

The Meaning and Importance of Confirmation

In a day and age of advancing technology, we can greatly appreciate confirmation. When you pay a bill online, you receive an email “confirmation” of your bill being paid. When you purchase an airline ticket or any product online, you receive “confirmation” of your purchase. Seeing those notifications assures us that what we are pretty sure has been done is truly done. The Rite of Confirmation provides a similar comfort.

Interestingly enough, early Church fathers, such as Tertullian and Augustine, believed and taught that a laying on of hands was necessary following Holy Baptism to confer the giving of the Holy Spirit. This belief and practice was based on Acts 8:14–17, and continued on in the church and eventually came to be considered a sacrament in the western or Catholic church. They believed this was sacramental because it included an anointing with oil or holy water along with the laying on of hands to confer the Spirit and was promised by Jesus in John 16:7–11.

After studying the Scriptures thoroughly and realizing the false teachings in the Catholic Church, Martin Luther came down hard on this view of confirmation. Luther’s main emphasis was that Baptism is wholly sufficient on its own to bestow complete salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Nothing else was needed because nothing was lacking. Thanks be to God, this is the position we continue to hold to this day.

As Luther came to better understand the abuses of the Catholic Church, along with the abuses of other reformers, he promoted the virtue of confirmation as vital in preparation for receiving the Lord’s Supper. In his preface to the Small Catechism, Luther decried the lack of basic Christian belief found among the church goers in his surrounding areas. He rightly believed that admittance to the Lord’s Supper should only be granted to those properly catechized in the Christian faith (i.e. knowing the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, etc.) and able to fairly examine themselves (1 Corinthians 11:25).

Building upon Christ’s call to baptize and to teach (Matthew 28:19), Luther emphasized the importance of catechizing the young in order to make them ready for the Lord’s Supper. Truly, Baptism grants full forgiveness of all sin and continues to be a great comfort to the Christian all life through. In Baptism, the sinner is placed into the name of Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27) and the confession of the Christian faith. As a baby and a young child, the Christian cannot consciously confess that faith, nor can they properly examine themselves. After a certain level of maturity has been reached, this confession and examination becomes possible.

That is where the Rite of Confirmation comes in and is so valuable. In the Rite of Confirmation, the basics of the Christian faith are confessed, along with the expression of intention to remain faithful to Christ, demonstrating the presence of saving faith within them, for Jesus says in John 15:5, “Apart from me you can do nothing,” and St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:3, “No one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit.” Joshua’s words to the Hebrew people, “Choose this day whom you will serve” (24:15), were said to those who were already filled with the Holy Spirit and so could make that confession.

This Rite of Confirmation is also of great importance to us because of the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. This sacred meal was instituted by Jesus on the night before he died. It is to be considered his last will and testament, and so it needs to be handled in the greatest of sincerity. This is Jesus’ supper and so we are to follow his lead fully. Jesus began this meal only in the presence of his closest disciples, not the whole body of those who had followed him from town to town. As Jesus began this meal during the celebration of the Passover, that historic meal leads to and lends meaning to the Lord’s Supper. The Passover, as commanded by God, was only to be celebrated by those who belonged to the covenant people of God (Exodus 12:3, 47). For the men, only those who were circumcised could participate (Exodus 12:48). The Lord’s Supper corresponds to this as one must be first baptized before they can receive the Lord’s Supper, as Baptism is the Sacrament of initiation into the people of God in Christ (Acts 2:27–42).

Because the Lord’s Supper commemorates the death of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:26), and is an expression of established fellowship and unity, as is demonstrated among the Hebrews celebrating the Passover and the closest disciples who first received the Lord’s Supper, only those in the same confession of faith are to commune together (for a fuller understanding of this teaching, please read all of 1 Corinthians 11:17–34). In the Confirmation rite, confirmands publicly confess the same faith as those with whom they wish to commune. The church has opportunity then to hear this confession and rejoice in the fellowship they share with these who are newly confirmed in the faith.

To be clear and certain, we agree with Luther that Confirmation is not to be considered a sacrament. It is not instituted by Christ Jesus, nor does it contain a physical element, and it does not confer the forgiveness of sins. Confirmation is a rite begun within the church for the benefit of the church to hear the confession of faith of those desiring to commune following a thorough examination of their faith. This rite allows the church to enjoy the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that is given in the Lord's Supper and is celebrated with the newly confirmed.

Regarding the use of a Confirmation verse, the history of this practice is not known. It is encouraged that the verse be easy to memorize and meaningful to the confirmand. They should be able to call this verse to mind easily and this will bring them comfort in various situations.

