

Confirmation FAQ

Is Confirmation for everyone?

- Yes, we believe that Confirmation is an important milestone, tradition and step in the spiritual formation of a student. We also recognize that every family is different and is on a different journey. We offer many options for middle school students to engage with the Student Ministry department and also offer Confirmation as a supplement to families wishing to pass along the doctrine and traditions of the Lutheran faith.

How old does my student have to be?

- Students usually participate in Confirmation during their 7th and 8th grade year, with the Confirmation ceremony occurring in May of the 8th grade year. Students who walk through Confirmation are confirming their faith and baptism. If your student needs to be baptized please contact **Laura Pierson at lpierson@salem4u.com**.

What are the expectations of Confirmation and why are they important?

- Doctrine Study – The study of doctrine and what we believe has always been at the core of the Confirmation journey since early on. Middle school is the time where students get the opportunity to learn more deeply about the doctrine of Christianity and the core beliefs of the Lutheran denomination.
- Sermon Outlines - We not only desire for our students to be regular worship but we also like to help them process the messages. So, we've created a simple form for students to fill out online as a part of the online classroom, where students can fill out sermon reflections. We ask that over the course of the year students fill out 8 of these reflections.
- Discussion Groups – We believe important faith formation occurs in small groups and hope to create a small community of students with a mentor that can be there to walk through the challenging moments of adolescents together.
- Parent service opportunities – We believe partnering with parents and having students witness parent involvement in ministry greatly improves the likelihood that students will remain involved in ministry as they reach adulthood. This may include helping with the Confirmation gala, attending events, chaperoning trips or being a discussion group mentor on Sunday mornings.
- Student service opportunities – We believe serving and processing through the serving experience is one of the best ways for our students to learn and grow in their faith. After students complete a service experience, we simply ask that they go to the google classroom to log it and tell us about what they did and what they learned. That over the course of the year students will complete 2 service experiences and reflections.

- Testimony - 8th Grade students will go through a testimony writing workshop in the spring of their 8th grade year and then will be given an opportunity to share their testimony prior to being confirmed.

What are the key dates for parent classes and discussion groups?

- Discussion Groups – Once a month on Sundays at 9:30 am during Salem’s new “Connect Time”.
 - September 27
 - October 25
 - November 15 (an exception to meeting at the end of the month to avoid Thanksgiving)
 - January 24
 - February 28
 - March 28
- Sunday morning 7th grade parent and student Communion classes
 - October 11, 2020
 - October 18, 2020
- First Communion for 7th graders – October 25, 2020
- Sunday morning 8th grade parent and student Blessing and Testimony classes
 - April 11
 - April 18
 - April 25
- Confirmation Gala – May 1, 2021
- Confirmation – May 2, 2021

Who comes to the Discussion Groups?

- Discussion groups are for the Confirmation students. It is our chance to talk to them about the material that families have been working through at home. We are looking for parents who are interested in attending as an adult mentor to a group of students. They will sit as groups on Sunday mornings and pray for them through the week. If this interests you, please email Ashley Reed (areed@saalem4u.com).

What if my student has to miss a discussion group?

- We allow students to miss one discussion group without making it up. If they miss a second, it is the student’s responsibility to schedule a time to meet with the Tyler or Arleah and discuss the material within 30 days of the missed discussion group.

How does my student get registered for Confirmation?

- Fill out the registration form on the Salem Student Ministries tab of the website, Church Center, or email Ashley Reed at areed@salem4u.com for a direct link. After you have registered you will be given the code for the classroom as well as will be added to the list for emails and other forms of contact.

How is the Confirmation structured?

- You and your student will be given access to your online Google Classroom
- Students will receive monthly units that include reading, journaling, reflection, check -in forms.
- At the end of every unit students and mentors will meet for Discussion Groups on a Sunday during the 9:30 am “Connect Time” to review material to participate in group activities.

Who will be teaching and leading Sunday morning discussion groups or the parent/student classes?

- Tyler Tollefson and Arleah Talbott will lead Sunday morning discussions for students
- Parent and student classes will include teaching by the Pastors and staff.
 - Parent/Student Classes
 - Fall 7th Grade Student and Parent Classes (Communion Instruction)
 - Spring 8th Grade Student and Parents Classes (Blessing and Testimony)

Why self-study?

- While solid teaching is an important part of our spiritual growth, the personal disciplines of prayer and Bible study are essential for continued, sustained growth. In a self-study model we are putting greater responsibility on students to take ownership of their spiritual growth. We are also helping them develop habits and disciplines that will serve them over their entire faith journey. We also wish to inspire an open communication channel between mentors, students, parents and friends that will begin faith conversations that continue into adulthood.

What are the benefits of parents being involved in this meaningful process?

- In every student’s life, the influence of a family is always greater than the influence of a church. No matter what, a student’s family (not their church) will always be the biggest influence in their lives. It is ideal to partner with the most powerful, influential people in our students’ lives in order to influence their faith. We use the term “partner” for a reason - because parents and the church need each other. We need to team up with parents because they’re ultimately the biggest influence on their own kids’ spirituality. Parents need to team up with the local church because their kids need to see faith in Jesus and missional living modeled from a whole community of believers.

How long will it take?

- The program is designed to take 2 school years and will be spaced into self-paced monthly sections. Units will become available at the first of the month and then are due at the end of the month. At the conclusion of a unit we will meet for the Sunday Morning discussion group.

How does my student complete service hours or sermon notes?

- You will find a form to report service experiences and submit sermon notes via form or a photo within the student google classroom you. We ask that they complete 2 service experience reflections and 8 sermon notes a year. Paper forms or a PDF to print is available by request.

What about First Communion?

- There will be a 7th grade fall student/parent class (October 1 and 18) about what communion means to us as a church body. First communion will then occur Reformation Sunday during the 10:45 service of the students 7th grade year (October 25, 2020).

Is there a cost for the Confirmation program and what does that cover?

- *This is a change this year. This year the program will cost \$60 total. All other Junior High functions will be charged prior to those events. This includes trips and retreats. Subsequent Journals will also cost \$5.

What are the Confirmation expectations for a 7th Grader?

- Parent/Student classes - Fall preceding first communion
- Attending the Discussion Groups
- Completing the Journal and its online content
- 8 Sermon notes
- 2 Volunteer Reflections
- Volunteering at the Gala

What are the Confirmation expectations for an 8th Grader?

- Parent/Student classes - Spring (Students - Testimony class, Parents - Blessing class)
- Attending the Discussion Groups
- Completing the Journal and its online content
- 8 Sermon notes
- 2 Volunteer Reflections
- Pastor meeting prior to Confirmation ceremony
- Attending the Gala

What does a month in Confirmation look like?

- Log in to online class at the beginning of the month to watch the introduction video and answer discussion question
- Self-pace through the month - read/reflect/write/respond through the assigned section of the Journal and its Bible/ Small Catechism content
- Log in to the online class to complete the check in and the quiz
- Come to the discussion ready to interact, have fun, apply and discuss content with your small group leader, classmates, and student ministries team.