

Welcome. . .

Thank you for responding to the Spirit's call to be a mentor at Good Shepherd. It is an important and growing part of our common life together in the body of Christ. As a mentor, you will be walking with a young person of this parish in their journey of faith leading up to their Affirmation of Holy Baptism with the rite of Confirmation. You will play an important part of the teaching ministry of this parish as we seek to Believe, Belong, and Serve.

This booklet is designed to assist you in your ministry. You will find prayers, thoughts, ideas, and examples that will help you as you journey in faith with our youth to the joy of Affirmation of Baptism.

Understanding Your Role and the Process

Our Confirmation ministry covers three years and includes primarily 6th through 8th graders. Over the course of those three years, our youth study the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Luther's Small Catechism which includes his explanations of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. Confirmation ministry ultimately includes Sunday Morning Education and Sunday Youth Nights as well as the Wednesday night Faith Invasion meeting. Beyond learning the key tenets of our faith, it also provides further opportunity for our youth to build relationships with their peers and the wider community and to explore how they can serve God with the gifts they have been given.

The Wednesday night meetings are at the center of the ministry. The youth gather together in a large group. We sing, pray, read Scripture, enjoy instructive skits, and participate in an occasional activity to reinforce the lesson. Each week we also have a "Life-Line" where a member of Good Shepherd shares about their faith journey and how it relates to the lesson for the night. On regular Wednesday nights, the youth meet in small groups for the last thirty minutes with a small group facilitator. On Mentor Nights, we have our regular lessons but also try to provide room for mentors and confirmands to interact and share their faith through conversation and doing activities together

You may have already journeyed with your confirmand through 3rd Grade Bible Walk-through and/or Communion Instruction Class. If so, you are continuing that same mentoring relationship that was established then. On the other hand, this may mark the beginning of your mentoring ministry with your confirmand. In any case, you are with them now as they enter an important and challenging phase of their growth and maturity as a person of Faith. The Confirmation Ministry at Good Shepherd is a large and fulfilling ministry within the life of this parish and you will play an important role.

Confirmation and Our Mission . . .

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is an inclusive and welcoming faith community rooted in Christ.

***To Believe:** For the Glory of God, every member is actively involved*

in faith formation, deepening our relationship with God.

To Belong: *For the well-being of the Church, every member is actively involved in connectedness, deepening our relationship with each other.*

To Serve: *For the health of the world, every member is actively involved in servanthood, deepening our relationships with the community and the world.*

When our youth are confirmed as 8th graders, they are asked the following questions:

Believe: “Do you believe in God the Father?”
“Do you believe in God the Son?”
“Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?”

Belong: “Do you intend to live among God’s faithful people?”
“Will you hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper?”

Serve: “Will you proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed?”
“Will you serve all people, following the example of Jesus?”
“Will you strive for justice and peace in all the earth?”

Each youth responds, “I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.” As they affirm their Baptism and make these promises, they join the rest of our community in living out the mission God has given us to Believe, Belong, and Serve. As individuals and as a church family, our constant work is to discern how the Holy Spirit is calling us to live out our faith and be the body of Christ in the world.

What does it mean to be confirmed?

In some sense, Confirmation is a rite of passage. In the Confirmation service, we will pray that the Spirit, which was given to our confirmands at Baptism, will be renewed in them so that they can be witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in new ways. One way to think of it is as an ordination to the priesthood of believers. Therefore, the goal of the Confirmation process is not for the youth to memorize the catechism. The goal of Confirmation is for the youth of our parish to have a living, dynamic encounter with God. Such an encounter will never leave us the same. It will change us into the likeness of his image — resurrecting us from the old life to a new life in him.

This encounter with God will happen through a variety of means. Of course, the most profound encounters will be through Scripture and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. But it will also come through their time with you as their mentor. Scripture and Communion are central to the life of the Church, but the Church is a community. By Christ’s grace, the time they spend with you will bring their encounter with Scripture and the Sacraments into their fullness.

Mentor Nights for '06/'07 (Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 pm)

August 30	Mentor Orientation
September 27	Abraham and Sarah
November 29	Wilderness to Land
January 31	Israel
February 28	The Exile
March 28	The Book of Job
April 18	Study on the Psalms

We have seven Mentor Nights slated for this year. As a mentor you will join us on these nights as we work our way through the Old Testament. To keep up to date with our studies, you may find a summary of previous lessons on the church's website:

Reflections and Recommendations

Share Life and Share Faith

We are stronger in community. As human beings we are created in the image of God. God is community — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We mimic the life of the Triune God when we share our lives with one another; and this makes us stronger. Likewise, the Scriptures teach us that Faith is communal. It is something that is shared. We learn this from all the times when the Bible tells us that people like Paul received the Faith as it was handed on to them. This handing on of the Faith can only take place in community. As a mentor, you are invited to participate in this handing on of the Faith by sharing your faith and how it is made evident in your daily life.

