

Junior Confirmation



Student Handbook 2021-2022

**Redeemer by the Sea Lutheran Church
Carlsbad, CA**

CONFIRMATION ORIENTATION AGENDA

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WHAT IS CONFIRMATION, ANYWAY?

Confirmation & Its Baptismal Connection

Confirmation is directly anchored to the commitments parents make before God on behalf of their children on the day of their baptism. Together, Godparents, parents and the congregation commit themselves to the task of seeing that every baptized child is “brought up in the true knowledge and worship of God...” The objective our Confirmation program is dedicated to serve is the noble and necessary endeavor of helping each youth explore the Christian faith and teachings so that they might personally affirm their baptismal grace.

Confirmation & Its Jewish Connection

Confirmation is to Christians what the bar mitzvah is for the Jewish community. Junior High youth participate in a course of instruction designed to explore the ways in which God has revealed Himself in Scripture while preparing to be welcomed in the church as an adult/confirmed member. Emphasis is placed on what Christians believe, teach and confess, according to Holy Scripture.

Confirmation & Its Lutheran Connection

Lutherans have always seen Confirmation as an integral part of Christian discipleship. Luther and his fellow reformers penned the Large and Small Catechisms for that specific purpose. Although the core curriculum has varied from generation to generation, most programs emphasize a thorough understanding of the Ten Commandments, Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Lord's Supper and Confession/Absolution.

Confirmation & Its Discipleship Connection

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in Matthew 28 announced the charter of all Christianity: To “make disciples of all nations”, (first) baptizing and then “teaching them everything” He had commanded. Confirmation is one of the ways we carry out Christ's Biblical mandate to teach the faith.

There are so many mixed and conflicting messages circulating today about God and His love. Confirmation is one of the Church's primary tools designed to equip today's youth to better discern what is truly good, right and salutary in our Lord's eyes.

Through catechism young people gain an understanding of how God works in the lives of His people. It helps them rightly distinguish what God expects of us (*Law*) from how God cares for us (*Gospel*). It helps them come to grips with the two warring natures within each believer's heart (the old Adam and the new man – *Romans 7:15-20*). It helps them appreciate that the Christian's daily walk is a constant battle against the forces of evil and to applaud the victory that has already been won for us upon the cross of Calvary.

Confirmation provides the single best opportunity for the congregation's staff to build positive relationships while earning the right to shepherd young students into spiritual maturity. The issues and opportunities that present themselves to today's youth are staggering. Their core values and foundational beliefs will be severely challenged. Confirmation is a time when each student's doubts and questions can be directed to the foot of the cross in an affirming and loving Christian environment.

Confirmation is important because it is designed specifically for the time in each student's life when their spiritual, physical and emotional development is perhaps most aggressive. Because life is a journey, Confirmation is as well. It is not so much a program to be experienced and a graduation to be celebrated as it is the second of a lifetime of steps in discipleship that follows on the heels of each child's enrollment in Sunday School. It is not an end unto itself, but an important training event in each person's developing and intimate walk with their Lord.

Following successful completion of the confirmation program and the affirmation of their baptismal grace, each student is considered an “adult” member of the congregation! Confirmed members are expected to participate in the Lord's Supper regularly, to use their God-given gifts to the glory of His name, and to dedicate themselves to the noble task of making many more disciples of all nations!

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

1. CURRICULUM

There are two (2) years of instruction. Typically, students begin in the 7th grade, but prior circumstances may require a later start. Many catechumens blossom spiritually within the allotted time. However, some students will need additional effort to develop the level of spiritual maturity expected of a child of God preparing to be confirmed. Confirmation is not a “graduation.” It is a privilege to be confirmed. It is not a right nor is it a rite of passage! It is a public affirmation of faith development and the acknowledgment of emerging spiritual maturity. Confirmation is therefore, the inevitable result of measurable progress in the faith life of an individual.

2. REVIEWS

In some churches, confirmation is a function of how much you can memorize. Not at Redeemer! In our congregation, confirmation is a measurement of how much of what you know is being applied to how you live. The pastor and elders will be reviewing each student’s spiritual progress (two times per year, plus an oral review), probing to find out just how much instruction is being applied in their daily life. To be certain of each youth’s readiness, a final comprehensive practical review will be given to catechumens who are finished with their academic work, have completed an in-depth spiritual development plan, and have been recommended to be confirmed by the pastor and elders.

