

Immanuel Confirmation Handbook 2024-2025

Dear Parents,

As pastoral staff, parents and mentors we are in partnership for the primary goal of nurturing and strengthening the faith of your child, leading toward public confession before the congregation (Rite of Confirmation). One would think that our primary strategy for accomplishing this goal would be Sunday catechism instruction, but it isn't; our primary strategy is worship which is why what I am about to say is so important. It is in worship that God is present to us, handing out His gifts of forgiveness and grace; it is in worship that we come to understand our need and His goodness. It is through worship that God touches us with His re-creative power, and we learn the language of faith, passed down to us through the many generations of believers that have gone before. As always, the quiet, steady example of faithful attendance at worship set by parents is crucial during your child's years of study and reflection.

We are partners in your child's faith formation; as partners we should not contradict one another, what is taught in the classroom should be reinforced at home and in the observable Christian witness of parents, pastors and mentors. This observable Christian witness includes being in worship regularly; our children need to see from us that worship and time spent in worship is important, if we are only bringing our children to the instruction portion of confirmation, we as parents are shortchanging our children on the greatest opportunity for the nurturing and strengthening of their faith—that of Christian worship.

Together, we are a partnership that has only the best in mind for your child—we all desire that they will grow up in the faith and knowledge of their Lord Jesus Christ and that they will grow into the profession of faith that they will make on their confirmation day. Continue to keep them and their faith formation in your prayers, knowing that your pastor and your child's mentor pray for them and you as well. The handbook that follows is meant to aid our confirmation partnership on behalf of your child.

Serving in His name,

The Immanuel Pastoral Staff

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Goals of the Confirmation Ministry

- **Nurture and strengthen** the faith of the student, leading toward public confession before the congregation (Rite of Confirmation).
- **Assist** the student in the integration of faith and life.
- **Include** our young adults in the life of the congregation.
- **Create** opportunities for friendship and meaningful relationships.
- **Transition** Immanuel youth into Senior High Youth Ministry.

Strategies for the Mission

If the goals are the destination, then the strategies are the roads we take in getting there. Confirmation instruction at Immanuel Lutheran Church is firmly set in God's Word as presented and explained to us in Luther's Small Catechism. In the Six Chief Parts of the catechism, we find the central truths of Holy Scripture—the grace of God, the cross, the giftedness of faith.

We will strive to achieve the goals of the Immanuel Confirmation Ministry through the use of six strategies:

1. Worship

It is here that God is present to us, handing out His gifts of forgiveness and grace; it is here that we come to understand our great need because of sin and His goodness, shown in Jesus.

2. Sunday instruction

The cornerstone of our Confirmation ministry is the Sunday instruction, offered to all students in 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Classes meet from September through May, with a number of Sundays off for holidays or special events. **Class sessions are Sunday mornings, 9:30 am -10:15 am.**

3. Home, Parental Modeling and Family Devotions:

As always, the quiet, steady example of faithful parents is crucial during these years of study and reflection. At home you model faithful worship and bible study attendance for your child and lead by example a family devotional life, using the materials shared each week.

4. Mentors and Small Groups

A mentor is a model of the faith: an adult who has pledged to spend time with your child for no other reason than to demonstrate the Christian Walk. Beginning with 6th grade it is our goal to have male and female mentors are present with the class during instruction helping to facilitate discussion; in addition, mentors look for fun and service opportunities to help youth live out their faith and build community.

5. Large Group Gatherings (As we are able in 2024-2025)

Participation in the Large Group Gatherings underscores the nature of church as community, and provides opportunities to build relationships and history together, which are both important keys toward later participation in Senior High Youth (and beyond). Nothing beats time spent together in developing the relationships so necessary for a sense of belonging.

6. Confirmation Camp/ Mo District Retreat (Formerly Camp Windermere)

Confirmation Camp and the Missouri District Jr. High Retreat (now at Crosspointe) are getaway experiences that combine many of the strategies listed above into a 5 or 3 day “get away” setting. These experiences provide time for additional instruction and for activities that continue to build friendships between the students. Attendance at Confirmation Camp is required, as this is where the 10 Commandments are covered; MO District Retreat is an optional experience.