In summary and conclusion, the Rite of Confirmation is not a sacrament, hence the title of "rite." Confirmation gives students the opportunity to publicly confess their Christian faith and express their unity of belief with the body of Christ. Confirmation then welcomes the confirmands as communicant members and invites them to receive the Lord's Supper.

We rejoice every year with the welcoming of new confirmands! Keep them in your prayers as they continue to grow in the faith given to them in Holy Baptism and now to be strengthened by receiving the body and blood of Jesus in his Supper.

The Lord bless you and keep you as you remember your own Confirmation and the joys you have as a confirmed member of the body of Christ!

In Christ's service,
Pastor Caithamer

Let Us Pray

For Healing and Recovery: Mark , Robin, Elena - granddaughter of Steve & Susie, Grace -mother of Gary, Jim -brother of Karla, Kaylianna -great granddaughter of Bob & Joan, Karla, Charlene, Brian, Teresa-godchild of Bob & Joan, Barbara -family friend of Bob & Joan, John, Hendricks - grandson of Dan & Joanie, Maria, Merv , Roy - father of Anne, Todd -grandson of Harold, Brett -cousin of the Kindts'

For Successful Treatments: Dan, Nancy, Barb, Luke, Earl, Linda, Joan, Jeanette, Nancy

For our Military: Nick, Nick, Andy, Brandon, Zachary, David

For our Missionaries: Pastor Randrianasolo Dembiniana Havanjanakary and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica



Vacation Bible School—Clues to Christ (JUNE 17-21, 2024; 9:00-11:30am)
Come join the case! Just as a detective puts clues together to solve a mystery, we will be looking through various 'clues' in the Bible to see and prove that Jesus is in fact our Savior. Students will do this as well as sing songs, make crafts, play games, and eat snacks. Registration is now available at <https://vbsmate.com/events/stjohnchampaign/28907> for students 3 years old (potty trained) through completed 5th grade. Email vbs—at-stjohnls.com with any questions.

Volunteers Make Our VBS a Success!

Volunteers make our VBS a success. Youth (completed 6th grade - 12th grade) and adult volunteers are needed. If you can help full or part time, we have many ways to be involved to suit your schedule needs or interests. A sign-up sheet is posted by the Fellowship Hall. We also need help with set up on the Saturday before (June 15), as well as tear down on the Friday of the week, following the closing program. There are sign-up sheets for these days as well. Email vbs@stjohnls.com if you have any questions. Also, if you are not able to volunteer in person while VBS is going on, but would still like to help, keep on the lookout for ways you can donate items or supplies that we may need.

VBS News—We are in need of a third lead teacher for our Vacation Bible School this summer. All material is provided. If you are interested, please contact Sara . We will be having a planning meeting on Saturday, May 11th at 9:00am in the Fellowship Hall.

Summer Sunday School begins June 2nd. We want to give our teachers a break for the summer. There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board by the Fellowship Hall if you would like to volunteer for one or more Sundays. The material will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy.

Midweek—We are looking for a 6th/7th grade teacher for our Midweek school for the upcoming year. Midweek meets each Wednesday beginning with opening at 5:45pm in the sanctuary, and then meets until 7:00pm. Material would be provided. If you are interested or have questions please contact the church office.

Young Adults Group will meet on May 18th at 1:00pm. (More details to follow) All between the ages of 18-40 are welcome to join us. If you have any questions please contact Sara. Also, we are planning on having a summer party on June 2nd at 4:00pm in Philo.



May Music Notes



<i>Wednesday, May 1</i>	6:00 Handbell rehearsal	
<i>Sunday, May 5</i> (8:00 Confirmation)	10:00 Choir rehearsal	
<i>Wednesday, May 8</i>	6:00 Handbell rehearsal	
<i>Thursday, May 9</i> (Ascension)	6:00 Choir rehearsal 7:15 service – Men’s Choir	
<i>Sunday, May 12</i> (7 th Sunday of Easter)	8:00 Mixed Choir	
<i>Sunday, May 19</i> (Pentecost)	8:00 & 10:45 10:45	Alleluia Ringers Mixed Choir

Our singing and handbell choirs will conclude their Spring season on Pentecost. We thank everyone who has taken part, and look forward to resuming regular music making together after the Summer hiatus.

Anyone interested in offering their instrumental talents over the next months is welcome to contact Keith to schedule a date. If you are seeking a suggestion about what you might play, our music library has a wide selection of available repertoire for all varieties of instruments and levels of accomplishment.

The Lutheran Hymnal and the Lutheran Service Book

Our comparison of hymn tunes and texts between our present and former hymnal will include using some of the old and new tunes as our Sunday organ preludes over the Summer. We will also include some of this in an upcoming Hymn Sing Prelude. Stay tuned!

