

**MIDDLE
SCHOOL
MINISTRY
@
IMMANUEL**

**A BRANCH OF IMMANUEL YOUTH
& A PATH TOWARD
CONFIRMATION**

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CALENDAR

ROUGH SCHEDULE FOR THE 2021-2022 PROGRAM YEAR.

****DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE IF NECESSARY, TIMES TO BE DETERMINED.***

SEPTEMBER	the faith journey 1 orientation 8 rally night 25 activity night
OCTOBER	what is the Bible? 16 activity night 20 no group
NOVEMBER	environmentalism 20 activity night 24 no group
DECEMBER	a day in the life of Jesus 22 Christmas party w/ high school 29 no group
JANUARY	parables & telling stories 21-23 retreat
FEBRUARY	human sexuality activity date tbd
MARCH	death and dying activity date tbd
APRIL	good samaritan leaders activity date tbd
MAY	final meeting & activity tbd

OUR CONFIRMATION VISION

“The Christian life is not about knowledge, rituals, or church membership; it is about loving God and loving our neighbor. Hence, the point of confirmation ministry is living a life of faith based on loving God and loving our neighbor.”

We are so excited for you to be joining us as we reframe the culture of confirmation. Know this: you are already a beloved member of this church family. We want to create a space for you to meaningfully engage in your faith & doubt as young people. To do that, we are going to shake some things up this year, and all the information you need will be in this packet. (So keep it around! Also going to be published on the website.)

What we want you to remember is that confirmation is your choice that you will navigate along with your friends and family. Confirmation is not a requirement or a checklist item. There is no "right" way or time to be confirmed. It's a personal journey to confessing your faith in Jesus Christ in response to your baptism. All of the following areas are things that are important to this journey.

GUIDE TO THE CONFIRMATION JOURNEY

There is no right way to go about confirmation, but we want to give you as many helpful tools and spaces as possible. The only *true* requirement to confirmation is that you genuinely explore your faith!*

*Kinda ;) We have a couple things that are technically required because they help YOU to understand what your confirmation really means!

GOALS

- to create community
- to help you know God
- to encourage you to love others well
- to provide a space to doubt and question
- to grow in mission and purpose
- to understand your baptism
- to learn grace

to give you the freedom to choose.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

Middle School Youth Group will be every Wednesday night (unless otherwise communicated) at 5:30pm.

Wednesday nights are NOT "confirmation class." Just like the HS Youth, we hope you'll choose to attend your Youth Group to explore your faith and build relationships! We will discuss different topics of life and faith within small groups and will also have large group meetings about once a month to do service, big discussions, lessons, or stump-the-pastor q&a! Wednesday nights are dedicated to YOUR community. Invite friends, bring questions, and hang out together.

ACTIVITY NIGHTS

Activity nights will occur monthly @ Immanuel for approximately two hours depending on the activity. Times will be announced as activities are planned but will fall within the hours of 2pm-8pm.

Activity nights are dedicated to having fun together! There will be different things each month, including games, movies, and ALWAYS food of some kind. These are great to invite friends to (not just your Immanuel pals)! Ann will be hosting these; adult volunteers always welcome to help with students or food. Students are welcome to recommend activities, snacks, or games to Ann.

FAMILY GOD TIME

Family lesson content is included in this packet.

These are your classic "confirmation lessons" from Luther's Small Catechism. A huge part of our faith is learning alongside our family. If you intend to be confirmed, we highly suggest your family doing these together! They utilize the "faith five" conversation format, so it is great to do with the whole family! Feel free to do your own "lessons" as well!

CROSS-GENERATIONAL EVENTS

It's also important to spend time with the people of all ages within the church. We have so much to learn from one another. We are working on developing these events, and they will be promoted when the time comes. For now, consider joining coffee hour after Sunday worship or Wednesday night meals before youth group!

