



St. Andrew
Middleton, WI

Parents Equipped To Teach

A confirmation ministry for parents of
middle school children

- Parents committed to the spiritual nurture of their children.
- A church committed to helping parents nurture their children.

Home

Church



What will the parents do?

Parents prepare to teach each lesson by watching a short video on that lesson *without their child(ren) present*. This video helps parents prepare by previewing answers, and key passages and words.

Parents assign the work the child is to do before meeting with them: workbook pages, activity sheets and memory work (one passage per week and a part of the catechism). The parents will review that section, question by question, with their child by reading the child's workbook, checking the activity sheets and reciting the passages (cumulative for the whole curriculum) and catechism section with the child. This is the pattern for the first three weeks of the month.

Experience has taught us it's best to agree on a set time each week. This can't be given second priority to anything or it won't work. Once the parent and child agree on a time, try to work everything else around it. This calls for a commitment from parents and children.

During the fourth week of the month, parents don't teach a new lesson. The children will meet with the pastor to enjoy a dinner together, game time, worship time and review the lessons the parents have taught.

Curriculum

The course text book is **Luther's Catechism, Anniversary Edition**. This hardcover book is divided into 52 lessons covering six chief parts. The softcover "**Catechism Connections**" booklet is the place where your child will record his or her answers to the questions in the hardcover Catechism. The **Activity Sheets** will help parents engage their child(ren) in practical application of the biblical truth they've learned and clarify expectations for the next week (what section of the Catechism to study, what pages to complete in the Catechism Connections and what passage and catechism section to memorize).

Value of a catechism

Interpretation

The catechism is one way God, over the centuries, has used the wisdom he's given believers to help us see the meaning of his Word.

Selection

There are over 31,000 verses in the Bible. Most of us need some help in knowing which of them are most important for knowing God and living a life of faithfulness.

Organization

What is foundational? What's built on the foundation? Where's it all going? The catechism gives a kind of flow and order. Our children can be left in great confusion if they only learn random Bible verses that are never brought in to any particular order, sequence, or progression of thought.

Completeness

In the bigness and detail of the Bible, there is a core, unified, comprehensive body of truth. The catechism isn't perfect, but it helps us deliver the counsel of God completely.





Why do parents teach these lessons to their children?

God wants PARENTS to nurture the children he entrusted to them.

- “Fathers, do not exasperate your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4)
- “Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:7)
- “He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands”

God wants his CHURCH to nurture children of the church family.

- Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” (John 21:15).
- “It was he who gave some to be...pastors and teachers...to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature...” (Ephesians 4:11f)

More reasons why parents are teaching these lessons:

- Parents grow in their faith as the Holy Spirit works through the Word. There is nothing like teaching something to help one learn it.
- Families keep the lines of communication open. Conversation goes beyond the weather to discussion on life: its problems, joys, answers, aims, and purpose.
- Families lay the guidelines for teen years -- why some things go, and some things don't. God's law becomes the guide for the whole family. God's gospel becomes the inspiration for how we live.
- Martin Luther wrote the catechism to help parents teach their children. The heading for each part reads: “As the head of the family should teach it in the simplest way to those in his household.”
- The history of the Lutheran church has shown we have a problem nurturing the faith of teens. Many are so sick they aren't eating God's life-giving Word. Without it, they will die spiritually.
- With all the sports, bands, clubs, school districts, etc. competing for a child's attention, parents can both show their kids the priority God deserves *and* teach them on their own timetable.

If BOTH mom and dad attend church regularly—72% of their children remain faithful.

If ONLY Dad attends regularly—55% remain faithful.

If ONLY Mom attends regularly—15% remain faithful.

“ if NEITHER mom nor dad attends regularly—only 6% remain faithful.

8% of Christian parents never talk about God at home.

These are just statistics and one could debate the validity of the research. Or one could take them as sobering evidence about the important role parents play in their children's eternal lives.

Faith is the most precious treasure parents have to share with their children. It's natural for them to want to take the lead in their children's confirmation instruction



What does a confirmation ceremony have to do with being a member of St. Andrew?

A sinner becomes a saint through the Spirit's work in Holy Baptism. That's how you join the Holy Christian Church.

Confirmation is not like baptism. Confirmation is a ceremony, or rite, is a public celebration of the confirmand's appreciation for gifts the Spirit gave in baptism.

The confirmation ceremony marks the church's invitation to the Lord's Supper. The confirmation ceremony recognizes that the confirmand has completed this part of the life-long process of confirmation and now wants to continue in regular worship and Bible study.

By the time a child is confirmed at St. Andrew, he or she will have determined a suitable ministry role and been trained and scheduled for it. Our Pastor for Service and Outreach will help with that.

How does this fit into my life and the mission of St. Andrew?

Confirmation is only a small, but important, part of the life-long process of discipleship. It is not the beginning nor the end of Christian learning. In a sense, confirmation began from the earliest Bible stories on a parent's lap and won't end until death. The worship of our God, growth in his Word and service to others deserves to be a priority in our lives from the cradle to the grave.

Parents who contradict their teaching by lives that leave no room or passion for worship, nurturing their faith or service to others contradict the lessons they teach. Children tend to sniff out hypocrisy.

Parents who worship regularly, participate in Growth Groups and make the Word a presence in their homes, and serve others through the mission of Jesus' church teach with their lives.

Here's our goal and what God promises to bless:

1. Parents committed to the spiritual nurture of their children.
2. A church committed to helping parents nurture their children.

Questions? Contact Pastor Hunter at randy.hunter@st-andrew-online.org or 608-831-8540.



What is “being confirmed?”

To confirm is to make sure. Confirmation is the life-long process of making sure of God's love for us in his Son. It's the life-long pursuit of believers to become surer of how we live — responding to God's love by the way we live.

Confirmation instruction usually begins in 6th or 7th grade and has these objectives:

- To build up the faith of parents and children by helping them more fully understand the scriptures and the sacraments.
- To help children and parents develop a life-long habit of worship and Bible study — God's tools for keeping us in faith and our response for the gifts we receive through faith.
- To equip parents and children for serving in the mission of God's church.
- To help parents in their role of raising God's children.

At St. Andrew we believe the church and the home share responsibility for achieving these objectives. When teens are asked whom they turned to for guidance, a majority (78%) said they usually turn to their parents.

What will the children do?

- Learn the basic teachings of the Bible.
- Learn to distinguish between Law and Gospel and apply both to their lives.
- Learn and memorize the Six Chief Parts of the Catechism.
- Memorize key Scripture passages and truths.
- Develop and demonstrate good worship habits.
- Develop and demonstrate good Bible study habits, (family devotions, personal and group Bible study, prayer, etc.)
- Attend Junior High Bible study.
- Learn and use witnessing skills.
- Learn and demonstrate good stewardship habits.
- Prepare for the Lord's Supper by personal examination.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with fellow Christians.
- Learn and demonstrate a life of Christian values.
- Complete all assignments prior to confirmation.

Parents:

God has blessed us with children. God has blessed us with his Word. By combining the blessings of God's Word with the blessings of our children, we're doubly blessed!

Then, as God promises his believers, “you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live...and it may go well with you (Deuteronomy 6:2-3).

May God fill you with joy as you service him by building up your children's faith.