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A LUTHERAN MINISTRY

Confirmation Handbook

2023 - 2024

MIDDLE SCHOOL

MINISTRY



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FAMILY MINISTRIES

What is the **Confirmation Track**?

Confirmation at Christ Lincoln is an opportunity to affirm the vows that were often spoken on behalf of students at their Baptism. Our Wednesday night teaching times and small group discussions give students a chance to explore what it means to be a Lutheran Christian. If students stay on the Confirmation Track through middle school and choose to be confirmed, they will make a public confession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord on the last Sunday in October of their 9th grade year.

What is our **Confirmation Philosophy**?

At Christ Lincoln, we believe that it is our responsibility to provide parents with tools to help raise their children in the faith. Martin Luther intended for parents to use the questions, answers, and explanations in his Small Catechism as a tool to raise their children to know and love God.

Our hope is that you, the spiritual leader of your household, will take time each week to talk with your children about what they're learning on Wednesdays and Sundays and how God's Word applies to their relationships, lives at school, and eventual professional callings.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 sets the example for how household faith leaders are to **connect children to Christ and His Word**:
"these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

Please use the provided class code to enroll in the Remind messaging system, through which you can choose to receive emails, texts, or push notifications on your phone.

Follow us on Facebook (search "Christ Lincoln Middle School Ministry") **and on Instagram** [@middleschoolchristlincoln] to see pictures of our activities and for reminders about special events.

Visit the Christ Lincoln Middle School Ministry webpage at christlincoln.org/middleschool/ for **electronic copies** of your Confirmation folder materials, for **links to video lessons**, and to **register for events** like the Nebraska District Youth Gathering or Summer Mission Trip.

Small Group Leaders will text you and your child (with your permission) with details for **Small Group Fun Nights** and **Impact Nights**. Please be aware of any timing/location changes that occur on these fellowship and service nights.

Your **registration** cost each year helps us cover the costs of materials, snacks, your Catechism, backpack, as well as Small Group Fun Nights and Impact [service] projects. Financial assistance is available; please speak to the Director of Middle School Ministry.

When you **bring a friend**, please let them know of our expectations and group values. Visitors are encouraged and are asked to fill out a **guest card** found in your leader's table bin. Please do not invite one-time visitors to your Small Group Fun Nights or Impact Nights.

What is expected of **Parents?** (continued)

- **Model Bible study for your child.** If your child participates in the Sunday morning Middle School Bible study, take that time to join in a Bible study yourself. If your child chooses to complete their Bible journal at a different time in the week, read the assigned chapters yourself and talk about them together.
- At the end of each semester, work with your student to **prepare for their Confirmation** interview.
- **Pray together** as a family and personally for your children.
- **Encourage your child to participate** in youth gatherings, summer trips, and other youth group events. When your child invites a friend to be a part of our church community, help them by connecting with the friend's parents and family.

What else do I **need to know?**

Class cancellations due to bad weather will be announced on Wednesdays by 3:00pm. We do not always follow school district decisions! If you opted to receive text messaging, you will receive a text from us to let you know of the decision. Announcements will also be posted on the front banner of the Christ Lincoln website.

If your student has any **special educational or behavioral needs**, please inform the Director of Middle School Ministry. We want all our students to learn in a way that suits them best. If you inform us of your child's needs, we can more effectively help them succeed.

What is the **end goal** of Confirmation?

We seek to guide students as they develop a lifestyle of following Jesus [discipleship]. Each step of the Confirmation journey is intended to model a discipleship lifestyle that balances:

- **ROWS**: Worshipping weekly to hear God's Word, share His sacraments, pray, and praise the creator for His eternal love.
- **CIRCLES**: Gathering for community where we develop authentic relationships, pray and study God's Word together, and encourage each other in faith.
- **ARROWS**: Serving the Church and world because God's love for us compels us to show love for our neighbor.
- **DOTS**: Devoting our life to prayer, studying God's Word, and being with God to strengthen our faith, hope, and love.

Details about each of these goals and how we track progress to them may be found on the "Confirmation Expectations" page in your folder.

Who is Confirmation for?

Students entering grades 6, 7, and 8 (or the equivalent level, if homeschooled) are eligible.

Registering for the Confirmation Track does not necessitate that confirmation will be the end result. Rather, we hope that as the student learns more about Jesus and how faith is expressed in daily life, he/she is able to confirm Christianity, as expressed by the creed, as his/her own beliefs.

What is expected of **Students**?

Students on the Confirmation Track at Christ Lincoln agree to these values [as detailed in the Middle School Ministry Covenant]:

- Commitment
- Confidentiality
- Respect
- Caring
- Participation
- Accountability
- Reaching One More

On Wednesday nights, students have the option to **gather together around a meal**, beginning at 5:45pm and until 6:10pm. Pizza slices are available for \$2 each. Water, Gatorade, and Ice Drinks are also available for \$1.

All students should be at their group table, ready to begin promptly at 6:15pm. Each week, students should bring the Middle School Ministry backpack with their:

- Bible
- Catechism
- Confirmation Folder with the:
 - Yellow "Faith5" page signed by a parent/faith mentor
 - Updated Confirmation checklist

Phones will be kept in table bins during the large group lesson and small group discussion. Please leave other electronics (iPads, computers) at home. Christ Lincoln is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Students are expected to **show respect and share appropriately.**

Respect: your Small Group Leader, your group members, the spaces and rooms we borrow from the church and school, and yourself. Jokes, gossip, and negative talk of others are never ok.

Share: your honest answers, feelings, and learnings. Share your meeting space, supplies, and encouraging words with everyone.

Students who do not meet these expectations will receive a **verbal warning** from their group leader. If the student chooses to continue their behaviors, group leaders will **contact a parent/guardian**. In the event of unresolved issues following the parent contact, the **Director of Middle School Ministry** [in partnership with parents] will **determine the best course of action** for the student, group, and group leader.

What is expected of **Parents**?

Parents are the most influential examples of faith for children. Though we are honored to serve your students for an hour or so each Wednesday, you care for and lead your child each day! In order to help your student gain the most from the Confirmation Track, we encourage you to:

- **Engage your student** in the discussion, Catechism and Bible reading, video lessons, and prayer in their **"Faith5" pages**.
- **Regularly encourage** their progress through the Confirmation checklist. Ask how they plan to serve, when they will take worship notes, etc. Help minimize student's stress levels by not letting your child fall behind or wait until the last minute!
- **Worship together** and discuss the service as a family.
- **Serve together** and talk about the experience as a family.