weapons of any kind will not be permitted on the church premises and will result in students' immediate removal from Compass. If you wouldn't bring it to school, don't bring it to church

Steps of enforcement by SGLs and FJLC staff

1. Verbal Warning
2. Call to parent
3. Parent/guide/pastor conference
4. Parent attend confirmation with child
5. Completion of program at home under parent's supervision

Parent's Role:

- Know your student's schedule
- Make Compass attendance a priority-NOT optional, and be prompt for drop off and pick up
- Attend worship regularly with your child and ensure they complete Compass requirements
- Make sure that your student's SGL is contacted if they will be absent
- Please be of support to your student's SGL-they are making a big commitment to your child. Help out as needed for Compass.
- Continuing the Conversation at home as a family is part of Compass and is a required element of our program. See the Handbook for suggestions to do this.