

# Confirmation Handbook



**Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church  
Shoreview, MN**

**2021-2022**

# Confirmation Handbook 2021-2022

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# Welcome

Confirmation at Shepherd of the Hills is a ministry designed for 6th-9th graders, though is open to all. It is a springboard of sorts into, what we hope, is a lifelong journey down the path that God lays before each person. Confirmation is a time for Christ Followers to learn about God and their faith in large group settings by worshiping God through song, drama and experiential teachings. We also learn through small groups, which meet regularly to talk, pray, serve, and play. Small groups give the students an opportunity to create open and honest relationships with their peers, their small group leaders, and our awesome God. These times in small groups create intentional space for relationships and help confirmands to establish a connection to the community in a deeper way.

Here at Shepherd we have a 3.25-year ministry. Youth generally begin in the fall of their 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. They will have three full years of learning and mentoring. In the fall of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year they will participate in the Affirmation of Baptism service on the last Sunday in October, this is their Rite of Confirmation Service.

## **SHEPHERD'S CONFIRMATION OBJECTIVES:**

When you have completed your time in Confirmation, we hope you:

- Know how deeply you are loved by God and that you have an important place in this community!
- Have an understanding of Scripture (the Bible) and know some ways it can be used in your life.
- Know how to live out your faith in the world in word (able to talk about your faith) and deed (service).

Because all of these things are living into the promises made for you at your Baptism, that you will be Affirming at your Rite of Confirmation.

## WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

Outside of church walls, "confirmation" is a run-of-the-mill word typically associated with the idea of verification—we can choose to receive "confirmation" when a package we have shipped reaches its destination, for example. Inside church walls, however, the word "confirmation" is used quite differently, and often to mean slightly different things. So what does it mean, anyway?

## WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT CONFIRMATION?

Most often, "confirmation" is used to describe the entire three-year educational program which serves to prepare students for the Affirmation of Baptism service and the life of discipleship that follows. During this time, a student is said to be *in* or *going to* confirmation. The Latin word *confirmare*, the earliest ancestor of "confirmation," literally means "to strengthen." Paired with the word "faith," this produces an appropriate definition of "confirmation" as used in this way—it is a time *to strengthen faith*.

"Confirmation" is also used to describe the special worship service that concludes this time of faith-strengthening. Therefore, a student looks forward to *being* confirmed *at* their confirmation service. Liturgically speaking, this is called an *Affirmation of Baptism*, a rite of passage which reminds both individuals and the assembly of the covenant made at our baptism—both God's promise to us and our call to live out those promises.

Martin Luther, however, reminds us that the Christian life is one of *daily* dying and rising with Christ in the waters of baptism. In this sense "confirmation" is something that *never stops happening*. It all begins with the sacrament of baptism, in which we are washed with water, marked with the cross of Christ, and filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a public celebration. It is *confirmed* in the Affirmation of Baptism service, in which we say "Yes!" to our baptism. And it *continues* in the daily renewal of our commitment to the baptismal life.

**In other words, confirmation is not an end, but a beginning.** During the Affirmation of Baptism liturgy, candidates are asked to "profess faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church."

**Additionally—and perhaps more importantly—candidates are asked:**

***"Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:***

***To live among God's faithful people,***

***To hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,***

***To proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,***

***To serve all people, following the example of Jesus,***

***and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?"***

This question from the heart of the Affirmation of Baptism liturgy paints a rather vivid picture of a life of faith, and as such it serves as the foundation of the confirmation program at Shepherd.

## WHAT DO WE STUDY IN CONFIRMATION?

- 2021-2022 Year: Catechism: The Lord's Prayer, The Creeds, and The Ten Commandments
- 2022-2023 Year: Christian Living and The Life of Jesus
- 2023-2024 Year: Old and New Testament (The Bible)

## CONFIRMATION IN A TIME OF COVID-19

Safety and flexibility is important when it comes to how we do faith formation here at Shepherd, especially in a pandemic. Throughout the past year, our programming for Confirmation was designed to be accessible both in person and virtually. We will continue to make space for this hybrid accessibility with the ability to move back and forth from in person to virtual if needed.

This gives space not only for flexibility should COVID-19 regulations bring us back to quarantine, but it also gives space for folks who are not feeling well to access confirmation from at home.

We will be starting the year off fully in person with the hopes of staying that way. These opportunities are simply a precaution and a step to make confirmation available if anyone misses a week or is not feeling well.

How this will look:

- As we currently have a large number of individuals not old enough for vaccination, we will maintain masks while inside at all confirmation events, with the exception of the main presenter on Large Group evenings only when presenting and only if vaccinated.
- We will maintain three feet social distancing.
- Food is only permitted when it is purchased as individually prepackaged items and while we are outside.

You will note changes to our Registration forms due to COVID. If you have any questions do not hesitate to reach out and ask.

