

# **Lutheran Foundations: A Confirmation Curriculum©**

## **Year 2. Jesus Christ: His Life and Work**

### **The Tomorrow River Lutheran Parish**

**Orientation. September 24, 2025**

## **What is Confirmation?**

In Baptism, God claimed you – and your parents made some promises about how they would raise you. When you go through the rite of Confirmation – sometimes called the Affirmation of Baptism – God is still the driver, God still has you, God will still do all the things that need doing that you can't do. BUT now you have the opportunity to take over the promises about how you are going to live. You will CONFIRM that you are a Christian and that you intend to live as a Christian. That's why we call this thing "Confirmation".

You aren't a baby anymore! You are a big kid now! So, our job between today and the day you get confirmed, the day you affirm your baptism, is to get you ready. We need to teach you the basics of the Christian faith so that you can sensibly make these promises. Today you don't know enough... We have to fix that! Together!

Here is the critical portion of the Rite of Confirmation from Evangelical Lutheran Worship (that's the cranberry-colored hymnal at your church)

### **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

*Response: I renounce them.*

Do you believe in God the Father?

*Response: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*Response: I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; he*

*ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*Response: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

## **AFFIRMATION**

You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

*Response: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.*

So that's where we are headed...

**One last thing:** Confirmation for a Christian is sort of like pre-algebra for someone who wants a career in math. It is the very beginning of what you need to know and practice as an adult Christian. It is not the end. It is not graduation! We will be covering the very basics of the faith. We are trying to bring you to the place where you can sensibly promise to start working to stay on this path yourself!

## **The Bible**

*"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me;*

*it has feet, it runs after me;*

*it has hands, it lays hold of me...*

*a simple layman armed with Scripture is to be believed  
above a pope or a cardinal without it." –Martin Luther*

## **What is the Bible?**

"Most Americans, religious or not, have heard of and read part or even all of the Bible. It is arguably one of the most often referenced books — or set of books — in our culture.

In its most basic definition, the Bible is a diverse collection of writings, divided into two main sections:

- the Old Testament, which tells the story of God's relationship with and work on behalf of the Hebrew people

- the New Testament, which shares the story of Jesus, God's Son, and his teachings, death and resurrection, as well as the experiences and faith of the first followers of Jesus

But its meaning — and its significance to the Christian faith — is far more complex and profound. As Lutherans, ELCA members believe that the Bible is the written Word of God. It creates and nurtures faith through the work of the Holy Spirit and points us to Jesus Christ, the living Word and center of our faith. And in reading the Bible, we are invited into a relationship with God that both challenges us and promises us new life.”

– From the website of the ELCA

This year we are focusing on the Gospels, 4 accounts of Jesus' life and teaching. MUCH more about this in our next lesson!

### **For Lutherans, the Bible is all of the following:**

1. The Written Word of God
2. A Book, or more properly, a collection of books, to be read using ordinary literary rules (genre, setting, context, purpose, tense, redaction, etc). In addition, we are committed to honoring the plain meaning of words and we seek to understand how the initial writers and readers of any part of the Bible would have understood those words.
3. A Book written in other languages and arising from very different cultures and then translated into English
4. A gift from God
5. A book which points to Christ (The Manger and swaddling clothes which hold Christ -- Luther)
  - a. It is NOT Divine (The Master pointing to the moon...)
  - b. It is NOT to be worshiped
  - c. It is NOT a textbook providing answers for questions of  
History  
Anthropology  
Physics  
Biology  
Geography

### **Why are there so many translations?**

1. The Bible was written a long time ago. Those words are (mostly!) nailed down. But English is a living language. The meaning of words is always changing and evolving... so we have to update our translations
2. We keep finding new fragments of the ancient Bible. Sometimes we find enough proof to change what we think the original Bible said.

3. There are different ways to translate.
  - a. Word for Word
  - b. Meaning for Meaning
  - c. Thought for Thought
  - d. Paraphrase
4. Some translations try to come in at a specific reading level and so they might use words that aren't quite right from a translation perspective, but which are necessary to simplify the text...

### **Which translation should you use:**

That depends on a couple of things: What do you want to use it for, and how well do you read? You need a Bible for this class. There is probably one at home. If money is tight, use that one! Or you could pick one up at Goodwill for less than a dollar...