WORSHIP

Sunday @ 9:15, Wednesday @ 6:30

We hope you'll join in worship with us; this is the easiest way to connect with the church and hear about God. We are working on designing Wednesday nights to reflect people like you - our young people! We want it to be a relaxed and interactive experience where you feel like you can be yourself completely.

UNDERSTANDING BAPTISMAL PROMISES

**These are your only "requirements" before being confirmed.*

Demonstrate your understanding of:

- living among God's faithful people**
- hearing the word of God & sharing in the Lord's supper**
- proclaiming the good news of God in Christ through word & deed**
- serving all people following the example of Jesus**
- striving for justice & peace in all the earth**

Because confirmation is "the affirmation of baptism," we want to help you learn to live out the promises made in your baptism. Understanding baptismal promises will be shown by an activity/project along with a written reflection of the activity/project. (one project/reflection per promise = 5 project/reflections.) You can do these AT ANY TIME; they are self-paced. They can be done alone, with a partner, or even as a small group. We recommend getting your project approved by one of us before you do it We will provide any help you need. see more pg. 09-13

GUIDE TO THE CONFIRMATION JOURNEY SUMMARY:

In order to be confirmed (should you chose to do so),

we hope you:

- attend youth group
- come to activity nights when you are available
- do Family God Time Lessons
- worship!
- spend time with other generations in the church
- *attend confirmation/junior high camp*
 - *(We ALMOST require this because it's so great but understand extenuating circumstances.)*

we require you:

- to make a *personal* choice and commitment to explore and live out your faith
- decide, *along with your family*, when the appropriate time for you to be confirmed is (We will continue to have annual confirmation services, but it's your choice what year in middle school, high school, or beyond that you're prepared for confirmation.)
- demonstrate your understanding of the five baptismal promises
- write and share a faith statement (You'll receive guidelines for this after you complete your baptismal promises projects.)

BAPTISMAL PROMISES

helpful guidelines:

- you need to complete at least one project for each promise
- you can complete these individually or as a part of a group
- we recommend getting your activity approved by Ann, Pastor Zech, or Pastor Rod before you begin
- ask for help! if you need it, that's what we're here for! we want you to feel confident in what you're doing
- you will need to complete a reflection for each promise - can be written & handed in or typed & emailed to any of us
- reflections don't have a length requirement but need to include
 - what you did & how it went
 - how it relates to the promise you're displaying
 - what experiences you had & what they taught you about faith
 - how you will use what you learned in the future

*Keep in mind, this is not an exhaustive list of projects you can do. You can use any of these examples, but we'd also encourage you to come up with your own ideas as well!

LIVE AMONG GOD'S FAITHFUL PEOPLE

1) FAITH JOURNEY INTERVIEWS

- interview 3 or more people about their relationship with God and how their faith has grown and changed over time
- take notes! helpful for your reflection
- try to interview people outside of your immediate family

2) CREATE A PRAYER PRACTICE WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

- organize some sort of regular prayer time that is with other people
- example: lead a prayer session for your family every week
- example: organize a monthly prayer hangout with your friends

3) EVALUATE THE CHURCH

- answer questions:
 - How does the church encourage community?
 - How could it do a better job of creating community/family?
 - Come up with one example idea of an event the church could do.
- still need to write a reflection on what these questions have to do with anything :)

4) HOST A CROSS-GENERATIONAL EVENT

- example: volunteer to host coffee hour
- example: host a churchwide game night

5) DO A GROUP BIBLE STUDY

- with your small group or other friends
- can use a study guide or ask for help in deciding what to read
- meet as many times as it takes to cover your topic/book

HEAR THE WORD OF GOD & SHARE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

1) SERMON NOTES

- do 10+ written notes for different sermons
- still need to write a reflection on what taking sermon notes did for you and how you connected with God's word

2) READ THROUGH A BOOK OF THE BIBLE

- pick a book of the Bible and read it
 - don't just pick a book because it's short. research what books might interest you!
- space out your reading over time so you don't get overwhelmed
- take notes about what you're learning as you go to help with your reflection

3) VOLUNTEER IN WORSHIP

- be a reader or communion assistant
- remain on the schedule for at least one year so you get to do it a couple times!