## REGISTRATION AND FEES

Registration looks a little different this year. All Forms are web-based and can be found online at: <https://www.shepherdshoreview.org/kids-confirmation.html> We would ask that this form be turned in by September 15<sup>th</sup>. This form will allow our Small Group leaders and Shepherd Staff to be fully prepared for your youth to participate in our Confirmation events.

Shepherd does not have any Confirmation fees. At Baptism your congregation makes promises to support and pray for you in your new life in Christ. Confirmation is a mission of Shepherd and so we are stepping into that call by supporting the full financial cost of the programming. If you wish to make a donation on behalf of the Confirmation programming, you are welcome to do so anytime.

## WHEN AND HOW DO WE MEET?

We meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8pm beginning in September and we finish each year in the middle of May. At the beginning of each week, Confirmation, families will receive an email with reminders and information for Wednesday as well as announcements for upcoming events.

We will be focusing our lessons in a four-week rotation model that provides for in person, virtual, large group, small group, and family engagement.

- **Lesson Evenings—6:30pm-8pm onsite—all Confirmands are to bring a caring adult**
  - These evenings will be large group lesson focused. They will be led by the pastoral staff with the support of small group leaders and they will give the foundation for the rest of the month. **As such we are asking for a caring adult to join each confirmand who can be one more system of support throughout the month.**
  - These evenings will be recorded again this year for anyone who misses attending. You will not get the same level of learning and engagement if you are not present but all confirmands will need to watch this if they miss the in person lesson.
- **Small Group Time Meetings—6:30pm-8pm onsite in small groups**
  - These evenings will be small group focused. The guided conversations will be focused on the same topic as the previous week's lesson, designed by the pastoral staff and led by small group leaders. These weeks will also consist of safe onsite small group service projects.
- **Individual Project Weeks—This week will not have a designated meeting time and youth will be on their own to create a project based on the month's lesson focus. They can recruit parents, friends, family members, church staff, small group leaders, mentors, etc. to assist them.**
  - Our youth are creative and amazing people. This week is designed to help them connect what they are learning with things important to them in daily life. Projects can include, but are not limited to: journaling, taking pictures, creating a movie, writing a poem, drawing, woodwork, making a collage, writing a letter, interviewing an adult or friend, and so much more!
  - For this week we will have clear directions and simple projects to do. They are not intended to be a burden or a challenge added to your plate but a way for you to intentionally apply the monthly topic to your daily life
- **Presentation of Project Weeks—6:30-8:00pm onsite and in small groups.**
  - These evenings youth will meet in their small groups to present their projects, have check ins, and spend time in fellowship.

# CONFIRMATION CALENDAR—2021-2022

## The Small Catechism & Other Fun Things

### SEPTEMBER

**FOCUS: The 10 Commandments (1-3—Love God)**

- 15 Orientation—For PARENTS and YOUTH
- 22 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 29 Small Group Time

### OCTOBER

**FOCUS: The 10 Commandments (4-10—Love Others)**

- 2 *Day Retreat onsite at Shepherd*
- 6 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 13 Small Group Time
- 20 Individual Project Week
- 27 9th Graders: Confirmation Service Prep/  
6th-8th Graders: Presentation of Projects
- 31 Confirmation Sunday**

### NOVEMBER

**FOCUS: The Creeds**

- 3 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 10 Small Group Time
- 17 Individual Project Week...Turn your projects in virtually before December 1
- 24 Pies For Praise & Thanksgiving Eve Worship

### DECEMBER

**FOCUS: Augsburg Confessions/Lutheran Confessions/Book of Concord**

- 1 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 8 Small Group Time
- 15 Individual Project Week/Christmas Party
- 22 Presentation of Projects
- 29 No Confirmation—Merry Christmas/Happy New Year

### JANUARY

**FOCUS: The Lord's Prayer**

- 5 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 12 Small Group Time
- 19 Individual Project Week
- 26 Presentation of Projects

### FEBRUARY

**FOCUS: Holy Communion**

- 2 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 9 Small Group Time
- 16 Individual Project Week
- 23 Presentation of Projects

### MARCH

**FOCUS: Holy Baptism**

- 2 Ash Wednesday Worship
- 9 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 16 Small Group Time
- 23 Individual Project Week
- 30 Presentation of Projects

### APRIL

**FOCUS: Confession & Forgiveness**

- 6 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 13 Small Group Time
- Holy Week*
- 20 Individual Project Week
- 27 Presentation of Projects

### MAY

**FOCUS: Daily Prayers**

- 4 Lesson—Youth & Parents
- 11 Small Group Time
- 18 End of the Year Party

\*Spring Retreat TBD—hoping to host it at Gustavus College

\*\*Please note that all dates were chosen carefully after conferring with known and accessible 2021-2022 school calendars, as well as, the overarching Shepherd calendar. We know that some of our dates overlap with other events and apologize upfront for this. With this number of calendars, it unfortunately, cannot always be avoided.