3. WORSHIP & YOUTH GROUP

So many youths today find the formal worship setting to be almost impossible to understand. The music and the language simply do not communicate much to them. Not at Redeemer! The youth at our church are sure to find a format that speaks to their heart at one of our two distinct Sunday morning services. At various other times, junior high youth will gather for activities and Bible Study. In addition to making close friends, the youth will have the chance to apply their learning to their own lives.

4. THE SYSTEMIC MODEL

One of the major frustrations with confirmation today is the “unlearning” that takes place away from the classroom. Not at Redeemer! This catechetical model is built around you and your FAMILY. It is a systemic model designed specifically to address the spiritual life in each household and not just the faith development of an individual.

5. LEARNING STYLES

Did you know that there are seven recognized intelligences and five distinct ways in which people learn? Most confirmation programs only allow for the “lecture learner.” Not at Redeemer! Small group experiences, times of reflection and hands on activities and projects as well as some “fun and games” allow students with various learning styles to work with the classroom concepts in ways that are more relevant to them.

6. HOMEWORK

It is not uncommon to find a member of the family who is “spiritually challenged” creating inner conflict for the student who loves the Lord and his family as well. This places the Church and home in obvious tension. Not at Redeemer! Homework will be assigned that reinforces the classroom learning in the context of the “home.” It is designed to create regular opportunities for families to discuss values, and impact members of households who are passively or aggressively resisting faith development.

7. SERVICE HOURS

Many people have been taught that faith and actions are something other than different sides of the same coin. Not at Redeemer! “Service Hours” are included in order to help students discover their talents while learning the Biblical truth that though works never save us (Eph.2:8-9) “faith without works is dead” (James 2:14-20). We would like the students to participate in “Secret Service” also – this is something that you do for another person/family and accepting no money without their knowledge. See the letter you can leave upon your completion at the end of the handbook.

FIVE EXPECTATIONS

1. CLASS ATTENDANCE

- ❖ Each student is responsible for attending each scheduled class. Schedule conflicts must be cleared through your teacher, Pastor Augie or the Office prior to the absence. Sicknesses will be excused if reported ahead of time.
- ❖ Parents or their appointed representatives are considered a fundamental part of the way this program is structured. Parents may be asked to attend some classes/events and assist with some aspect of class administration. Parents are also expected work on homework assignments and other projects (as directed) with their students as well as be responsible for monitoring and approving memory work.
- ❖ Bibles and Writing Instruments are required at every class – it is best for each student to have their own Bible (and Catechism during “doctrine” years), for familiarity and note-taking.
- ❖ Punctuality (e.g. being on time) is expected. Especially our class time is limited to a little less than one hour. Being late will make learning more difficult and the learning process more frustrating to the student.
- ❖ Tests & Quizzes may be given during class time, or sent home as homework. In some cases, parents may be asked to verify that no study or note aids were used during completion of the exam.

2. WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

- ❖ The Sabbath rolls around once a week, not every-so-often. Worship attendance is foundational to the life of a believer. Absenteeism will have negative consequences for the student preparation for being confirmed.
- ❖ Active participation through acolyting, sermon note -taking, and the like are expected.
Note: Patterns of worship that contradict the Word of God will directly affect a student’s recommendation for readiness to be confirmed.

Expectations:

Worship Notes: You will be asked to complete 10 worship/sermon notes. These are so that you can reflect not only on the sermon/message, but on your whole worship experience.

Lent & Advent – These seasons offer additional opportunities for spiritual preparation. Catechumens discovering the importance of repentance and confession in their spiritual growth as well as looking forward to Christ’s return with hope are expected to attend at least three Lenten or Advent services (**Wednesdays, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Christmas Eve, etc..**)

3. BIBLE STUDY / HOMEWORK

- ❖ The study of God’s Word is the source of wisdom and knowledge.
- ❖ Active and positive involvement in Junior High Youth Group, Scripture & Catechism memorization, as well as completion of your assigned confirmation homework is expected.
Note: Patterns of participation that imply a disinterest in the pursuit of wisdom will directly affect a student’s recommendation for readiness to be confirmed.