The Instruction

1. Sunday Class and Lessons for 2024-2025

The following information is important for both parents and students to know and follow:

*** Instruction begins September 8, 2024 and is completed May 18, 2024.** As a gift from the congregation, 5th grade students will receive a *Faith Alive Bible as they begin their Bible overview*; and 6th grade students will receive a Small Catechism from the congregation. **These are presented in person on Rally Day, which is also the Sunday we begin instruction, September 8, 2024. A special prayer is offered in weekend worship for the new and continuing students as we begin our instruction year on Sunday, September 8, 2024.**

Class is held each week except for the following Sundays (at this time, Jr. High Sunday School is not planned for the weeks we do not meet:

- December 1, 2024 (Thanksgiving Weekend)
- December 22, 2024 (Christmas Break)
- December 29, 2024 (Christmas Break)
- January 19, 2025 (holiday weekend)
- February 16, 2025 (holiday weekend)
- March 16, 2025 (Beginning of Immanuel Spring Break)
- April 20, 2025 (Easter) [No Sunday School/Bible Classes]

*** Class begins at 9:30 am and ends at 10:15 am. each week. Please be prompt!**

<p>5th Grade please bring to class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your Faith Alive Bible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Pen or Pencil <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Student Book; 30-Lesson Bible Overview 	<p>6th – 8th Grade please bring to class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luther’s Small Catechism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your Bible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Pen or Pencil <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Student Book; 60-Lesson Catechism Study
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* The four-year lesson plans are presented on page 13 in this Handbook.

Where will we meet for class?
5th Grade: East Building Art Room
6th-8th Grade: East Building Commons

5th grade—What to Expect:

A. Sunday: Lesson Time

Led by a lay volunteer, Ms. Natalie Oleschuk, students will be led through the student book (30-Lesson Bible Overview) with a combination of time in the book, Bible study, working with a partner, and lesson related activities.

B. Good Habits at Home: Talking about what your child learned and Family

Devotions There is no lesson homework but there are important things for each lesson to be done at home as a family. Our hope is that your family will make good use of devotional materials to develop a habit of being in God’s Word and prayer regularly; if you need suggestions, please ask.

C. Missing Confirmation Class

Because your pastor believes that church attendance and class attendance are absolutely key in the life of young disciples, when Sunday of worship is missed, please present a note and/or a church bulletin if your family worshiped elsewhere. With services regularly presented via YouTube this should not be an issue. A student will make up the missed class session, by completing the workbook section that was covered when they were absent and showing it to the pastoral staff. A parent signature on the lesson confirms that your child did the make-up review of the lesson missed. Parents, please communicate to us that your child did the work.

6th - 8th Grade—What to Expect:

A. Preparing for Sunday Morning: Lesson Overview Video

Each lesson has a short video to be watched at home that serves to prepare the catechumen (your child) and their family for the lesson to be discussed on Sunday. Most lessons are scheduled to be completed over two Sundays. The link to the lesson overview will be emailed to families mid-week to prepare for Sunday.

B. Sunday: Lesson Time

Led by the pastoral staff, catechumens will be led through the student book (60-Lesson Catechism Study) with a combination of time in the lesson book, catechism and Bible study, working with a partner, and lesson related activities.

C. Good Habits at Home:

Dr. Luther commended the catechism to the head of the household for the teaching of the faith to the family. It is God’s desire that His truth be integrated into daily life. The weekly help that will be delivered (e-mailed home) for each lesson is the “**Connection**

Journal,” with a number of suggested ways that parents and children can reinforce what was shared in class. The other part to this journal is a short daily bible reading, an accompanying audio devotion and a question to help the student and their family reflect on the recent lesson material.

The Connection Journal has a place for parent signature and date; the signed journal sheet should be returned to confirm that your household did participate in memory work and family prayers to help form your confirmand in God’s Word. Each lesson covers two Sunday class periods; the **Connection Journal** should be submitted prior to the beginning of the next lesson.

D. Missing Confirmation Class

Because your pastors believe that church and class attendance are absolutely key in the life of young disciples, when a Sunday of worship is missed, please present a note and/or a church bulletin if your family worshiped elsewhere. With services regularly presented via YouTube this should not be an issue. A student will make up for the missed class session by completing the workbook section that was covered when they were absent and showing it to the pastoral staff. A parent signature on the lesson confirms that your child did the make-up review of the lesson missed.

E. Sermon Reports (6th-8th Grade only)

Each student will be required to complete 6 Sermon Reports during the year, preferably 1 per month (October – April, none due in December). Blank Sermon Report sheets will be available in the narthex; completed reports may be turned into the pastoral staff.

The purpose for this assignment is to train the students in their ability to distinguish law and gospel in a sermon, and to apply the message to their own lives. Instruction will be given during the year that will help the student understand what to listen for in a sermon and how to complete a Sermon Report Form. Parents are encouraged to help the student each month in this assignment by talking about the sermon on the drive home, over lunch, etc. Experience shows that younger students especially need assistance to recall and sort out the language and the concepts. Feel free to take notes during the sermon, and then to “compare” them afterward prior to the completion of the report.

