

Confirmation Frequently Asked Questions

Is Confirmation for everyone?

Yes, we believe that Confirmation is an important milestone, tradition, and process for the development and formation of faith in the life of a student. We also recognize that every family has their own unique faith journey. Students typically participate in Confirmation during their 7th and 8th grade years, with the Confirmation ceremony occurring in May of their second year. However, students can participate in Confirmation between their 7th grade year and their Senior year. Confirmation takes 2 years to complete for all students.

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

This year, the program will cost \$50 total, covering parent and student journals, winter lock-in, and miscellaneous discussion group supplies. 7th-grade fees cover Small Catechism and lower Seder costs, and 8th-grade fees cover Confirmation Weekend costs. Other Junior High functions will be charged before those events, including the fall retreat. Replacement Journals will cost \$5. Students will need to purchase or bring their own ESV Bible for use during Confirmation. They will receive a Small Catechism and Confirmation Journals.

How does baptism relate to Confirmation?

Students who walk through Confirmation are confirming their faith in Jesus Christ and affirming their baptism. If your student needs to be baptized, please contact **Leslie Reese at lreese@saalem4u.com**.

What about First Communion?

First communion will take place in October and is for first-year students (or those who could not participate last year).

Communion instructions will take place in two parts.

- First, students and parents(s) will attend a **9:00 am class on October 19, 2025**.
- Second, following the 10:30 church service on the same Sunday, families will participate in a traditional Seder meal after church, where they will have their first experience with the Communion elements, bread and wine.
- *After that, students will be able to participate in communion in the sanctuary during church on Sundays. The first opportunity for that will be on October 26th, 2025.*

What does the Discussion Group look like for students?

Discussion groups are led by volunteer group leaders. During this time, groups will discuss material that families have been working through at home. They will sit as groups on Sunday mornings and pray for them throughout the week.

What does Parent Class during the Discussion Group look like for parents?

There will be a required parent/adult class that will meet with Tyler Tollefson, Pastor Schleicher, Pastor Niekek, or Pastor Parks to discuss the same content that students are working on, but one chapter ahead. This will help prepare parents to support their students as they work through the journal. Please designate an adult who plans to attend these classes consistently. However, more than one adult per family is welcome.

What if we have to miss a discussion group?

We allow families 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 Tyler or Arleah and discuss the material within 30 days of the missed discussion group. 2 or more absences will mean they have to repeat the year, delaying their confirmation.

How is the Confirmation structured?

Large group discussion groups will happen once a month (typically the last Sunday of each month). Journal work is to be completed **before** the discussion group. This includes the reading, questions, family homework page, and check-in page. In the fall first year students have parent/student classes to prepare to receive first communion. In the Spring, second-year students have parent/student classes where they prepare their testimonies, and parents prepare their blessing.

Is this a self-study Program?

Yes & No. 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 keeping the responsibility where the Bible mandates it - in the family unit. This allows both parent and student to take ownership of their spiritual growth. This will allow students to 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.

How does my student complete the generosity experience or sermon notes?

You will find a form to report generosity experiences and sermon notes in the back of the student's book. We ask that they complete 1 generosity experience reflection and 8 sermon notes per year. Paper forms or a PDF to print are available on our website.

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

We are using the word parent in this document, but recognize that faith is often passed down by a grandparent, stepparent, or other important adult mentor.

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 greatest influence in their lives. It is ideal to partner with the most powerful, influential people in our students' lives 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 by a whole community of believers.

What are the aspects of our Confirmation Program 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. Adolescence is the time when students get the opportunity to learn more deeply about the doctrine of Christianity and the core beliefs of the Lutheran denomination. Students must complete their blue and red journals.

Sermon Outlines - We not only desire for our students to be regular worshipers, but we also like to help them process the messages. So, we've created a simple form found in the back of their Journal. We ask that over the course of the year, students fill out 8 of these reflections. This will also be available online as PDFs.

Parent Involvement and Engagement – It's true! Parent involvement in ministry and in the life of their child's faith greatly improves the likelihood that students will hold onto their faith as they reach adulthood. This may include attending events, chaperoning trips, or being the parent attending on Sunday mornings. This also includes having engaging faith conversations in the home. Each lesson includes a Family Homework component that we ask every parent to do with their child.

Student generosity opportunities – We believe serving through the generosity experience is one of the best ways for our students to learn and grow in their faith. After students complete a generosity experience, we simply ask that they fill out the reflection page and tell us about what they did and what they learned. Students will complete 1 generosity experience and reflection during the year.

Testimony - 2nd-year students will go through a testimony writing workshop in the spring of their second year and then will be given an opportunity to share their testimony at the Blessing and Testimony Ceremony during Confirmation Weekend.

Expectations:

Expectations for 7th Graders (or first-year students):

- Attend Special Events: FUSE and winter lock-in
- Complete Fall Communion Instruction and Seder
- Attending the Discussion Groups
- Complete the Journal (including required check-ins, memory, family homework, 8 Sermon notes, and 1 Generosity Reflection)

Expectations 8th Graders (or second-year students):

- Attend Special Events: FUSE and winter lock-in
- Attending the Discussion Groups
- Complete Spring Testimony Instruction
- Complete the Journal (including required check-ins, memory, family homework, 8 Sermon notes, and 1 Generosity Reflection)
- **Confirmation Weekend:** Attend the Blessing and Testimony evening (Saturday, **May 3, 2026**) and Confirmation Sunday (Sunday morning, **May 4, 2026**)

Expectations for Adult Mentor/Parent:

- *All Parents: Complete the family homework page with the student before the discussion group*
- *All Parents: Attend Parent Class on discussion group Sundays*
- **Parents of First-Year Students:**
 - Complete Communion instruction and Seder
- **Parents of Second-Year Students:**
 - *Complete Blessing classes*
 - **Confirmation Weekend:** Attend the Blessing and Testimony evening and Confirmation Sunday

Confirmation Schedule 2025-2026

Parent/Student Orientation *(Student and Parent)*

August 24, 2025 @ 9 am in Second Stage (Upstairs of Community Center)

Connect Group Building *(Student's only - No parent class)*

September 21, 2025 at 9 am

Discussion Groups (in Second Stage) *(Student and Parent)*

Class 1 - September 28, 2025 at 9 am

Class 2 - October 26, 2025 at 9 am

Class 3 - November 16, 2025 at 9 am

Class 4 - January 25, 2026 at 9 am

Class 5 - February 22, 2026 at 9 am

Class 6 - March 29, 2026 at 9 am

Fuse Fall Retreat - November 7-9, 2025

Winter Lock-In - January 16-17, 2026

First-Year Students

Communion/Class & Seder Meal (in Second Stage) *(Student and Parent)*

Sunday, October 19, 2025: **Class at 9:00 am followed by Seder Meal & 1st Communion at 12:30 pm**

Second-Year Students

Blessing & Testimony Class *(Student and Parent)*

- April 12, 19, 26

Confirmation Weekend

- Blessing & Testimony Ceremony - **Saturday, May 2nd, 2026**
- Rite of Confirmation - **Sunday, May 3rd, 2026 during 10:30 am worship service**