



# Affirming Your Baptism at St. James

“In holy baptism the triune God delivers us from the forces of evil, puts our sinful self to death, gives us new birth, adopts us as children, and makes us members of the body of Christ, the church.” (from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p.225)

Affirmation of baptism, or confirmation, is the opportunity for young people to affirm this gift of faith. For many of us, this was first given to us when we were very young and could not answer for ourselves. With this, confirmation is an important rite in the life of the Lutheran Church, and at St. James. In addition to being an opportunity to deepen faith and spiritual practices, affirming one’s baptism allows an individual to have a full participation in the life of the church.

Students are invited to begin Confirmation beginning in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, with the expectation that all areas of the program are completed by 9<sup>th</sup> grade. With 9<sup>th</sup> graders now being confirmed on Reformation Sunday, those being confirmed will have the first two months of their final year to finish up any requirements, and spend the remainder of the year serving as mentors to our first and second year students.

## Areas of Focus & Expected Units for Completion

### **Scripture\***

Students will engage in studies or classes to deepen their understanding of and comfort in the Bible. This includes our once a month teaching session (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month during the regular Sunday School hour), as well as attending other Sunday School classes, Bible Studies led at various times throughout the year, and Youth Group.

### **Catechism\***

A primary focus of our year on Lutheranism, students will study topics that focus on The Lord’s Prayer, 10 Commandments, and Creed, the Small Catechism.

### **Faith in Practice\***

Putting faith into practice is at the heart of what being a follower of Jesus is all about. Students are expected to participate in the CARES breakfast rotation on Sunday mornings, as well as other opportunities of service put in place throughout the year as a part of the confirmation program, youth group, and other church activities.

## **Leadership**

Using our gifts to lead and serve is a part of following Jesus. With this, there are lots of ways to serve and lead at St. James. In regards to worship, our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are expected to serve as acolytes, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are expected to serve as sacristy assistants, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders are expected to serve as ushers.

## **Our Church**

There is a lot that makes St. James a special and thriving community of faith. Students are expected to connect with a ministry, committee, or project of their choosing that helps them learn more of the integrated life of our church.

## **Wider Church\***

The church is bigger than just St. James! Students are expected to participate in at least 2 wider church opportunities per year. This includes synod retreats, ELCA Youth Gathering, mission trips, Reach Work Camp, Confirmation Camp (1 time requirement), God's Work Our Hands, Synod Assembly, and other opportunities that arise.

## **Electives\***

Individual students will certainly have an interest in one area more than another, whether that is in one of the above areas or in another focus. Electives provide the space for a student to explore one area deeper, or to focus on another area altogether.

## **Faith Statement**

As 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are nearing completion of the program, they are expected to meet with Pastor Mike or Pastor Andrew at least 1 time in order to work on a statement of faith for this point in their faith journey. This statement will consist of reflections on the confirmation program, experiences, what they have learned, and how their faith will continue to serve them in the future.

For all of the above areas, students are expected to complete the Reporting Form and submit it to Pastor Mike or Pastor Andrew within 30 days of the end of the study or project for unit to be granted. An independent study can also be used for any of the above areas with a "\*" above. Please complete and submit an Independent Study Form to Pastor Mike or Pastor Andrew prior to beginning your work in this area in order to have it approved for unit.