But if you want to buy a Bible, or if someone is willing to buy one for you, here are some suggestions:

If you want a lifetime study Bible that you are going to grow into, think about

1. The Lutheran Study Bible <https://www.amazon.com/Lutheran-Study-Bible-Youth-Ministry/dp/0806680598> or
2. The Oxford Annotated Bible <https://www.amazon.com/New-Oxford-Annotated-Bible-Apocrypha/dp/0190276088>

Both of these use the New Revised Standard Translation of the Bible. This is the preferred translation for the ELCA. That's the church that ordained me, that made me a pastor. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

If you are looking for a great Bible for personal reading, here are two excellent Bibles

1. The God's Word Translation <https://www.amazon.com/GODS-Translation-Large-Print-Bible/dp/0998447722>
2. The Message <https://www.amazon.com/Message-Bible-Contemporary-Language/dp/1576839168>

If you want to learn the Bible Stories in the FASTEST & EASIEST way possible, get a Bible Story Book. This is how my parents taught me the Bible stories.

1. Egermeier's Bible Story Book was first published in 1922 and substantially updated in 1963. The language in that update is now 61 years old and some of it needs to be updated again, but it is the best book I know to get your head around the top 300 or so Bible Stories. <https://a.co/d/3L11IWU> **This is a required book for this confirmation class.** I have copies for sale for \$15 each. If you can't afford that, I am happy to give you a copy!
2. God's Big Picture Bible Storybook. You are too old for this, but it would be an EXCELLENT book for you to have if you want to read Bible Stories to any

younger family members... Double bonus: You learn the stories while being a champion big sibling! <https://www.amazon.com/Gods-Big-Picture-Bible-Storybook/dp/1400246873>

If you are HUNGRY and want to go deeper

1. The Bible Project is excellent. Here is the landing page for their Overviews of the books of the Bible... but this is only the beginning! You can go DEEP with these folks! And it is all free! <https://bibleproject.com/videos/collections/new-testament/>
2. For the adults watching over a kid's shoulder: Jaroslav Pelikan's book *Whose Bible is? A Short History of the Scriptures* is simply outstanding.  
<https://a.co/d/iRdSdRD>

## Lutheranism

We are just going to touch this today! Lutherans are a kind of Christian who believe and teach that we are saved by God's Grace (alone!) through Faith (alone!) in Jesus Christ (alone!). Don't worry TODAY about those "alones" ... just open a file folder in your head for each of them – and add another file folder titled "Scripture Alone". We are going to spend the next 3 years filling those folders!



We follow the teachings of a guy named Martin Luther. This is Martin Luther. He was a German Monk and Priest who wanted to reform the Catholic Church. He was born in 1483 and began his public reformation work in 1517. He is NOT Martin Luther King Jr.

This is Martin Luther King Jr.. Martin Luther King Jr. was an American born in 1929 and assassinated in 1968. He was a Baptist preacher and a champion of the Civil Rights movement. He was a great American. But he is not who we will be talking about for the next 3 years.



Both great men. But two different men.

Lutherans respect Martin Luther King Jr. We follow the teachings of Martin Luther.

## Expectations, Paperwork, etc.

On the Website, you will find a number of forms – some of which must be completed and returned:

1. A registration form. Families don't need to fill out multiple forms with the same information, but we do need to know each kid's baptismal information
2. An intention form. Do you want to be totally "in" for confirmation or do you just want to drift in and out? Either way, we are glad to have you!
  - a. If you are "in", there are expectations.
    - i. Regular worship attendance. At least 30 services during the year. No more than 5 of those services can be "online". We want you to get into the habit of coming to church and building a community.
    - ii. Regular attendance at confirmation class. In general, the online sessions are for remote students and for local students who are ill or traveling. Local students are expected to show up for the "in person" classes!
    - iii. Acts of service. 5 hours at church, 10 hours out in the world
    - iv. Daily Devotions/Readings
3. The Readings Schedule. Each Month these need to be signed and returned.
4. The Class Schedule
5. A reproduction of the full ELCA Rite of Confirmation – so that you can stay clear what we are working on and what you are promising.

Videos will go up on Fridays

If you miss an email, video links and the zoom link are on the top of the confirmation page on the church website: [trchurch.org](http://trchurch.org)

I'm looking forward to a great year!