

8th Grade Confirmation Project

Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. Matthew 10:32

This project is an opportunity to grow and develop in Christian maturity and to give a very personal, yet public, confession of faith in Jesus Christ. Its several components concludes with the student sharing a statement of faith in one of our worship services during the summer after 8th grade.

Components:

1. Reading and reflecting on two books of the Bible.

Choose a Gospel and one of the following New Testament letters listed on the online form:

Gospel: Matthew Mark Luke John

New Test. Letter Romans Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians James 1 John

Guidelines:

*Don't read more than 1 chapter a day. You could easily read Colossians in 15 minutes, but the goal is to read and also to reflect on a portion of Scripture.

*Read with these questions in mind: What did this passage say about who God is or what He has done? What does it say about me? Something for me to do, know, or believe?

*Read with the Bible in one hand and a pen in the other hand: underline passages that answer some of those questions above, or that *you* have questions about. Bring your Bible when we meet together in the fall, so we can look at the passages that stood out to you!

2. Listen to someone share his or her faith in Jesus.

Choose a Christian who is a growing disciple (i.e. regular worshiper, prays regularly, reads the Bible on their own) and ask that person about his or her relationship with Jesus. Make sure to choose someone who meets the criteria above. *We would be glad to help connect you to some members of this congregation to ask if you'd like.*

This conversation is best face to face, but can be over the phone if geography dictates. A conversation is better than just email, although you could email them questions beforehand so they know what you plan to talk about.

Three Words: "Be A Reporter!"

What not to do: "Hey Uncle Rob, tell me about your faith in Jesus" (Rob talks for 2 minutes) "Okay thanks. See ya!"

That's not what a reporter does, a reporter comes with questions (think about the reporters who gather around Mike Matheny after a Cardinals game). Pepper this person with questions! Say "tell me more about that", etc.

Some recommended questions to ask during your sharing and listening time together:

- Tell me about your relationship with Jesus.
- Tell me about your personal spiritual disciplines/habits. (ask about specific ones—prayer, serving, worship)
- Tell me about the joys and struggles that you have as a believer.
- Develop 4 or 5 more questions that will help you find out about their Christian life (possible topics: forgiveness, favorite Bible passages and why, (if a relative)--what do you want my relationship with Jesus to look like when I'm an adult? Etc)

Record the questions and a summary of their answers.

Indicate the person you will meet with and their relationship to you on the online form.

3. iServe or Missions Project

Participate in 2 iServe or missions projects through Webster Gardens. iServe includes Summer Café, Big Rake, July 4th Parade, Amigos de Cristo Family Mission Trip in Sedalia, MO, Acuna Mexico summer trip, and various other serving opportunities. Dates and further info on various opportunities at webstergardens.org

See more details, and indicate ones you're interested in, on the online form.

4. Statement of Faith: After your first meeting with the Pastors or Zech, develop a 350 word statement that clearly demonstrates an understanding of the Triune God, particularly the work of Jesus Christ, and the student's relationship to Him and His church. (Be sure to mark the Deadline on your calendar: January 15, 2019)

Here's a possible template if you would like some guidance...

Opening:

Share your confirmation verse (Pastor C and K will assign you a verse after our September meeting) and a thought on how it applies to your life.

Share the Gospel!

Who is Jesus, what has He done for YOU. Make sure in your statement there is a clear statement of this. Don't be wishy-washy—bring the Gospel! Talk about forgiveness, his death and resurrection, and eternal life.

Use the parts of the Catechism you've learned during Faith 101:

You might talk about how God has brought YOU to faith in baptism.

You might share how God uses confession/forgiveness in YOUR life.

You might talk about how the Father, Son, and Holy spirit each work in YOU.

You might add elements of your confirmation project that apply to your relationship with Christ:

You might have learned an idea about prayer from the person you interviewed.

You might have had a particular passage stand out to you in your Bible reading.

You might share a time you were able to share the Gospel while you were serving.

(Note: the faith statement shouldn't be mostly concerned with describing the elements of your confirmation project, but feel free to use your experience to illustrate a fact about who Jesus is and what he has done.)

Closing:

You might talk about how leaders, friends, parents, teachers have had an impact on your understanding of God and his work in your life.

You might mention how you plan to continue as a member of the body of Christ (participating in worship, finding an area to serve or continuing in an area where you already serve, sharing with others what you've learned). Possible phrases: "When I'm in high school..." or "My plan to grow in my faith is..."

NOTE: Write in the first person singular ("I," "me," "my"), since this is *your* statement of faith. Please use correct grammar and spelling as well.

And now, to help you out, here is a list of what not to write in your statement of faith...

"God is always there for me/always listens to me" – this is a vague statement, and honestly, you could pretty much say that about your dog Rex. You don't need to use this terminology in your faith statement.

The reason that Jesus invites me to come to him with my problems and burdens is because He has everything I need. He offers a listening ear. He is so kind and caring. While true, you have to admit that's pretty vague; many people believe these things about Allah or Buddha too. You only have 350 words, so what's unique about *Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit*? What does the catechism or Bible say about who Jesus is and what he has done?

I'm glad I'm being confirmed. Only use this if you explain what "confirmed" means...

"Serving others who didn't have much made me appreciate the things I have." This seems like a good thing, right? What's sneaky about it is that it doesn't say that it changed my life at all—how much I consume, how I use my time and resources for God's purposes. The Lord wants me to thank him for what He gives me, and also think deeply about what responsibility that gives me.

"My faith" is important to me. It gets me through the day... This is another sneaky one. Faith is a gift from the Holy Spirit and it points us to Jesus Christ, so we don't focus on our faith, we focus on Jesus. Does that make sense? It would be like looking out a window at the most beautiful view you can imagine and saying "Hey, that's a really nice window." The window of the Holy Spirit allows me to see Jesus. In short: don't talk about "your faith", talk about Jesus!