Soli Deo Gloria,
Keith

Dan Yagow Retirement

After 43 years in the teaching ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Mr. Dan Yagow is retiring at the conclusion of this school year. Members of your church and school community are invited to join us at Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Danville, Illinois to mark the occasion. Mr. Yagow will be recognized for his service in the Divine Service on Sunday, June 2, 9:30 a.m. Following the service, a dinner will be served in his honor at 11:30 a.m.



Thank you to all who have participated in the E.A.T. Nights this year! We had nine great events and earned over \$4100 for our school. Did you know that this was the sixth year of these amazing events and over \$20,000 has been raised? That’s incredible! If you have a suggestion for a new restaurant, please contact the school office.



Congratulations St. John 8th Grade Class of 2024

*Graduation Ceremony
Friday, May 24, 2024 6:30pm
St. John Lutheran Church*

Reception following the ceremony in the Fellowship Hall



SPRING CONCERT

Tuesday, May 7th, 6:30 pm

Performances by St. John Kindergarten-8th grade students are included.

Invite your family and friends to come and hear how musically talented our St. John students are!



Our Little Lamb Preschool students will be having a promotion ceremony on Thursday, May 23 at 6:30 in the sanctuary. Families are welcome to come celebrate our preschoolers who will be moving on to kindergarten and to PS4 class next school year! There will be a reception immediately following the ceremony.

Bike Day Parking Lot Access

On Wednesday, May 22, our 2nd-3rd grade students will enjoy a Bike Day at school. To allow a safe place to ride, the entrances from Mattis Ave. and Round Barn Rd. will be closed from 9:30-3:00. The entrance from John St. will remain open, as well as the parking lot in front of the church and school. Thank you for your cooperation.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Sadie , Anne | 22 Linda, Jodie, Roger, Kyle |
| 2 Ezekiel, Jim, Jayden, Tori | 23 Elise, Olivia, Erin |
| 4 Jim, Daniel | 24 Reagan, John |
| 5 Olivia | 25 Isaac, Jack, Silas |
| 6 Rhonda, Rebecca, Rex, Stephanie | 26 Nancee |
| 7 David | 27 Lisa, Addison, Gracelyn, Gramercy, Jacob,
Liam Wurl- |
| 8 Leona, Cameron | 28 Vanessa, Allison, Leah, Chuck |
| 9 Brenda, Raine, Joel, Alvin | 29 Janell |
| 10 Spencer, Kristina | 30 Peter, Mazie, Andrew |
| 11 Christopher, Rev. Don Ehlers, Nick | 31 Katie, Louis |
| 12 Jim | |
| 13 Jonathan, Makayla, Sherry, Steve, Kate | |
| 15 Brendan, T.J., Elizabeth, Joshua, Connor,
Addison, Pryce | |
| 16 Debbie, JoAnne, Marshall, Will, Linda,
Jeremy, Benjamin | |
| 17 Kayla, Zach | |
| 18 Lauren, Stephanie | |
| 19 Jean | |
| 20 Nina | |
| 21 Penny, Arian, Chad | |

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 Dennis & Linda (56) | Mike & Lori (36) |
| 5 Larry & Jeanine (45); Rod & Sheryl (36);
Gary & Maura (23) | 21 Dan & Timmie (30); David & Jodie (47) |
| 7 Bill & Kathy (41); Bryan & Leigh (3) | 25 Dan & Julie (39) |
| 8 Gary & Cynthia (64) | 26 Jake & Hannah (6) |
| 9 Andrew & Jennifer (15); Gilbert & Cynthia
(65) | 27 Kevin & Lisa (18) |
| 17 Bret & Kara (16); Larry & Terry (44) | 28 Larry & Vicky (41) |
| 18 Jim & Dee (22) | 29 Kurt & Satomi (26); Dan & Joanie (42) |
| 19 Will & Hannah (6) | |
| 20 Randy & Sara (29); Don & Shirley (57); | |

PLEASE notify the church office (359-1123 or churchoffice—at—stjohn-lcms.church) if your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect.



Mission Statement:

United in faith, we serve the Kingdom of God by building lives that are rooted in the Word, centered on Christ, and motivated by Grace; to reflect Christ's love and share His Gospel with all.



Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 1 Corinthians 11:28

2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																																									
<p>Church Office 359-1123</p> <p>School Office 359-1714</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">April 2024</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	April 2024							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">June 2024</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	June 2024							S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							<p>1</p> <p>8:10 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 7:15 Holy Communion</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
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