



*Affirming Baptism
&
Making Disciples*

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Grades 6-9
2022-2023

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Over the past few years so much in our world has changed. The pandemic has forced us to live differently, and it has been so very hard for everyone. Yet, with all the changes, there are two things that have remained constant – our calling to be disciples of Jesus, and the embrace of a loving God who renews and restores us.



That is what our baptism is about – living out our calling, while being empowered by God’s promises of grace. Long ago, at the baptism of your child, you entered into a covenant that is built on the calling and the promise. And in return you promised to share your faith, nurture discipleship, and connect your child with the community of God’s people.

The confirmation program at Our Savior’s seeks to assist you in your ongoing faithfulness to your promises. We can’t take your place – you are the parent! We can, however, support your work and join you in this journey.

Our Savior’s confirmation ministry focusses on creating disciples. In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus directs us to baptize...teach...and make disciples. For 2000 years that is what the church has done. And we continue that task in 2022. We seek to make disciples of our young people, disciples ready to make a difference in a hurting, broken world. How we do that has changed over the centuries, but the calling and the presence of God’s Holy Spirit, the dynamic of baptism, remains the same.

So, in a sense, our program itself becomes an exercise in living out our baptism! We are, therefore, excited to have you join us in our journey of faithful living as we not only learn about discipleship, but as we live it out in our gathering, exploring, learning, and growing in faith!

General Program Outline

WORSHIP PARTICIPATION

Worship is essential to our lives as disciples of Jesus. In worship we take intentional time to bring praise and adoration to the God who has given us everything. At the same time we receive the blessings of a good and gracious God through Word and Sacrament, given in the midst of the gathered Body of Christ. Can't beat it...and you can't get it anywhere else! Being off by yourself just isn't the same!

During Covid, however, we have also discovered the opportunity of worshipping online, and many have made use of that avenue of worship. Either way, worship is not about us, but about a good and gracious God who gathers us together, in person or virtually, and nourishes us with life!

All of our families are encouraged to worship together. Even secular experts list “worshipping together” as one way families can remain strong and connected.

7-9th graders are complete “worship notes” for each service. **20 worship notes are expected** from September to the end of May. Worship includes Saturday/Sunday, but also special services – Christmas, Lent, etc. If you attend another church, bring a bulletin from the church, signed by the pastor to document your attendance. You can also watch the video and submit a “worship note” online, but online notes will be counted as ½ value. We will give an update periodically, but it is the confirmand’s responsibility to keep track of their participation in worship.

Finally, we ask our 7th graders and 8th graders to participate more deeply in worship by serving as acolytes. We also encourage families to sign up to usher – it’s not that hard!

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

All kids are welcome to “after school” on Wednesday. Come and hang out right after school is done, around 3 PM. Loosely structured activities, fellowship with other kids, and time for homework are all a part of “after school.” Dinner is included at 5:30, followed by class time for 6-8th graders at 6 PM.

Parents take one week to provide the meal. Guidance is available on good menu items, quantities, etc. It’s a great time to connect with the kids of this congregation, and best of all – *clean-up of eating space and dishes is NOT your responsibility!*

Kids who participate in “after school” sign in upon arriving. For security and safety reasons, after they sign in they are required to remain in the building or outside on the church grounds.

There is no “after school” on early release Wednesdays (Oct 12, Feb 8, May 10). No dinner is served, and we begin with classes at 6 PM.

7-8th graders should make sure they have a class that evening if it is an elective night, though they are always welcome to “after school” and dinner!

Learning for Grade 6

6th graders meet Wednesdays from 6-7 PM, beginning September 14. Over the course of the year they survey the Biblical stories, from creation in Genesis to the creation of the church community in Acts. Along the way they hear of God's call to be disciples, the revelation of God's love through Jesus, and the power God gives us to be faithful. Students are asked to bring their Bibles weekly. If a student doesn't have a Bible, we can help with that!

Classes are taught by Corey Sjoquist, who brings a wealth of experience in teaching this class, an energy to the classroom, and a deep love for God's people. He is a great example of discipleship in action. In this class students learn the stories and reflect on what they mean for us today, building a foundation for the next years in confirmation, and for a lifetime to come.

Learning for Grades 7-8

Grades 7-8 include a variety of learning experiences, including classroom and out of classroom activities. Course work for grades 7-8 consists of nine core sessions, and five individual electives. Parental assistance will be needed during the course of the year, so please plan to be available some Wednesdays to make this all work!

- **Core courses cover foundational aspects of our life of faith.** Core courses meet nine times, and attendance is expected of all students and guides.
- **A “Servant Leadership” project.** An opportunity to live out our discipleship, and reflect on what it means to us.

- **Each student takes five electives** – one from category one, and two each from categories two and three. *Unless otherwise noted, there is a limit of 12 in each elective course.*
- **Class sessions run from 6-7 PM on Wednesday evenings, unless otherwise noted.**
- **The Food Pantry Scavenger Hunt** is September 14. In smaller groups we go out into the community to gather donations for the food pantry – can your group get the biggest haul?

