Discipleship Leading to Confirmation Handbook

2020 – 2021

Grace Lutheran Church



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to another year of “Discipleship Leading to Confirmation” ministry! Whether it is your youth’s first or third year, we are so excited to partner with you as we work towards our common goal of making committed disciples of Christ. We use the phrase “Discipleship Leading to Confirmation” for this ministry because we want to focus on what it means for our youth to believe and live as a disciple of Christ leading up to the celebration service on Confirmation Sunday. Some of you may be familiar with this ministry, but I ask that you still read through this booklet as it goes over our philosophy, different elements of this ministry, and some key changes. This ministry is and always has been about our youth’s spiritual growth and walk with Christ. Foundational to this are the passages from Hebrews 5:11-6:3 and Matthew 28:18-20. We want to share with you what we see as the foundation of this discipleship ministry.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

 Adult

 Parent Pastor/DCE

There are 3 key relationships that need to be present in the life of our youth as they grow spiritually: their parents, their pastor or DCE, and another adult. The most important person that your youth can have a spiritual relationship with is you. We believe that parents have the primary role in the spiritual development of their child. This is an honorable calling, but a difficult one! We want to partner with you in doing this! The more you show your investment in your child’s spiritual growth the more they will invest in it. A church leader will invest in your child’s spiritual growth through teaching. Their small group leader, who is not a parent or youth leader, will be that important third voice of encouragement, accountability, and engagement.

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

 Discipleship

 Scripture Doctrine

There are three key understandings, that over the course of this discipleship ministry, will be foundational to your child’s spiritual growth. Those are discipleship, doctrine, and scripture. We will teach them to listen to the Scriptures as God’s Word and understand what His Word means for their life. We will help them to understand from the Scriptures what we believe and why we believe this. This doctrinal teaching comes from a Christian worldview, instead of the secular humanist worldview. Finally, we will look at what does it mean to follow Christ, what are the marks of a disciple, and how do we listen for God’s voice speaking in our life today.

 **DISCIPLESHIP DIMENSIONS**

 Grow in Christ

 Reach Out in Love Be a Family

 We believe that youth discipleship should be focused on growing in Christ, being a part of the family of God, and reaching out in love through witness and service. Because of this belief, throughout the year we will engage your child in opportunities to live out their faith in all three dimensions. We will have discipleship events that focus on fellowship and fun with one another (Family) and other events that are focused on serving others (Reaching). During our discipleship class times, we will be spending time towards God and equipping them to pray and spend time in devotions on their own (Growing).

 **ENGAGE**

In youth discipleship we want to engage the head and the heart of your youth. Head without heart brings understanding of God and His will without application and experience. Heart without head allows for experience and application without Godly wisdom directing our experience. Discipleship seeks to combine increasing our knowledge and shaping our actions at the same time.

We want to invite your youth to bring their friends to youth events throughout this year to learn and grow as they do. We truly appreciate, enjoy, and look forward to the opportunity to come alongside your youth as they grow in their journey of faith. We are always seeking new and better ways to make this discipleship ministry more effective. If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas please feel free to contact our Director of Christian Education, Christine Young, in the church office.

Yours in Christ,

Christine Young: Director of Student Ministry

Email: studentmin@grace-connect.org

 Phone: 262-345-3938

**Structure/Expectations of Discipleship Ministry**

**1. Discipleship Growth**

 A. Weekly “Growing” Time - Discipleship Class

The scope and sequence will flow in yearly cycles:

Cycle A (Cycle for 2020-2021): The Plan of Salvation (Old & New Testament)

Cycle B: The Apostles’ Creed, Life Issues

Cycle C: Discipleship Principles, Ten Comm., Lord’s Prayer

Sunday evening will begin in the Sanctuary on the Cross View Way campus. We need parental involvement as small group leaders.

 B. Monthly “Family” & “Reaching” Events

Every month we hope to have an Ignite event that will take the place of our Sunday night gathering. We will rotate between an “Family” event focusing on fellowship and fun and an “Reaching” event focusing on service and witness to others. For the time being, these events will take place outside only, so they will be weather permitting. We ask that your child do everything possible to try and attend these events as this is an essential part of their discipleship formation.

**2. Church Attendance & Worship Report Forms**

 - An important aspect of your child’s development is their time spent in worship.

 - Each youth must attend a minimum of 20 services at Grace and fill out 20 sermon note forms per calendar year in the 3 years leading up to Confirmation Sunday. It is preferred that you turn in the form on the same day as the service you attended. These forms are found in the narthex and on our church website. Please keep track of your sermon notes. If worshipping online, please use the editable PDF and online drop-box found on the youth ministry section of our website ([www.grace-connect.org](http://www.grace-connect.org)).

**3. Service Hours**

- We believe a huge aspect of being a disciple of Jesus Christ is reaching out in love to the community. 10 total hours of service must be completed by the end of April each year. This service may not include doing service for your family, weekend serving responsibilities, or something the youth gets paid to do. Due to the nature of this year, we will be understanding of the fact that youth may have to get creative with how they serve the community!

- There is a service hour form that must be filled out each time your child does an act of service in the community toward these 10 hours. This form can be found in the narthex or on our church website. There is also an editable PDF and drop-box for this requirement. Please keep track of your service hours.

**4. Memory Work**

- Memory work is very important to the development of disciples as they learn the faith and the Word of God. We are called to “learn, mark, and inwardly digest” God’s Word. Memory work is one of the ways this happens.

- The memory will be split between Luther’s Small Catechism and Scripture.

- The memory worksheet should be checked off by the adult that heard the memory work and turned in on the last night of Ignite for the year. Memory work should be said primarily to the youth’s small group leader. The memory work sheet will be on our church website and given to youth at Ignite.

- There are some who have problems with learning memory work. If this becomes an issue, please speak to Christine Young right away. We are willing to help work through this process to make sure that everyone has every chance to succeed.

**5. Weekend Service Responsibilities** – Suspended this year due to Covid-19 concerns.

**6. Faith Testimony** **– 3rd Year Only**

- Youth will choose or receive a Bible verse to be blessed with during the Confirmation Service. This scripture verse will be used to write a faith testimony. More information on this faith testimony can be found in a separate document.

**7. Confirmation Retreat - 3rd Year Only**

- At the end of the 3rd year, there will be a confirmation retreat to prepare youth for Confirmation Sunday. This retreat will be held at the church on Cross View Way from 8:30 until Noon.

 **8. Communion**

 **-** Communion is received by each youth after they have completed the communion class process. This includes finishing a communion workbook, attending Communion Class with a parent, and meeting with an elder to determine their readiness to receive Communion. You can go through this class as a family starting in their 3rd grade year. There will be an online registration for the communion process.

- First Communion is received on Maundy Thursday at the service at 6:30pm.

-Youth must go through the communion process before they are confirmed.

**9. Discipline Policy:**

1st Offense: Verbal Warning

2nd Offense: Call Home Warning

 3rd Offense: Asked to Not Return for 2 Weeks

4th Offense: Asked to Not Return for Remainder of the Year

\*\*\* No electronic devices during teaching time: Confiscate, Call Home, See Above

This discipleship ministry, that you have voluntarily chosen for your child, is about their continued growth, instruction, and discipleship. As such, involvement in every aspect of this ministry is a required component to participate in the confirmation service. Incomplete work will either be added to the following year or will delay the date of their confirmation celebration.

Your child’s readiness to confirm their faith will be determined by the Pastor, DCE, their small group leader, and you.