

... **PowerLife** ...

Confirmation Handbook 2009-2010

HOPE
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HOPE

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
John 3:16

PowerLife is Lutheran Church of Hope’s Confirmation program where students learn to identify with the life of the church as they confess their faith in Jesus Christ and see themselves as people of God carrying out the mission of Hope: to “reach out to the world around us and share the everlasting love of Jesus Christ!”

Confirmation...what does it mean?

Confirmation is a longstanding tradition in the Lutheran Church. It is an educational ministry which helps students, through Word and Sacrament, to identify more deeply with the Christian community and participate more fully in its mission.

Students are taught Lutheran basics from Martin Luther’s Small Catechism, and address topics such as “Who is God?”, “Who is Jesus?” and “Who is the Holy Spirit?” In addition, it’s also teaching them to live a Christian life by example. In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther described confirmation as the rite, by which a baptized person renews his or her baptismal vows, publicly confesses his/her faith, and is received into membership by the congregation. Confirmation is saying “yes” to your baptism. That’s why it is sometimes called “affirmation of baptism.”

Baptism is our birth into God’s family. It is a gift of new life offered to us by God. In baptism, parents and sponsors promise to nurture our faith by participation in worship, teaching of the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments, by placing into our hands the Scriptures, and by providing instruction in the Christian faith. The church promises to help parents and sponsors in fulfilling this promise. Part of the fulfillment of the baptismal promise is the decision to be confirmed.

Confirmation is a time of preparation for Christians to publicly profess that they do indeed believe those things promised for them in their baptism. It is accepting personal responsibility for one’s own Christian faith. Confirmation is not the “end” of one’s faith journey, nor is it equivalent to salvation.

Participation in confirmation is an optional part of PowerLife. Students are invited to fully participate in PowerLife whether they plan to be confirmed or not.

Students are confirmed at the end of their 8th grade year and profess the following:

- ✝ To continue in the covenant God made with them in Holy Baptism
- ✝ To remain accountable with God’s faithful people
- ✝ To actively pursue God’s Word in worship
- ✝ To share the good news of God in Christ through what they say & do
- ✝ To serve others, following the example of Jesus

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Program Description

PowerLife is a three-year program offered on Wednesday nights from September through April. It includes worship music, prayer and a teaching during large group followed by intentional conversation, sharing and encouragement through small groups.

Meeting times:

6th grade: 6:00-7:15 pm in the Worship Center (Catechism year)

7th and 8th grade: 7:00-8:30 pm in the Worship Center (Faith formation years)

Curriculum Sample

Our curriculum was written so that the small group leader could lead a conversation with the students, asking them their thoughts and helping them to reflect on the teaching they just heard & the events in their life during the past week.

Who is God?

Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day. Gen.1:31

Intro:

Start off with “high’s” and “low’s” again...one each around the circle. Open with a prayer thanking God for the “high’s.”

Recite the Apostle’s Creed again together... It is in three parts. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All are God and all are different. That is called the Trinity. Tonight we are focusing on God.

What does the creed use as a word to describe God? Let’s refresh our memory about creation. Read Genesis 1 together... the *whole* chapter.

What does this tell us about God? From the talk tonight, why did God create? Did God make anything that was bad?

Read Psalm 139:13-14. What does this say about you? Would you describe yourself as wonderful? Why or why not?

Describe a time this past week when someone said something negative about you. Was it true? Are there some things that we are weak at and some things we are strong at? Is that on purpose?

God made you special...on purpose for a purpose! What do you suppose your purpose is? We are going to identify what some of those purposes are in a few weeks.

Close in Prayer

Confirmation Sunday

Confirmation will be Sunday, May 2 at 2:00 pm. The service consists of a time of worship, recognition of the confirmands, profession of faith, a message and affirmation of baptism.

Expectations

Expectations are in place so that the participating student and their family can have the best experience possible through PowerLife. They are to encourage and provide boundaries, with the knowledge that Hope is a grace-filled, “spirited, growing and Christ-centered community filled with hope!” As one of the core values states, “we worship God, not tradition.”

Program Requirements:

- † Students are required to attend PowerLife each week. [Please see *Attendance Policy* on the next page]

(If a student must miss, please contact the small group leader. There is no make-up option, but it would be beneficial to ask the small group leader what was discussed during the student's absence.)

- † Students are expected to attend weekly worship.

- † Students are required to complete 16 sermon notes per year

(Sermon notes can be taken wherever there is a sermon being preached. They can be found in the student booklets. Once completed, they are shown to the small group leader for review and their signature. For more information on how to take sermon notes, turn to the back of this handbook.)

- † Students are required to memorize 10 Scripture verses per year

(Why memorize? Have you ever had a song stuck in your head, and you just can't get it out? Or something happens and you automatically think of a quote from your favorite movie? These things have become part of who you are. They've been woven into the fabric of how you think and what makes you YOU. What if, when you were scared, you could automatically think, "The Lord is my shepherd and I shall not want." Or when your "friends" make fun of you because you choose not to do something with them, you could in your heart say, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Memorizing God's Word also helps become part of who you are and provides a place to turn in times of pain and joy.