F. The Experience of Individual Confession and Absolution. (6th– 8th grade only) We have all had the experience of corporate confession and absolution in Sunday morning worship, but most adults have never taken the opportunity to meet with their pastor for *Individual Confession and Absolution* (LSB, pg. 292-293). To better prepare our confirmands, all youth, 6-8th grade will have the opportunity to meet with the pastoral staff one time (1x) each year for *Individual Confession and Absolution*.

G. Essays and Banners (8th grade only)

Students preparing for their Confirmation are required to complete an essay on an assigned question and a banner portraying their confirmation verse and its meaning to the life of a Christian (see “Confirmation 2023”, below.)

2. Acolytes and Church Service

Learning and growing in service to the Lord’s Church is important for all of us. All students (5th-8th grade) will be assigned to acolyte. In addition, every student (6th - 8th grade) will designate an area of interest for service in the church during the first week of class.

Areas of service include: Church Service Music, Sunday School Music, Altar Guild, Ushers, Choir, Light of Christ Chinese Mission, and Greeters. Under the supervision of adults serving in those areas, students will be given opportunities throughout the course of the year to learn the lay roles of service surrounding corporate worship.

Small Groups, 6th - 8th Grade

1. Assignments and Function

Small groups serve the purpose of building meaningful relationships between the students and between each student and a caring adult (mentor). Each student is assigned to a small group in the 6th grade, organized by gender (each group is either all boys or all girls). They sit together by group for the Sunday presentation, and discuss themes or applications of the catechism to their lives.

Friendships are further enriched through social and service activities together; these activities take place as time and schedules allow. Parents are invited to encourage after hours gatherings with these small groups.

Large Group Gatherings, 5th - 8th Grade

Large group gatherings are important to provide junior high students an opportunity to enjoy good Christian fellowship and to foster a sense of group cohesiveness. The main goal of the Large Group Activity is *fun*. Some gatherings will begin with a brief devotion and prayer to underscore the Christian nature of the group. There is one gathering scheduled per month, with a wide variety of activities planned. In the past, fees have been collected upon each event, based on that event’s cost (excluding the District Retreat in March and Confirmation Camp in June). This year we will be asking for a one-time fee of **\$50** to include all outings.

Planning for the **Missouri District Junior High Retreat**, is currently underway by the MO District; The “save the date” is April 4-6 2025, and will be **at Cross Pointe Retreat Center**. The cost for this event is approximately \$150.00 (pending District information), and registration will begin late January or early February.

Regarding all events, parents play a key role in serving as drivers and chaperones; if volunteers are needed, we appreciate your support by serving in this way.

Confirmation Camp 2025

The Confirmation Camp (for those students completing 6th and 7th grades in June 2025) is scheduled for **Sunday, June 8– Friday, June 13, 2025**. Please be aware that the retreat is a part of your child's instruction (The 10 Commandments), and every effort should be made to have him/her attend. Those who miss will make up the instruction with a workbook assignment, and, of course, miss out on all of the fun and activities that help to bond the group together.

The retreat this year will again take place at Camp Trinity in New Haven, Missouri. Further information will be sent in a letter this spring, but the cost for the week is set at \$229. Please inform Pastor Schrader or Pastor Karg if your child has a conflict with the dates or if you wish to seek financial aid.

Confirmation 2025

Confirmation Day this year will be **Sunday, April 27, 2025**. The weeks leading up to confirmation can be hectic, and there are a number of items of which families must be informed:

Confirmation is a public rite of the church preceded by a period of instruction designed to help baptized Christians identify with the life and mission of the Christian community. At Immanuel our period of instruction is from 5-8th grade. When instruction is complete, the pastor deems the student ready for confirmation. The ultimate goal of this instruction is a continued lifelong growing in the faith and the partaking, by the baptized Christian, in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

*****Prior to the Rite of Confirmation, each junior confirmand candidate and their parents will sit for a conversation with the pastor, as the pastor reviews the faith into which they are about to be confirmed. At that time, the candidate will state to the pastor their desire to be confirmed in their baptismal faith and their desire to "receive the Lord's Supper for the forgiveness of their sins and the strengthening of their faith in Christ and in love toward others." (Pastoral Care Companion, "Guidelines for Pastoral Examination of Catechumens," 664.)*****

* A **Confirmation Verse** will be chosen by each 8th gr. student. A list of verses will be provided early in the confirmation year, so that the student may share their choice with the pastor. It is quite possible that some students may choose the same verse; it is intended to be personal for each student. The verse they choose will be used as the theme verse for their banner and will play a significant part in their essay.

