

Confirmation Evaluation Process

Determining an individual's readiness to publicly confirm their faith in Christ and partake in the Lord's Supper is at best a subjective reality. To that end we recognize that all students do not mature physically, emotionally and spiritually in the same way or time frame. Therefore, it is our practice to give students the benefit of the doubt when it comes to their individual readiness.

However, there are a few key areas that we as the ministry staff of Zion will look at which, along with regular class work, will help evaluate each student's faith development and readiness for Confirmation on May 5, 2019. Parents, we know the huge part you play in this process, so please be diligent in helping your student in these areas, without doing it for them. If you have questions or concerns at any point this year please contact Pastor Preece or DCE/Minister of Youth and Parish Education Amy Heuer, Zion's Confirmation leaders for this year.

Church and Sunday School Attendance

Active involvement in Worship and Christian Education opportunities are vital for the spiritual growth of students and families. Therefore we do expect that your family will regularly attend one of our three worship services (8:00 AM, 10:30 AM, and 6:00PM) **and** our education hour (9:15 am) each Sunday. The student's active involvement in Worship and Sunday School will be taken into consideration in the overall evaluation process.

*If you attend a church service elsewhere (preferably Lutheran), we would like for you to bring us a bulletin or service folder from the church you attended. We discourage attendance at "churches"/religious groups that do not confess the "catholic," Trinitarian faith.

Worship Notes

As you regularly attend Sunday worship services at Zion, we ask you to take notes during the worship service using the provided worship notes form. You are expected to turn in worship notes from one worship service per month (for a total of 8 worship notes during your time of confirmation instruction). Worship notes are due April 22nd, 2018.

Memory Work

Memory work is an important part of Confirmation. Specific portions of the Catechism are assigned for classes through the year. We ask that parents be proactive in helping their students with this. Study a little throughout the week to help retain the material. Don't wait until the last minute!

FINAL EVALUATION

We realize all individuals have different gifts, learning styles, and ways in which they express themselves and their Christian faith. A system of "evaluation" has been put in place in Zion's confirmation ministry. This system seeks some indication of the "readiness" of one preparing for the rite of confirmation—and seeks to accommodate each young person's individuality.

Each student will select (at least) **ONE** of the two options as described below. Whichever option is chosen, the work should be completed according to guidelines by April 22nd, 2018. As this final evaluation seeks to represent the student's thoughts and work for the full year, they will have until February 15, 2019 (ZLS)/February 17, 2019 (ZLC) to make their selection.

Option # 1 – Questioning

The confirmand is given the opportunity to sit down with Pastor Preece, Amy Heuer, his/her parents, and the family's elder for a friendly visit and discussion of his/her faith. This will be an opportunity for: instruction for all involved; correction (if needed); and, most of all, for witness and mutual encouragement in the Christian faith.

Topics covered during this discussion will include:

- 1) What the confirmand believes about The Christian faith
- 2) The confirmand's own relationship with Jesus Christ and his/her understanding of what that means
- 3) The basics of the faith according to the six chief parts of Christian doctrine, as presented in Luther's Small Catechism

This discussion will seek to be balanced between what the confirmand knows (in the head) and what is believed (in the heart). As human beings, we can only observe what another person knows, because only God can read the heart.

"...if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9-10)

The Memory Work Sheets list out all the things confirmands will have committed to memory through a year of confirmation instruction and will serve as a basis for this discussion. Memory of the actual parts of the Catechism (The Ten Commandments, The Creed, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism, The Sacrament of the Altar) is encouraged, but practical knowledge and application are most important.

Questioning will need to take place at the church on one of the following Sundays: March 31, April 7, or April 14. A schedule will be posted in February to reserve your date/time.

Option # 2 – Essay of Faith

This option gives the opportunity for a more "public" witness of a confirmand's Christian faith. Those who choose it will be given a list of questions from which to select their topic.

Step One: The confirmand will write his/her personal answer to their selected question based on the information learned up to that point. This initial step is due March 1 (ZLS)/March 3 (ZLC). The pastor/teacher will then give him/her resources from the Catechism and from Holy Scripture to redirect, bolster, or focus his/her answer—in short, to help in overall development of the essay.

Step 2: The confirmand will take his/her original answer, the additional resources and guidance received from the teacher and, with his/her parent(s), expand on the answer, forming it into a 1 – 1 ½ page rough draft. This will be submitted to the teacher by March 23 (ZLS)/March 24 (ZLC) for a final review and correction.

Step 3: The manuscript will be finalized, and the confirmand will meet with teacher to rehearse his/her presentation in the sanctuary. The essay of faith will be read in a service agreed upon by the confirmand and Pastor Preece. Possible options are: 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM, or 6:00 PM on March 31, April 7, or April 14.