Expectations:

Homework: These are intended to get the student reading the Bible, using the Catechism, and extending the learning into their life. It is expected that parents will assist the student with homework as necessary. Homework assignment is due at the next class, unless stated otherwise. Late homework will receive a reduction in grade

End of Year Family Project: The families of our class will be asked to work together on a project that will be presented to the congregation. This is not only a time of bonding for families and for the class, but it provides a great opportunity to share what we are learning with the whole church. Be creative -- it’s sure to be fun! See the SAMPLE rubric for this project in the resource section.

4. JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP ATTENDANCE

- ❖ In addition to class time, Junior High Youth Group gatherings, fun events and outings for Junior & Senior High students are scheduled. These events allow you to relax and better connect with your fellow students. The fun and casual atmosphere gives you a wonderful opportunity to INVITE your friends! Many of your friends are just waiting for an invitation to experience Christ and the joy and acceptance He offers!
- ❖ It is hoped that our fun and learning events will deepen Christian friendships while strengthening spiritual development in a safe environment. The Junior High events & classes also provide opportunities to inwardly learn and digest the Scriptures on a more personal level. The dialogue that is developed not only reinforces classroom learning, but encourages and promotes the building up of positive relationships within the group and with other students at Redeemer. Attendance at these events is strongly encouraged.
- ❖ Retreats, gatherings, and trips are as much a part of confirmation as is the academic elements of Sunday morning.
Note: Failure to participate will impede the development of a student's readiness to be confirmed.

Upcoming:

Some events planned for this year are (see your schedule for dates):

The Rite of Beginning: Parents and youth are to be present at Worship on Sunday, September 26th. At the appointed time in the service, youth who are beginning confirmation for the first time or who are entering their second year, will be asked to come forward. Parents and sponsors will be asked to accompany them. Together we shall pray for the Lord's Spirit as confirmation begins, celebrate the promises made at each youth's baptism, and dedicate ourselves to seek first the Kingdom of God and all its righteousness.

District Junior Youth Gathering / Retreat: If our District offers a gathering this year, the theme, cost, speaker, and other details will be released as that information becomes available. These events are designed to be a time of focused and relevant learning for your student, while at the same time provide a change of pace that is energizing and motivating. This event will be attended by hundreds of teens from around our District. It will include dramas, music, and fun activities in the outdoors. It will also include opportunity for introspection and Bible learning. Students will be challenged to get outside their comfort-zone!

Special Service(s) and Outreach Events: Catechumens are expected to participate in congregational outreach events, such as REDEEMER SERVES! Participation at such event will count as service hours.

Summer Mission Experience: this is intended to be an intense time of applying the year's learning to your life as you put your Christian beliefs to work in the real world! This experience gives you the opportunity to refocus the "lens" of your life on God and his purposes. Often through this kind of powerful service and outreach you gain better insights into God's perspective on the world. This may be a brand new experience that will bring you out of your comfort zone, but it promises to be a life-changing experience you won't want to miss!

5. SERVICE HOURS

- ❖ After coming to faith in Christ, service to others in the Lord's Name is what the life of the Christian is all about! The hardest part about serving is making up your mind to do it! And "doing it" is always easier when others are "doing it" with you! But more important than that - you will gain the satisfaction of knowing that you have just been the hands and feet of Christ to someone else!

Expectations:

Number of Hours: Thirty (30) Service hours are required of every student during the scheduled year of confirmation.

Earning Hours: These hours can be satisfied by volunteering to acolyte (1 hr./time), or helping with special congregational events (whether specifically designed for youth) or by designing project(s) that use your special spiritual gifts to the glory of God and the building up of the Body (Church) of Christ. Up to 15 Hours earned over and above the 30 required may be carried over into the second year of confirmation to meet that year's requirements. Some of the events listed above can be considered for service hours. There are additional suggestions below.

Secret Service Project: We would like the students to participate in some sort of "Secret Service" - this is something that you do for another person/family (accepting no money) without their knowledge. A letter is available for you that you can leave upon your completion of the secret service project.

