

Affirmation of Baptism Overview

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ellicott City, MD

Affirmation of Baptism (formerly known as Confirmation) is a two-year faith-forming journey for anyone in the sixth grade or higher, their parents/guardians, mentors and facilitators who accompany them on this journey. The two-year schedule is divided as follows:

Bible Year – Time is invested re-discovering the sacred stories of faith contained in the Old Testament and the story of Jesus in the New Testament.

Catechism/Lutheran Living Year – Time this year is invested in learning about the teachings of Luther and how those teachings shape our faith in the 21st century. Time is also dedicated to practicing faith in the ministry of the congregation as well as spending time reflecting on how God walks with us as we live in our faith in the world.

God forms our faith through a variety of interactions: from traditional classroom discussions to attendance at worship services, participating in worship services and participation in the ministry of this community and in the world. Perhaps the most critical faith forming God does happens through rituals, conversations, and activities within the family structure.

“Why all these steps and structure?” you might be thinking. It is helpful to look at the faith-forming processes and activities the same way we look at how we live out our life in Christ (because God has so graciously loved us ... therefore I/we ...).

- Because of the promises made at baptism, those affirming their baptism learn the 10 Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles’ Creed
- Because we believe that the Holy Scriptures are the source and form of life, those affirming their baptism study the Holy Bible, including specific biblical passages that give us our traditions and beliefs.
- Because Jesus calls us to love God with all our heart, our mind and our soul, those affirming their baptism actively participate in worship, including serving in various ways as they feel called using the gifts that God has given them.
- Because Jesus calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, those affirming their baptism participate in service projects sponsored by the various committees of the congregation.
- Because we are gathered into the Body of Christ through the call of the Holy Spirit, those affirming their baptism participate in the “working” of the congregation including participating in functions, participating in the worship life of the congregation (serving as acolyte, usher, reader, assisting minister, musician, etc.)
- Because our baptism is lived out through our actions, those affirming their baptism actively participate in one of the congregation’s committees, including one of the committee’s activities.
- Because affirming one’s baptism also marks one’s life as a disciple to whom voting rights are given within the congregation, those affirming their baptism plan, organize, and execute a ministry project that supports the committee with which the student is working.
- Because we are called to be a witness of our faith to all we meet, those affirming their baptism write a one-page faith statement, based on a scriptural passage that speaks to their faith.

Those affirming their baptism embark on a faith journey that will last them the rest of their lives. Be assured, that because of the promises God made through Jesus Christ, it is not a journey that one travels alone. You will be lifted in prayer, receive support from parents, the pastor and the congregation, and most importantly, be accompanied by our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ. *Blessings on the journey!*