Confirmation is not only about learning what Christians believe. It is also about discovering how Christians take what they believe and live it in their daily lives. Seeing leads to believing. By coming to know you, your family, and your way of life, your confirmand is offered an insight into how Lutherans take the Gospel and the teachings of the Church and attempt to live their faith. By sharing your life, you model what it means to live faith.

A willingness to share your lived faith is an essential dimension of being a mentor. It helps your confirmand to hear how you have grown in your faith, to know that you still struggle and have questions about life, and to understand the values you bring to decision making. It is helpful to your confirmand to hear from you about concrete experiences in your life where your faith has made a difference. Include both the joys and struggles you have experienced on your faith journey. It is important to communicate that a person does not have to be perfect in order to be Confirmed. Sharing your life and faith takes time. You will need time to talk, to do activities together, and to take part in the functions related to Confirmation.

Throughout the process of Confirmation, remember that your life communicates how God's presence comes into ordinary living and makes it extraordinary. You are a witness of the great mystery of God's transforming love. As a mentor, you have the privilege of not only giving witness but also being a privileged witness to the mystery of God's movement in the confirmand's life. Our prayer is that not only will the confirmand benefit from his/her relationship with you, but that you also will learn and grow from your time and dialogue with another traveler on the journey of faith.

Opportunities for Confirmands and Mentors to Serve Together

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| October 8 | CROP Walk for Hunger
Participants will leave from the church at approximately 12:30 pm for this Sunday afternoon activity. |
| October 15 | Worship with the New Mission Congregation, Joy of Discovery Lutheran in southeast Raleigh. Leave from church at 10:30 am. |
| December 3 | A Day with Santa for children with handicaps hosted by Good Shepherd
Participants asked to take a two hour slot on Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm |
| March 20 | Confirmand Night at the Coffeehouse
Friday, 7 to 9 pm |

Trips to the Murdoch Center on Sunday Mornings
(Murdoch Center is a state facility for adults with developmental delays in Butner, about a 20

minute drive from the church. Youth and adults assist non-ambulatory residents to attend Sunday worship. Leave at 8:30 am and return by noon.)

November 5	7 th grade
November 19	8 th grade
December 10	6 th grade
February 18	8 th grade
March 11	7 th grade
April 22	6 th grade

Other Recommendations:

- _ Faithfully take part in Mentor Night sessions with your confirmand.

- _ Pray for your confirmand and ask for their prayer concerns.

- _ Invite your confirmand to parish activities such as Lenten Soup Suppers, the Harvest Festival, WIHN....

- _ Share childhood memories of your faith.
- _ On occasion, worship together on Sundays and Advent / Lenten Services

- _ Invite your Confirmand to participate in special seasonal projects, such as donating gifts to PLM Families Together at our narthex Christmas tree, collecting food for the Soup Barrel, or giving money to Lenten Offerings.

Structure of Mentor / Confirmand Relationship

For the safety and well-being of the youth and the adults involved in this program, we encourage this mentor relationship to be lived out primarily in the public activities of the congregation. If you are doing something with your youth outside of church functions, we recommend teaming with another mentor / youth pair for the activity.

We want for your confirmand and you to develop a relationship of trust where he/she feels comfortable in sharing the joys and struggles of faith and life with you. This is greatly impeded if the youth feels that every word they say will be reported to their parents. Therefore, we ask you not to share your conversations with their parents. However, there are exceptions to this rule. If you have concerns about your confirmand being in danger or endangering others, please immediately share that concern with Pastor David, Pastor Jennifer, or Dan Burris. We will respond to the concern and communicate with the confirmand's parents as needed. Even with less serious concerns, please know that the three of us welcome hearing how your mentor relationship is going and providing any support we can to make it a wonderful experience for both you and our youth.

For Reflection:

- _ In your life who are the people that have influenced you the most by their living the faith?

- _ Why do you say this?

- _ List three reasons why you love the Church.

_ What helps you talk about your faith to others?

_ List as many of the experiences you have had over your lifetime of being of service to others.

_ What did you find most satisfying?

_ How do you hear yourself being called to service today?