Service Project Reflection: In order to receive credit for Service Hours, each student must submit the "Service Project Reflection". An adult supervising the hours must sign the form that is to be submitted. Only submittals that are signed and dated will be accepted.

"Double Counted" Hours: If you are completing Service Hours for another organization (for example Scouts or Honor Society), you may utilize 15 of those hours toward confirmation. The rest must be unique to Redeemer by the Sea.

Ideas and opportunities to Serve

Sunday Mornings

Help with Sunday School (if needed)
Choir or Praise Team
Ushering, Greeting or Acolyting
Handing out informational material before or after services
Volunteering to help at the Welcome Table
Helping with Sunday Refreshments
Playing an instrument for worship
Offering special prayers at services
Straightening chairs before or after services
Helping Setup or Takedown tables/chairs for classes and meetings
Helping in the church nursery
Helping set up for communion
Liturgical Dance
Sharpening Pew Pencils
Reading books to younger school children at church or pre-School
Reading a Scripture lesson at services

At the Office

Stuffing Bulletins, newsletters, or other mailings
Filing
Pickup trash around the property
Washing Windows
Wiping down tables and chairs
Planting flowers and maintaining them
Mopping & Vacuuming

Community

Helping with any church outreach or Servant Evangelism event
Door-to-Door invitations to come to our church
Doing a fund raiser
Clothing Drives
Food Drives
Rummage Sale
Visiting nursing homes and senior care centers
Baby-sitting for families in their homes (unpaid)
Making meals for the sick
Organizing help for the homeless

Other Suggestions

Baking unleavened bread for special services
Putting together a church athletic event
Visiting the hospitalized
Vacation Bible School
Redeemer Serves!
Joining the prayer team
Helping at Redeemer Kindergarten & Preschool
Making encouraging phone calls on shut-ins
Setting up tables and chairs for special church events
Helping call youth/church members for special events
...And more!

Progress Reports

Attendance, Homework, Test & Quiz Scores, Worship Notes and Service Hours will be tracked throughout the year, with progress reports prepared after each Elder Interview. Parents may request intermediate progress reports at any time. You are encouraged to ask any questions and address any issues or concerns early on. Homeworks, and Worship Notes / Service Hour Reflection Templates will be available electronically, if extra copies are needed.

Homework: All homeworks are to be turned in on time. It is very difficult to catch up if students fall behind. Therefore there may be incentives throughout the year to encourage on-time completion of homework assignments.

Service Hours: Each Service Hour Reflection that is handed in will be recorded separately, however you may report multiple hours on a single form as long as it is clear that the projects are related. (For example, one form could be turned in for two separate acolyte service times.)

Worship Notes: You are required to hand in 10 Worship Notes throughout the year, but we ask that 3 are turned in by Christmas, 6 by Easter and 10 by the end of the class year.

Catechism Family Project

Due: Brought to class on APRIL 10, 2022. If you will not be at class that day, please drop off your project prior to that day to receive full credit.

Assignment: Prepare a presentation/project on a “chief part” or component of the Small Catechism that depicts or teaches that topic to your audience. You can do this in any way that sparks your interest and makes the learning material instructive and engaging for your audience.

Some suggested formats include (but are not limited to):

1. A Poster
2. A PowerPoint Presentation
3. A Video
4. Man on the Street Interviews
5. A Children’s Book
6. An Essay

Your project should include:

1. Your name (5pts)
2. The name of your chief part or component of the Small Catechism (5 pts)
3. Relevant Questions and Explanations for that chief part (40 pts)
4. At least two relevant Bible verses for that chief part (20 pts)
5. Why this chief part is important to you and to your hearers (15 pts)
6. Any other information you find relevant: pictures, maps, history, facts or anything else (20 pts)
7. Be creative & have fun! (5 pts)
8. (5 points deducted per day for late projects).

Remember: parents, students and siblings are all encouraged to work on this project together. It’s a family project 😊

There is a maximum of 110 pts. A prize is awarded to each project that receives a score of 85 out of 110.