* **Essays** will be written by each student as an opportunity to give public witness of their faith. Each student will write an essay on either of these topics, **"Jesus is the most important thing in my life because..."** or **"My Christian faith is important to me because..."** The final part of the essay will include your child's sharing of why their confirmation verse is special to them. Parents are encouraged to have conversations and help their child reflect on these statements as they write this important essay reflective of the faith they hold. Parental help is also sought in encouraging the student to keep up

with the “dateline” for the essay drafts, eliminating the need for rushing around prior to the night they are read. **Essay Final Drafts will be due, Sunday, March 2, 2025.**

* Each student being confirmed will design and make a **banner** (to be completed by Palm Sunday, **March 24**) depicting their Confirmation verse. The design and making of ecclesiastical art serves as another public expression of faith, and beautifies the nave on this special day. Time for assembly of the banners will be taken from a small group meeting. Additional “banner time” may be needed at home to finish up. Banners will be presented and explained to the congregation by each student on Essay Night (below).

* **A Parent Meeting is scheduled on March 5, 2025** at 8:00 p.m., or immediately following the Ash Wednesday Service. Pastor Karg and Pastor Schrader will review information necessary for each parent to know concerning Confirmation Day. Biographical forms are given out which include height and weight information needed for ordering robes. Sponsor and regular invitations will be available for purchase.

* A **Church Cleaning** is scheduled each year a week or two before Easter at 9:00 am. Please watch for this date to be publicized. We encourage families of confirmands to take time out to help with the care of our facilities, and to prepare the church building for Holy Week and Easter.

* **Essay Night is scheduled for Friday, April 25, 2025**, at 7:00 p.m. Students will present the essays they have prepared and the banners they have made. The presentation is open to the congregation, and families are encouraged to invite relatives, sponsors and friends. A reception closes out the evening. Students are asked to dress in their “Sunday best,” reflecting the respect we have for the study of God’s Word and the importance of their instruction.

* **A Confirmation Service practice is scheduled following Essay Night**; following a traditional cake and punch reception, confirmands will return upstairs to walk through the confirmation service. Everything the confirmands will need to know for the service the following day will be rehearsed, including lining up, processing, the Confirmation Rite itself, and recessing. This practice time frees up Saturday for families; every confirmand is expected to remain for the practice, so that he/she will be informed and confident.

* **Confirmation Day is Sunday, April 27, 2025** and the Rite of Confirmation will take place during the 10:30 a.m. service. **Robes** will be put on at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, and **pictures** will be taken at 9:30 a.m. in the chancel (upstairs). Seats are not reserved, so families are encouraged to arrive early. No flash photography is to be taken during the service, the service is streamed on YouTube and can be accessed later.

Dress: Boys are to have a white shirt, dress slacks and dress shoes; a bow tie may come with the robes. Girls are to wear dresses that are appropriate and modest (white is traditional). Heels are allowed, but remember that the confirmands must go up and down steps, kneel, etc.

Confirmation Fee : \$60—This fee covers the cost of robe rental, corsages/boutonnieres, and altar bouquets for Confirmation Sunday. The fee is due by the 8th grade parent meeting, Wednesday, March 5, 2025. Payment of the fee is a requirement to participate on Confirmation Sunday. (This fee takes the place of individual charges that in previous years were sent out after Confirmation Sunday)

* **First Holy Communion** will take place as a part of the Confirmation Service on April 27, 2025. The particulars of this will be determined as we get closer to the date and be communicated to Confirmand families.

* **Following Confirmation**, the 8th grade class will continue to meet with the Confirmation Ministry through May 18, 2025; confirmands will begin meeting with the Senior Youth on Sunday, June 1, 2025.

Communication

With any ministry partnership, communication is absolutely critical – both between parent and child and between family and church. While the former is out of our hands, the latter is something that we strive very hard to maintain. We will do our best to minimize changes in schedules that are published and give as much forewarning as we can if it becomes necessary to do so. We hope the items below will assist families in scheduling and the confirmation ministry in staying in touch:

- 1) The Confirmation Handbook for parents (available on the church website)
- 2) The publishing of the large group activity schedule at the beginning of the year. (see below)
- 3) Email: Pastor and leaders use this often to communicate with parents (individually and as a group); please provide us with the email address you check most frequently, if you haven't already done so.
- 4) Church Web Site: www.immanuelolivette.org

* This year we will not be using the family mailboxes as have been used in years past.