## RETREATS

Retreats are a part of Shepherd's Confirmation Programming because it is one of the best ways for us to build relationships within small groups and also across our full Confirmation group. These are intended to be times of fun, food, fellowship, games, worship, and learning.

**Fall Retreat:** October 2<sup>nd</sup> we will host our Fall Retreat onsite at Shepherd from 9am-4pm. This will be done in the same fashion as our 2021 Spring Retreat. We will be outside if the weather is good with indoor options available if inclement weather occurs.

**Spring Retreat:** We are hoping to host our Spring Retreat at Gustavus Adolphus College. They have currently suspended all retreat scheduling until January 2022. This is hoped to be an overnight retreat on campus. Once we have solidified with Gustavus dates and more information will be provided immediately so you can get this on your calendars.

## CONFIRMATION MENTORS

At this time, Confirmation Mentors are on hold until it is safe to be meeting one on one with others. We are hoping that Confirmation Mentors will begin in December for Advent. When that happens, youth are responsible for assisting in choosing their mentor. A would be a good mentor could be:

- An adult who is not related to you or your immediate family.
- A person who is a member of our congregation.
- Someone who can meet with you on Wednesday evenings during the whole season of Advent or Lent (We would prefer new mentors at each season).
- Someone who is not your current confirmation small group leader.
- Someone who you might know and want to get to know better.
- Someone who you might not know very well but would like to get to know better.

More information will be passed out when it becomes safe for mentors to begin meeting.

## FOR THOSE BEING CONFIRMED THIS FALL

**Statement of Faith**—In the final year of Confirmation, each confirmand is asked to complete a Statement of Faith. Directions have been sent out and The Statement of Faith assignment is due September 12.

**Rite of Confirmation**—Confirmation Sunday is held on the last Sunday of October each fall. The Rite of Confirmation is when you stand in front of the congregation and make a public profession of your faith, and state that you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism. Your parents/immediate family, Godparents, mentors and pastoral staff will pray over you that you will be empowered to live out your faith in everyday life.

Those being confirmed will be making stoles to wear during worship. Information will be provided on stoles soon. The Wednesday prior to Confirmation Sunday each confirmand will be present for a worship rehearsal and group pictures.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It takes a village to raise a child! That is also key in our Confirmation ministry here at Shepherd. We do ask that parents engage and invest time in the faith learning of your child/ren as we acknowledge you are the main faith educators and we are simply here to support you. With that, we require that our parents be involved in some aspect of the Confirmation program or in the life of Shepherd. Here are some examples of ways you can be involved during your youth's time in confirmation:

- Confirmation Small Group Leader
- Confirmation Small Group Leader Sub
- Confirmation Mentor to another youth
- Retreat chaperone
- Sunday mornings serving in worship
- Other ways you can think of that speak to your own gifts and interests.

If you have questions, please, reach out to Pastor Renee or Sister Tashina.

## EXPECTATIONS

In order to make Confirmation the best experience it can be, we agree to follow these guidelines:

1. We value LOVE: Love transmits to caring, supporting, respecting others. This includes other youth, adults, and staff.
2. We value punctuality: Be where you are supposed to be ... and on time.
3. We value coming to class prepared: Please bring your Bibles and, a writing utensil with you to each session.
4. We value respecting other people and property:
  - Do not distract others during times of prayer, worship, and teaching—Keep your hands to yourself!
  - Making fun of others, bullying, and unkind or destructive behaviors are unacceptable.
  - Listen to and respect leaders and peers.
  - Damage done to the property of the church, in rental vans, on retreats or anywhere we go will be paid for and restored by those responsible.
5. We value safety and little to no distractions during Confirmation, at worship, or other activities at church. Therefore, refrain from using the following items in class or worship:
  - Cell phones/Electronic devices (unless directed to do so by an adult leader)
  - Food/Drinks\*
  - Offensive clothing (Follow school guidelines)
  - Illegal substances
  - Weapons
6. We value bringing friends to check out Shepherd of the Hills, Confirmation, or any part of the congregation. That is how churches grow, but most importantly how people come to connect with Jesus! Thus, we expect you to:
  - Ask permission from your leader before the day they come or before the class begins.
  - Introduce them to the class when asked to.
  - Make sure your friend understands the purpose of Confirmation, and the respect and seriousness needed to be present.

\*During the COVID-19 pandemic, food is only permitted when it is purchased as individually prepackaged items, eaten outside. PLEASE NOTE: No wrappers can be left in the rooms we use due to preschool peanut allergies.

## **Shepherd Staff Contact Info:**

Do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

Church Main Phone Number: 651.483.5419

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