REDEEMER BY THE SEA LUTHERAN CHURCH

TO: STUDENTS / PARENTS
FROM: PASTOR AUGIE
SUBJECT: STUDENT ACOLYTES
DATE: 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

GENERAL

Some things to remember:

- Serving is a privilege, not a right.
- You are serving God in God’s house – please do so with an attitude of respect and reverence. (proper attire – dress “smartly,” no hats, no chewing gum.)
- Others are depending on you – promptness and responsibility are important.
- Others must work with you – neatness and courtesy are a must.
- Remember the Lord’s call for us to serve others. If the elders, ushers, greeters, music team or altar guild need help, please make yourself available during setup and cleanup

ACOLYTE DUTIES

Your main areas of responsibility as an acolyte are:

- Lighting and extinguishing the candles on the altar and the wall behind the altar
- Assisting at the Communion (collecting used individual cups)
- Assisting pastor. (This means to “be on the lookout” ... We may need lights, sound and temperature levels adjusted. There may be a quick message to bring to an elder)
- Please be sure to arrive at least 10 minutes before the service. You may sit with your family. At special services, you may need to wear robes and sit up front, and you may need to carry the processional cross

SCHEDULING

Acolytes can serve at either the 8:30 or 10:45 service. Please make your preferences known to whomever is preparing the schedule. However, each of you will be asked to serve at least one 8:30am and one 10:45am service to gain the experience of both worship styles. In the event that you cannot serve when scheduled, it is your responsibility to find a replacement and to call the person in charge of scheduling.

Thank you for your willingness to serve God. May God Bless you richly!

Confirmation Covenant

Welcome to Redeemer by the Sea Lutheran Church's Confirmation ministry. This book contains essential information.

1. THE PURPOSE OF CONFIRMATION:

The confirmation ministry of Redeemer by the Sea exists in order to help parents create within their child a vibrant faith relationship with Jesus Christ, as well as developing an understanding of the principle beliefs of the Lutheran Church.

As you can see by our purpose, we are here to assist parents in the faith formation process of their children. Research makes it clear that parents are the key to the faith formation process in young people. Our pastoral and teaching staff can teach and attempt to influence, but it is the parents' words, and more importantly their behavior regarding faith issues, that has the most profound affect on the faith development process. For this reason there are expectations for both students AND parents as part of our confirmation ministry.

2. PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS – Parents enrolling their son or daughter in our confirmation ministry are expected:

- A) To regularly attend worship
- B) To ensure that your son or daughter attends worship & confirmation classes on a regular and ongoing basis.
- C) To participate in homework and project assignments with your student as appropriate, as well as monitor their service hours, sermon notes and other logging items on the forms provided.
- D) To actively encourage your son/daughter to take part in all confirmation activities (i.e. class time, youth group studies, events and retreats).
- E) To arrive to class and events a few minutes BEFORE the event actually begins.
- F) To support the activities of the class by volunteering to serve in various parental roles.
- G) To pray for your son or daughter, their fellow students and the confirmation program staff.

3. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: - Students enrolled in Redeemer's confirmation ministry are expected:

- A) To attend confirmation classes and worship on a regular and ongoing basis.
- B) To attend, and actively participate in, all confirmation activities (i.e. class time, youth group studies, events and retreats).
- C) To be on time to all classes and activities.
- D) To complete any assigned course work in a thorough fashion.
- E) To be considerate, and polite to other students, parents, and staff.
- F) To complete homework and projects.
- G) To strive to live, at all times, in accordance with God's commands. (*With the help of God*)



Confirmation Covenant

I/We the parents of _____ have read the information contained in this booklet and by the power of God fully intend to work toward building within our child a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We will also support those teaching and leading our confirmation ministry by promising to uphold the expectations set out for parents of confirmation students at Redeemer by the Sea Lutheran Church.

(one or both) Parent's signature

Date

I, _____, having read the information contained in this booklet and by the power of God, do intend to grow in my faith and personal relationship with Jesus Christ, God's only Son, and my Savior. I will do my best to support, respect, and care for those leading and those joining me in the confirmation program at Redeemer by the Sea. I understand the expectations for students and promise to fulfill these expectations to the best of my ability.

Student signature

Date