Once a verse is memorized and recited to the small group leader, the student will receive a key tag with the memorized verse. At the end of the three year program, students will have received 30 key tags to collect on their key chain.)

- † Students are required to complete the At-Home portion of their Sermon Notes.

(Completing the At-Home section will foster healthy face-to-face time needed to encourage growth between parent/child.)

- † Students are expected to complete service projects through recommended ministries around Hope.

(Students will receive information on service opportunities throughout the year, with a Service Night being held in December where they can choose individual opportunities to serve within Hope.)

Taking Sermon Notes

Here are some helpful tips on how to take sermon notes:

Copy words from the screen: The pastor will often put important thoughts on the big screens. You can copy these down to help capture the main things he/she talked about. Sometimes they may change quickly, don't worry! Just do your best. Even if you get a little bit from each screen, you'll have words that will help you remember the topic.

Copy down Bible verses: When the pastor mentions a Bible verse, copy it down. If a lot of verses are mentioned, just do your best to write down as many as you can. You can look them up at home to learn more about the topic.

Copy down your thoughts: As you listen to the sermon, a specific thought, memory, or idea may cross your mind. Write it down! The sermon will give you ideas for doing what the Bible says to do. If the pastor talks about loving one another, you might write down, "I need to be kind to my brother/sister."

Keep listening: Even though the sermon may not make complete sense to you now, taking notes may help you remember something down the road, as you take your faith journey.

Sermon Note sample:

Sermon Notes

Date: _____ Speaker: _____ Title: _____
Worship song you liked best today: _____

Main Points: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Words I didn't know:
	At-Home:

What did God teach you today?:

Attendance Policy

We feel strongly that for us to foster faith as a priority in our students' lives, then this needs to be modeled through our choices. For this reason, we believe it's critical that attendance at all PowerLife activities supersedes any extra-curricular events. That means that sports competitions or practices, music concerts (non-school), or other extra-curricular events need to be secondary. We know this can be a hard choice to make. That is why we are giving you the dates for our events far in advance so that you can make arrangements if necessary to accommodate the expectations of PowerLife. Of course, we understand that there will be times where illness or family events prevent a PowerLife student from being able to attend, but otherwise, we ask that you help your student stay the course of keeping consistent attendance.

Behavior

Good behavior, as explained below, is expected from each person involved in this program. If behavior becomes a problem, students will be addressed by a staff member and may be sent home.

Before PowerLife begins, students will be directed into The Bridge. They are expected to stay in The Bridge and will not be allowed to leave.

During large group time, students will remain in their seats with their small group. Talking out of hand and failure to listen and respect what's happening up front will result in the student being asked to sit by themselves in the bleachers.

During small group time, students will remain in their room with their group. Students must be respectful of everyone in the group, allowing equal time for others to share and agreeing to keep confidential any issues that may arise with another small group member. If behavior becomes an issue, the student may be asked to leave the room to talk with a staff member, and even further, may be asked to call home to be picked up.

Dress Code

- † No spaghetti strap tank tops or bare shoulders
- † No bare midriffs
- † No shirts with inappropriate language or clever hidden meanings
- † No shorts/pants with wording on the backside
- † Shorts/skirts must be an appropriate length (when hands to side, must be lower than fingertip)
- † No exposed undergarments

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other similar distractions will not be allowed during PowerLife. Before opening worship, students must turn in their cell phone to their small group leader. The leader will hold on to them until the end of class. If not turned in, they will be held by a staff member who will then call home.

If you need to reach your student during class, please call the church office at 515-222-1520.

Restroom

Students will be allowed to go to the restroom before/during worship or after the talk is over. They will be expected to go one-at-a-time and ask permission from their small group leader. They will return promptly to their group.

Food/Drink

To be respectful of church property and the PowerLife program, students will be asked to finish food/drinks before entering the Worship Center. Café Hope will stop serving PowerLife students after 5:45 pm (for 6th graders) and after 6:45 pm (for 7th/8th graders).

If a small group leader decides to bring in treats, they must be shared during small group time only, and comply with the snack policy (NO peanut products).

For Parents

Please plan accordingly so that your student arrives on time, at the correct time. Students are welcome to gather in The Bridge up to 30 minutes before their scheduled start time. You do not need to accompany them inside. Small group will end promptly when scheduled so please plan for that as well: 6th grade ends at 7:15 pm and 7th and 8th grade ends at 8:30 pm.

As your student experiences PowerLife, there are many things you can do to walk alongside them:

- † Worship weekly
- † Pray for them
- † Listen to their questions; it's okay if you don't know the answers!
- † Make time to complete the At-Home section of sermon notes with them
- † Ask them questions about their faith & share your experiences too
- † Be a role model for them

Small Groups

Small groups are an age and gender-based group of 8-10 students led by at least one adult.