Elder Expectations

At Immanuel we have five expectations of every member; those in bold are expected even of our children and youth.

- **Regular in worship (hearing the Word of God)**
- Regular at the Lord's Table
- **Regular in Bible study/Sunday school/Confirmation**
- **Use your giftedness to serve others (talents)**
- Generously support God's mission (Prayer, gifts and abilities)

Regular church and class attendance from 5th– 8th gr. is an absolute expectation as your child moves toward the Rite of Confirmation. It is our hope that this good habit will continue with your child all their life.

Remembering our Confirmation Vows

Every person professing their Christian faith must be able to truthfully answer the questions asked on their Confirmation Day.

Profession of Faith

P Do you this day in the presence of God and of this congregation acknowledge the gifts that God gave you in your Baptism?

R *Yes, I do.*

P Do you renounce the devil?

R *Yes, I renounce him.*

P Do you renounce all his works?

R *Yes, I renounce them.*

P Do you renounce all his ways?

R *Yes, I renounce them.*

P Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

R *Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*

P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord?

R *Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

P Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

R *Yes, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

P Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?

R *I do.*

P Do you confess the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from the Scriptures, as you have learned to know it from the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

R *I do.*

P Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

P Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

R I do, by the grace of God.

P Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

R I do, by the grace of God.

P We rejoice with thankful hearts that you have been baptized and have received the teaching of the Lord. You have confessed the faith and been absolved of your sins. As you continue to hear the Lord's Word and receive His blessed Sacrament, He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. C
Amen.

Four Year Lesson Plan

Year One (5th Grade):

30-Lesson Bible Overview

Years Two - Four (6th - 8th Gr):

60-Lesson Catechism Study

Classes Topics

(2023-2024)

1 How and Why God's Word is Proclaimed (Preaching)?

1 Review of Sermon Report

1 Understanding Worship at Immanuel (Divine Service)

1 Acolyte Training / Refresher

1 Introduction to the Small Catechism

1 Reading God's Word

2 Overview of the Means of Grace

8 Holy Baptism

2 Confession

2 The Office of the Keys

8 The Sacrament of the Altar

1 Review of the Means of Grace

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(2024-2025)

1 How and Why God's Word is Proclaimed (Preaching)?

1 Review of Sermon Report

1 Understanding Worship at Immanuel (Divine Service)

1 Acolyte Training / Refresher

1 What is Confirmation?

1 The Creeds and Confessions

16 The Lord's Prayer

4 Table of Duties

1 Daily Prayers

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(2025-2026)

1 How and Why God's Word is Proclaimed (Preaching)?

1 Review of Sermon Report

1 Understanding Worship at Immanuel (Divine Service)

1 Acolyte Training / Refresher

1 What is Worship

1 Overview of the Small Catechism

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1 Life within the Congregation

1 The Church Year

1 Christian Stewardship

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Staff Directory

Pastor	Pastor Schrader	314-993-2394 (office); 314-591-4305 aschrader@immanuelolivette.org
Pastor	Pastor Karg	314-993-2394 (office); 314-761-5523 rkarg@immanuelolivette.org
5 th Grade Leader	Natalie Oleshchuk	314-872-8099 noleshchuk@yahoo.com
Church Office	Connie Baur	314-993-2394 cbaur@immanuelolivette.org
Large Group Coordinator	Connie Jander Becky Wells	cjander@ladueschools.net gofergirl45@hotmail.com
Mentors	Elizabeth Seddon Pete Seddon	914-960-5759 eflakne@yahoo.com

Important Dates for Confirmation 2024-2025

All Parents Information Meeting	September 11, 2024, 6:30pm
Blessing upon New Confirmation Year Class Begins	Sun., Sept. 8, 8am Worship Sun., Sept. 8, 9:30-10:15 am,
8th Grade Parent Meeting	Wed., March 5, Fellowship Hall 8 pm
8th Grade Essays Due	Sun., March 2, 2025
Missouri District Retreat (all grades)	April 4-6, 2025 @ Cross Pointe Retreat Center
8th Grade Banners Due	Sunday, March 23, 2025
Essay Night	Friday, April 25, Church Nave, 7 pm
8th Grade Confirmation Practice	Friday, April 25, following Essay Night
Confirmation Day: Pictures	Sunday, April 27, Fellowship Hall, 9:15 am
Confirmation Day: Service	Sunday, April 27, Church Nave, 10:30 am
1st Communion	Sunday, April 27, Church Nave, 10:30 am
8th grade to Senior High Class	Sunday, June 1, Youth room, 9:30 am
Camp Trinity	June 8-13 Camp Trinity