4) DO A DAILY DEVOTIONAL

- find a devotional book, devotional app, or pick a devotion from the Bible app (ask for help finding one if needed)
- read it daily (or as often as you can) until you get through it

5) DO-IT-YOURSELF COMMUNION

- bake bread & create/decorate a "chalice"
- read about the Last Supper
- share communion at home with your family

PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD IN CHRIST THROUGH WORD AND DEED

1) INVITE FRIENDS

- invite a friend to worship, youth group, or an activity night
- try to invite three or more friends (don't need to be at the same time)
- thank them for coming & remind them they're always welcome

2) LEAD WORSHIP

- be a reader, assisting minister, do special music, run live stream, usher, etc

3) BE AN ENCOURAGER

- leave or send notes or gifts to specific person/people
- lift their spirits
- reach out to anyone when they are struggling

4) HOST A CROSS-GENERATIONAL EVENT

- example: volunteer to host coffee hour
- example: host a churchwide game night

5) DO A GROUP BIBLE STUDY

- with your small group or other friends
- can use a study guide or ask for help in deciding what to read
- meet as many times as it takes to cover your topic/book

6) WRITE AND/OR READ A DEVOTION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

- create a devotion or lesson that could be recorded and shared on the church's social media pages
- create at least 4 different videos or writings to be shared

SERVE ALL PEOPLE FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

1) SERVICE PROJECT

- find an organization to volunteer/serve at
- plan a service project for your family, small group, or all middle schoolers to do together

2) FUNDRAISING PROJECT

- find a fun and creative way to raise money for an organization that serves others

STRIVE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE IN ALL THE EARTH

1) JUSTICE & ADVOCACY

- find an issue of injustice in our world you're passionate about
- research it - read websites, books, petitions about the issue and what's being done to help
- advocate (speak up for) the issue in a tangible way
 - write a letter to your congress-person
 - make a donation
 - volunteer at related events

2) PURSUE AN ACT OF JUSTICE IN YOUR HOME

- find a way to seek justice as a family
 - could be anything from doing advocacy to taking a greener approach to life in your home!

3) JUSTICE & PEACE ESSAY

- write an essay that explains, in your own words, what justice really is & how justice is linked to peace
- you wouldn't have to write a reflection on the essay

FAMILY GOD TIME TEMPLATE

H I G H S A N D L O W S

Go around & have each family member share their highs and lows for the day/week/whatever time period you want to do.

R E A D

Each lesson includes readings from scripture & references Luther's Small Catechism. We suggest having both your Bibles and your catechisms handy. Make sure everyone has their own, and give everyone an opportunity to read.

D I S C U S S

There are provided discussion-guiding questions, but they are just a jumping-off point! Take the conversation wherever it needs to go for y'all.

P R A Y E R

Pray together for all the components of the night (your highs and lows, what you learned, and what you hope God will do with those things, and any other prayer concerns).

B L E S S I N G

Speak blessings over one another as you close. You can take turns whose night it is to bless, or you can each bless one other person in your family. Consider something simple, comparable to a benediction in worship.

FAMILY GOD TIME CONTENT

- Topic:** 10 Commandments Pt. 1: Love God
Read: Exodus 20:1-11, LSC Commandments 1-3
Discussion:
 - What does it look like to put God first?
 - What is an idol? Do we have idols in our every-day lives?
 - What does "taking the Lord's name in vain" mean?
 - Do we ever use God's name to cause harm?
 - What things in our lives would look the same if we took these commandments to love God seriously? What things would be different?

- Topic:** 10 Commandments Pt. 2: Love Others
Read: Exodus 12-17, LSC Commandments 4-10
Discussion:
 - What does it mean to honor your parents? Do parents honor their kids?
 - Why does God give these commandments? Why should I try to honor the 10 commandments?
 - Discuss times when Jesus (in his ministry) taught how we should love others. How did Jesus live out his love for others, both before and at the cross?