Small Group Placement

A student is assigned to a small group based on the school he or she attends. Dividing small groups in this manner exists to foster lasting relationships and create a support system within the immediate community the student lives in. We realize this format is not ideal for all students. Therefore, on the registration form, students are given the choice to be in a small group with all students from the same school or to be with students from a mix of schools. We feel it's important they receive that choice so they can have the best experience possible. They can also list one student to be placed with, and that student must also list them as well.

Role/Relationship with small group leader

For students: The small group leader will commit to praying for students and will contact them if they miss a class, just to follow up. They are also committed to watching the students in their group grow in faith through memorizing Scripture, taking sermon notes and participating in worship/conversation, etc.

For parents: The small group leader will contact you to introduce themselves. They may ask permission to attend events that your son/daughter participates in. They also may send a card/e-mail for special occasions or for encouragement.

Retreats

Retreats are offered for students going into 7th and 8th grade. They are held at Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp. For more information, visit www.riversidelbc.org

The 7th grade retreat will be Sept. 26-27, 2009.

The 8th grade retreat will be Dec. 4-6, 2009.

Visitors

Students are encouraged to invite friends! If a visitor has come more than one time, a staff person will contact them to gather more details and encourage them to register as an official student.

Adult Volunteer Opportunities

- † Small Group Leader: Grade 6 (6:00-7:15 pm) or Grades 7 & 8 (7:00-8:30 pm)
- † Small Group Leader Substitute: Choose in your child's class or wherever needed
- † Halls Angels: (*committed to creating a safe and peaceful environment enabling Christian growth to take place. They are a presence for maintaining order among students and leaders*)
Shift 1 (6:00-7:15 pm) or Shift 2 (7:00-8:30 pm)
- † Retreat chaperone: Grade 7 or Grade 8
- † Production (Audio/Visual)
- † One Body Special Needs Ministry

2009-2010 Schedule

Date	Scripture	Story
Sept. 16	Jeremiah 29:11	<i>"Get To Know You" Night</i>
Sept. 23	Ephesians 2:8-9	<i>The Core- Why believe? Why go through confirmation? How?</i>
Sept. 30	Genesis 1:31	<i>Who Is God? Apostle's Creed, Part 1</i>
Oct. 7	Psalms 86:8	<i>"There is no God like our God" - Who God isn't...</i>
Oct. 14	John 1:1	<i>Who is Jesus? Apostle's Creed, Part 2</i>
Oct. 21	Romans 8:38-39	<i>Why Did He Have to Die?</i>
Oct. 28	Romans 8:9, Eph. 2:4	<i>Who is the Holy Spirit? Apostle's Creed, Part 3</i>
Nov. 4	Romans 10:9	<i>How Do We Develop Relationship With God?</i>
Nov. 11	Spiritual Gifts Assessment	<i>What Are Our Gifts and How Do We Use Them?</i>
Nov. 18	Service Night-breakouts/signup	<i>Where is God calling me to serve?</i>
Nov. 25	No PowerLife	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
Dec. 2	Mark 6:45-46	<i>How and Why Should I Pray-The Lord's Prayer</i>
Dec. 9	Prayer Night	<i>Does God Answer Prayers?-The Power of Prayer</i>
Dec. 16	Christmas Story	<i>Small Group Christmas Party</i>
Dec. 23/30	No PowerLife	<i>Christmas Break!</i>
Jan. 6	Deuteronomy 4:40	<i>What Are the Rules Again?- Intro to the 10 Commandments</i>
Jan. 13	Exodus 34:14	<i>What Are the Small 'g' Gods that Compete Against God?</i>
Jan. 20	Exodus 20:7	<i>Don't Mess With God's Name</i>
Jan. 27	Isaiah 52:7	<i>Go to Church</i>
Feb. 3	John 13:34-35, Ex. 20:12	<i>Honor Your Parents</i>
Feb. 10	Matthew 5:29; 18:21-23	<i>Don't Kill- How Our Actions and Words Matter</i>
Feb. 17	No PowerLife	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>
Feb. 24	Proverbs 13:20	<i>Relationships- Who You Hang With is Important</i>
Mar. 3	John 10:10	<i>Don't Steal</i>
Mar. 10	Exodus 20:16, Proverbs 16:13	<i>Don't Lie- Character Counts!</i>
Mar. 17	No PowerLife	<i>Spring Break</i>
Mar. 24	Proverbs 14:30, Gala. 5:25-26	<i>Don't Covet- How Envy Can Destroy Your Soul</i>
Mar. 31		<i>Easter Mime</i>
April 7	Matthew 28:19	<i>What is Baptism and Why is it Important?</i>
April 14	Luke 22:19	<i>What About Communion? What are we actually doing?</i>
April 21		<i>Faith Statement Night</i>
April 28		<i>Last Night—Small Group Party</i>

Schedule is subject to change.

Contact Information

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding PowerLife! If you are unsure of who to contact, you can send your message to: student@hopewdm.org

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