CORE COURSES

The Sacraments – October 5 & 19, December 7 (7th grade),
December 14 (8th grade)

The Ten Commandments – January 4, February 1, April 12
Servant Leadership –

7th Grade - September 21, November 2, May 3

8th Grade – September 28, November 9, May 10

ELECTIVE COURSES

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org/confirmation-2/

CATEGORY ONE

BIBLE STUFF

Psalms – Writing Your Own

February 8

The Psalms are prayers or hymns lifted up to God. We will explore the psalms, and then learn about writing our own psalm.

The Prodigal Son

April 19

So...who are you? Younger brother...older brother...Dad...how does the story of the Prodigal Son fit in your life?

Acts 16 – The Big Jail Break – NOT!

January 11

Sometimes you get what you pray for...and sometimes you turn it down! See what Paul and Silas do when God acts big – and they stay put.

The End Times...or Just Another Day?

October 12

Read the news – lots of tragedies and bad things going in. Is the end of time approaching or just life in fast lane? Let's see what the Bible tells us – you might be surprised!

Tarnished Disciples

January 18

Some of God's best servants were, shall we say, a bit less than perfect! Anyone you know?

CATEGORY TWO

“LIVING IN THE WORLD” STUFF

Taking Care of Me

January 25

God entrusts us with lots of stuff – including ourselves! Learn about ways to have a healthy you, taking care of your physical self, and being a good steward of God's gifts. *Taught by Naoko Giblin, professor at UW-L.*

If Only the Leaves Could Talk...Oh Wait, They Can! May 17

Let's take a walk in the neighborhood and explore the wonders of an “urban forest.” What are we seeing as the world returns to life after a long winter? And how is this part of God's renewal of the earth? *Taught by Jim Kerkman, retired forester.*

Using Art to Express Faith

**November 16
or January 18**

Art can be a powerful way to speak – so how can art be used to express our faith – to others, and to our ourselves? A simple art project is included. *Taught by Angie Hemker, Middle School art instructor. This course will be offered twice – BUT YOU CAN ONLY SIGN UP ONCE!*

Faithful...Flora...Future...

April 26

Faithful living includes care for the creation around us. Learn about the flora and the ecosystems that have been affected and damaged, and how we can restore them as part of our faithful living. *Taught by Tyler Boudry, Conservation Biologist and Wildlife Technician.*

I Want to Tell You a Story

November 30

We all have a story to tell, of our life and our faith. But some people have a special story, a deep and riveting story of how God has been a part of their life. Come and hear a story of a real person who has discovered God's presence and God's calling to them. *Taught by Carolyn Karl.*

Real Life, Real Faith, Real God

**January 11
and February 15**

Think faith – and life – and God – don't mix? Think again! Class members will meet and learn from some real people in our midst who have a real story to tell. *Limited to 8th graders only – maximum of 8 participants. This is a two-credit elective.*

CATEGORY THREE

“LIVING IN THE CHURCH” STUFF

Grief and Faith

November 30

Losing a loved one is really tough. But...there is hope...for healing and for life. Find out how to cope with the loss of

someone special, and how to help others with their grief. *Taught by Pastor Kris Bjerke-Ulliman, Hospice Chaplain.*

“Hanging of the Greens”

**November 16 and
November 30 (7 PM)**

Help Pastor Jean plan the Hanging of the Greens on November 30, and then...make it happen! You will meet twice – the second time to help lead worship. But don't worry – it's easier than you think! *This is a two-credit elective.*

Checking Out Another Faith

February 15

A time to explore another faith and how they see God and God's work in the world. What do we as Lutherans share with them, and how do we differ?

Working the System

**April 19
or April 26**

Worship includes some “behind the scenes” work on audio and video. Learn how our new tech system works, and how to operate it. Maybe...you can be one of our “techies!” *Limited to a maximum of 6 participants. This course will be offered twice – BUT YOU CAN ONLY SIGN UP ONCE!*

Quilts for Jesus

**Early Release Wednesdays, 1-3 PM
Oct 5 or Feb 8 or May 10**

Come on an early release day and work with the quilting group as they assemble quilts that go around the world. See how the work can be fun as we work together for the sake of God's people. *Limited to two participants each session.*

Christian Symbols

April 26

We use lots of symbols in church. We will learn a bit about symbols, and then venture into the sanctuary to look at the symbols used in our own church building.

Food Pantry Support

First Thursday, 3:30-4:45 PM
or Third Thursday, 3:30-4:45 PM

Come over after school and help with the “behind the scenes” work at the Food Pantry. Lots of things need to happen to feed the hungry, and you can be a part of that ministry! *Limited to two participants each time.*

Learning for Grade 9

9th grade confirmands use a different schedule than the 7-8th graders. The 9th grade year focuses on discipleship, and includes a number of interactive experiences designed to develop and strengthen discipleship in the confirmand.