- Topic:** 10 Commandments Pt. 3: What about the other commandments?
Read: Matthew 22:34-40, Matthew 26:26-28
Discussion:
 - Be sure to explain that there are a LOT of other commandments and rules God gave to Israel in the Old Testament (Exodus-Deuteronomy contains a lot of law). This is often called "the Old Covenant".
 - Does God get mad that we don't follow all the laws in the Bible?
 - Why do we not follow every single law in the Old Covenant?
 - What law *do* we follow?
 - What is the most important thing in God's eyes?

- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 1: Creation
Read: Genesis 1, LSC Apostles' Creed The First Article
Discussion:
What does it mean for us today that God is our creator?
Why do you think the creation story is in the Bible?
How should we treat creation?
What do you feel like when you create something?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 2: Birth of Jesus
Read: Luke 1:26-35, Luke 2:1-7, LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
What is so cool about Jesus' birth?
Do you have to have a perfect family and childhood for God to use you for good?
Who is Jesus in relationship to God the Father?
Why is this important?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 3: Trial of Jesus
Read: Mark 14:53-65, Mark 15:6-15, LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
Why did Jesus get arrested?
Why didn't some people like Jesus?
Why did they want him to die?
Do you ever feel like people don't like you when you do the right thing?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 4: Crucifixion
Read: Mark 15:21-47, LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
Why did they kill Jesus?
What do you think the disciples felt like when Jesus died?
Did Jesus deserve to die?
What do we learn Jesus' death really means?

- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 5: Resurrection
Read: John 20:11-23, LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
Who did Jesus first resurrect to?
What can we learn from [Mary]? How can we be more like [her]?
What does Jesus tell the disciples about his resurrection?
What is the most important thing about the resurrection for us?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 6: Ascension
Read: Luke 24:50-53, LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
What does it mean to "ascend"? What does it mean here?
Why do you think Jesus left his friends and ascended to the Father?
What important work followed the ascension?
How do you think we should respond to the ascension?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 7: Return
Read: Luke 21:25-28, 1 Corinthians 15:50-57 LSC Apostles' Creed The Second Article
Discussion:
Why do you think Jesus is coming again?
What is redemption?
How will a return of Jesus make that a reality?
What will be "changed" about us in Jesus' return?
Answer Paul's (rhetorical) question, "O death, where is your victory?"
What victory do we look forward to?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 8: Holy Spirit
Read: John 14:26-27, Galatians 5:22-26 LSC Apostles' Creed The Third Article
Discussion:
What is the Holy Spirit?
How is the Spirit related to Jesus?
What does the Spirit do?
What does sanctification mean?

- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 9: Church & Saints
Read: Romans 1:1-7, Acts 4:32-35, LSC Apostles' Creed The Third Article
Discussion:
What is a saint? What do you have to do to be a saint?
What does the word "catholic" mean? Look it up if you don't know!
What is the purpose of the church? What should it look like?
How can we do a better job at being the church?
- Topic:** Apostles' Creed Pt. 10: Forgiveness, Resurrection, & Life
Read: Galatians 4:1-7, John 5:19-24, LSC Apostles' Creed The Third Article
Discussion:
What does God's forgiveness mean for you?
What is an heir? What does it mean for us to be heirs of God?
Discuss what you, as a family, believe about the resurrection of all.
What is eternal life? What will eternity look like?
How do we begin living our eternal lives NOW?
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 1: Intro
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, 1 John 3:1-3, LSC The Lord's Prayer Introduction
Discussion:
Describe the *ideal* relationship between parents and their children.
How and why do we sometimes stray from that ideal?
What does it mean for God to be our Holy Parent?
Describe ways God reminds you of a good mom or dad.
Remember: God is both "motherly" and "fatherly"!
Why is it cool that we address God this way?
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 2: Petition 1
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, 1 Samuel 2:2, LSC The Lord's Prayer First Petition
Discussion:
What do you think "hallowed" means?
What is holiness? Try to use the 1 Samuel verse to help answer.
How do we keep ourselves holy? our church holy?
Why do we remember God's holiness in this prayer?

- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 3: Petition 2
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, Mark 4:30-32 LSC The Lord's Prayer Second Petition
Discussion:
What comes to mind when you think about a kingdom?
How is God's kingdom different from a worldly kingdom?
What is God's kingdom like?
Where is the kingdom? When? How?
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 4: Petition 3
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18 LSC The Lord's Prayer Third Petition
Discussion:
What is "will" mean?
What does God desire for the world based on these readings?
Why do we pray for God's will to be done?
How can we be a part of God's will for the world?
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 5: Petition 4
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, Exodus 16:4-5, LSC The Lord's Prayer Fourth Petition
Discussion:
What does "daily bread" mean?
What does this petition teach us about trusting God?
Is God faithful to provide? Think about the Exodus.
BONUS: Listen to the song "Your Love is Strong" by Jon Foreman and reflect as a family.
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 6: Petition 5
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, John 13:34, LSC The Lord's Prayer Fifth Petition
Discussion:
What is forgiveness? What does it give us?
What is it like to be forgiven? by God? by others?
What is it like to forgive?
Why do we need to forgive?

- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 7: Petition 6
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, 1 Peter 1:6-7 LSC The Lord's Prayer Sixth Petition
Discussion:
What is temptation? What is trial?
Why would God allow us to experience these things?
Think of examples of how you have grown in tough times. Give thanks for God's faithfulness through the trial/temptation.
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 8: Petition 7
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, 1 Corinthians 13:6, LSC The Lord's Prayer Seventh Petition
Discussion:
What does the word "deliver" make you think of?
What would it look like to be "delivered" from evil?
What is evil?
What is truth? How do we abide in truth?
- Topic:** The Lord's Prayer Pt. 9: Conclusion
Read: Matthew 6:9-15, LSC The Lord's Prayer "Conclusion" or "Doxology"
Discussion:
Discuss each of these and what it looks like for them to be God's:
kingdom
power
glory
Discuss "AMEN."
- Topic:** Holy Baptism Pt. 1: What is Baptism?
Read: LSC The Sacrament of Holy Baptism pt. 1
Discussion:
Follow the question in LSC.
Go to the scripture referenced in LSC.
Answer the question in your own words.

- Topic:** Holy Baptism Pt. 2: Why do we baptize?
Read: LSC The Sacrament of Holy Baptism pt. 2
Discussion:
 - Follow the question in LSC.
 - Go to the scripture referenced in LSC.
 - Answer the question in your own words.

- Topic:** Holy Baptism Pt. 3: How can water do such great things?
Read: LSC The Sacrament of Holy Baptism pt.3
Discussion:
 - Follow the question in LSC.
 - Go to the scripture referenced in LSC.
 - Answer the question in your own words.

- Topic:** Holy Baptism Pt. 4: What does baptism mean for me?
Read: LSC The Sacrament of Holy Baptism pt. 4
Discussion:
 - Follow the question in LSC.
 - Go to the scripture referenced in LSC.
 - Answer the question in your own words.

- Topic:** Communion
Read: LSC The Sacrament of Holy Communion, Exodus 12
Discussion:
 - Follow the questions in LSC.
 - Discuss the history of the Passover.
 - Answer the questions in your own words.

- Topic:** Confession
Read: LSC Confession
Discussion:
 - Follow the question in LSC.
 - Go to the scripture referenced in LSC.
 - Answer the question in your own words.

CONNECT

Website: immanuelfamily.com

Facebook: Immanuel Lutheran Church

Instagram: @godwithusyouthmin

TikTok: @godwithusyouthmin

Remind:

<https://www.remind.com/join/msatimmanu>

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