

CONFIRMATION EXPECTATIONS 2016 - 2017

Confirmation is a privilege and opportunity to learn of and from God, and to grow in one's faith. It is a time to ask questions, to review and connect the stories of the Bible, and to understand the history of our Lutheran faith.

Confirmation is about maturity, growing up into Christ, and choosing to be a part of His community. Confirmation is a privilege and not a right. We hope those who choose to participate will possess a "desire" to learn about the faith, will be committed to meeting the expectations and standards of the instruction, and will participate appropriately and respectfully during this faith exploration time.

- 1) Catechism Instruction at St. Mark's ELCA is a 3-year program. Included in the 3-year program is weekly catechism instruction including the Old and New Testament, Lutheran traditions, and the weeklong instruction during the summer in the last year. When students have completed 3 years of instruction and passed the confirmation test, they become confirmands to be confirmed on either Reformation Sunday or All Saints Sunday.
- 2) Confirmation students are being taught using a four-fold approach.
 - ❖ Catechism instruction taught by team teachers during the Sunday School hour. Students are not allowed to miss more than six Sunday morning classes during the school year outside of major holidays.
 - ❖ Two "Faith Alive" retreats typically attending one in the fall (September 23-25, 2016) and one in the spring (February 3-5, 2017) at Lutheridge during the school year. Your attendance is required at both.
 - ❖ Sermon reports: Students will be required to complete sermon reports for two Sundays each month (Oct. 2 & 30, Nov. 6 & 20, Dec. 4 & 18, Jan. 15 & 29, Feb. 12 & 19, March 5 & March 19, April 2 & 16, May 7 & 14) and turn them in to the church office box on the door following the worship service. Sermon reports may be done at another congregation if you are out of town or need to make up a week. Sermon report forms can be found outside the chancel area where candlelighters are located, as well as on the doors to the church office and the confirmation classroom.
 - ❖ Attendance with Pastor at Campconfirmation Exodus Cluster Week at Lutherock (July 16-22, 2017); Youth Gathering trip (June 27-July 1, 2018); and summer Confirmation Week on site (TBD).
- 3) Students will be asked to put their cell phones in a basket while attending class. They are not to use them during worship or while serving in the worship service.
- 4) First Level (7th grade) students are presented their Bibles on Rally Sunday. Students are encouraged to USE your Bible. Don't be afraid to mark/make notes in it, personalize it-make it your own! Bring it to class each week.

- 5) Service is an important aspect of Confirmation Instruction, wherein you learn the value and need for service in the church. Students are expected to participate in the ministry of serving as acolyte and torchbearer during their years in confirmation. There may be other opportunities offered as well. The schedule for this year is enclosed.
- 6) Two "Faith Alive" Campfirmation Retreat weekends at Lutheridge are planned. The cost is approximately \$150 - \$162 each which includes lodging, activities and meals. The parents are responsible for half and the church will pay half. There are 4 opportunities to attend Faith Alive Camp. Two in the Fall of the year, and two in the Spring. One in the Fall (September 23-25, 2016) and one in the Spring (February 3-5, 2017) will be chaperoned and transportation will be provided by St. Mark's.
- 7) If you cannot attend one of the chaperoned weekends, registration can still be handled through the church office, but transportation will be your responsibility. However, we strongly recommend that you take advantage of the earliest opportunity to attend camp to save yourself undue stress later trying to work the last two into your busy schedule. Please go ahead and mark your calendars now as each student will be expected to attend these two retreats. Your payment of half the cost for each retreat will typically be due a month before each retreat. This year's costs to you are \$73 per retreat.
- 8) In mid to late July during the summer of the first year of catechism, students will attend Campfirmation Week at Lutherock with Pastor Gary (July 16-22, 2017). If the first year is missed due to sickness or other commitments, then it may be made up the next year. The Exodus Cluster is comprised of pastors and youth from Grace Lutheran in Newton, Christ Lutheran in Charlotte, Christ the King in Charlotte, and Holy Trinity in Gastonia and St. Mark's. This cost is approximately \$450 for the entire week's lodging, meals, and activities. St. Mark's will pay the registration fee of \$150 and parents will be responsible for the remaining \$300 balance which will be due in early February 2017. Once the youth return from their Campfirmation Week, the Alec Sigmon Memorial Summer Campership Fund will reimburse \$150 per camper to the family.

Confirmation 2016-17 Schedule Dates

September 14, 2016: Acolyte, Crucifer and Torchbearer Training will be held at 7 pm in the Nave immediately following our Oneederful Wednesday meal and Youth Bible study.

September 18, 2016: Catechism Student & Parent Orientation Meeting during Sunday School in the FAITH classroom located in the lower level Parish Hall. We ask that all Confirmation students and their parents be present at either worship service to be recognized.

September 23-25, 2016: Faith Alive! Campfirmation Retreats at Lutheridge (chaperoned)

October 2, 2016 – May 21, 2017: Sunday School Catechism from 9:30 – 10:20 am. (27 actual instruction periods) If you eat breakfast at the church, be upstairs in the Parish Hall by 9:20 am, then in the classroom by 9:30 am. We will treat you to breakfast together at Hardee's most holiday weekends-meet in the Parish Hall upstairs foyer entranceway.

Oct. 2 & 30, Nov. 6 & 20, Dec. 4 & 18, Jan. 15 & 29, Feb. 12 & 19, March 5 & March 19, April 2 & 16, May 7 & 14: Sunday Sermon Reports are due. A mid-semester report of attendance and Sermon Reports will be sent to each parent/student.

November 4-6, 2016: ELCA Youth Leadership Summit at Lutheridge. Please go to www.novusway.com for more information.

February 3-5, 2017: Catechism students attend Faith Alive! Retreat on "Holy Baptism: at Lutheridge www.novusway.com for more information. Registration form and \$73 will be due January 15, 2017. (chaperoned)

April 28-30, 2017: You may go to www.novusway.com for more information

July 16-22, 2017: Campfirmation Week at Lutherock with Pastor Gary & the Exodus Cluster for 1st level confirmation students. Your cost will be announced early 2017.

June 27- July 1, 2018: Youth Gathering in Houston. Various fundraisers throughout the year will be held for this fund. Confirmation students are expected to participate.