Unless otherwise noted classes are Wednesday evenings from 7-8 PM. Some learning will take place in activities outside of class, either with the small group, or confirmands working on their own.

9th graders’ learning includes a variety of discipleship experiences:

September – The spiritual gifts God has given you, and how you can use them to make a difference.

October – How does Jesus make a difference in the midst of all the “monsters” we experience in life?

November – Learning to appreciate what other generations share with us, and giving thanks for their presence.

December – Celebrating the gifts – and pondering the gift we are and can be to others. How can I make a difference in the world?

January/February – Learning to be good stewards of our financial resources as we manage our money well and find new ways to make a difference in the world.

See the schedule on page 15 for more details on discipleship training for 9th grades. Parents should note that they will be asked to join the class in early December, and again twice in January/February.

The Cost of Confirmation

Confirmation has a cost! Staff time investment is significant, and we use a variety of resources to make things happen, all of which have a cost. 9th graders also have a cost of \$15 for corsages, boutonnieres, and a class picture. In general, however, Our Savior's offers our confirmation ministry without charging participants as part of our ministry to the community around us!

So, how do we make it work? Through our regular offerings and gifts that support the ministry of this congregation, we make this discipleship ministry a reality. ***Your support of this congregation's regular ministries is an important part of making a difference in the lives of your children, children around us, and those who will enter this ministry in years to come.***

Finally, don't forget to pray for us! Confirmation is an exciting, exhilarating ministry, but it is also sometimes daunting and even a bit tiring. Pray for leaders, group guides, and for kids too!

Things You Need to Know

- We have worked hard to craft an engaging ministry that raises up disciples. We cannot, however, do it without parents. See page 13 for more on parent's role in this ministry.
- When West Salem schools have a snow day (or no school due to other reasons), or school dismisses early, confirmation will also be canceled that day. When in doubt, call the office!
- We know that electronics, including phones, are a big part of kids' lives, but not in class! Best to leave them home, but if they are here phones and other devices are to be turned off while class is in session. Devices not turned off will be "relocated" until class is ended.
- We expect confirmands to act as children of God. Discipline is not generally an issue, but if it is we will work with parents. Some things will not be tolerated:
 - Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco are not allowed at all.
 - If your child bullies or endangers other students, he/she will be removed.
 - Behavior disrespectful toward adults, or that is destructive of property, is not acceptable.
- If issues arise during the year please come and speak with us – we want what is best for all our confirmands, and we need your participation to make that happen!

Stuff for Parents

1. Show interest in your child's faith development and especially in their work toward affirming their baptism.

2. As pastoral staff, guides, and others in the confirmation ministry, we solicit and treasure your prayers and your insights. We are a team together.
3. Be a good example – you as parents have the greatest impact on the faith and life of your children. Believe it or not, they learn from you!
4. Worship with your child – they need it – and so do you. Studies show that families that worship together have a greater closeness, and work better together especially as kids get older.
5. Pray together as a family – it may be awkward at first, but you will grow into it!



7th & 8th Grade Calendar

Date	Event
September 14	Scavenger hunt for food pantry
September 21	Core Class/Acolyte training – 7 th grade
September 28	Core Class/Acolyte training – 8 th grade
October 5	Core class – 7/8 th grade
October 12	Elective
October 19	Core Class – 7/8 th grade
October 26	
November 2	Core class (7 th grade)
November 9	Core class (8 th grade)

November 16	Elective
November 23	<i>Thanksgiving Eve worship – 7 PM</i>
November 30	Elective
December 7	Core Class – 7 th grade Bethlehem @ English – 8 th grade
December 14	Core Class – 8 th grade Bethlehem @ English – 7 th grade
December 21-28	<i>Christmas Break</i>
January 4	Core class – 7/8 th grade
January 11	Elective
January 18	Elective
January 25	Elective
February 1	Core class – 7/8 th grade
February 8	Elective
February 15	Elective
Feb 22- April 5	<i>Lent and Holy Week worship</i>
April 12	Core class – 7/8 th grade
April 19	Elective
April 26	Elective
May 3	Core class (7 th grade)
May 10	Core class (8 th grade)
May 17	Elective

9TH Grade Calendar

September 14	Getting to know the real you
September 21	Still “getting to know the real you”
October 5	You, Monsters, and Jesus
October 12	Preparing for Halloween Party
October 26	Halloween party for younger kids (6-7 PM)
November 2	Appreciating the gift of generations
December 7	Celebrating Advent with the “Hanging of the Greens” – <i>Class following worship, and ending around 8:15 – parents join us</i>
January 4 or 11	Stewardship-A – <i>parents join us</i>
January 25 or February 1	Stewardship-B – <i>parents join us</i>
February 8	So, What Comes Next?
March 1-8-15	Working on confirmation projects
April 12	So, What Comes Next? – Part 2
April 19	How Does That Work?
April 30	Confirmation Sunday