

St. John, Valmy
Catechism Class Handbook
2017–2018



Why have Confirmation Class?

To “confirm” is to make sure. Confirmation isn’t just a period of 3 years of instruction during the junior-high years of a person’s life. Confirmation is the life-long process of growing in God’s Word and love for God through regular worship, reception of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and the study of God’s Word. All these things equip us and encourage us to live a life of thanksgiving and praise to our gracious God. This is the main goal of Confirmation Class.

Additional Goals

- Learn the main events/accounts of the Bible and how they fit with God’s plan of salvation.
- Learn to distinguish between Law and Gospel and apply both to his/her life.
- Learn the Six Chief Parts of the Catechism and apply to life.
- Memorization of key Bible passages and key truths so that he/she may apply them in their life.
- Develop and demonstrate good Bible study habits, so the student may be equipped to study God’s Word on his/her own.
- Learn to understand worship and responding to God’s love in Jesus.
- Prepare for the Lord’s Supper by study and personal examination.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with fellow Christians.

Schedule

Lord willing, we will begin another year of Catechism instruction on **Wednesday, September 13th**. We will end our year with our last class on May 16th, with **Confirmation Examination/Presentation on Saturday, May 19th at 6:30pm** and **Confirmation Sunday on May 20th**.

Our schedule will be the same as in years past. Our regular schedule will run from 3:30-5:30 pm. During Lent we will end at 5:00 pm.

There is only one half day that occurs when we have class—November 22. We will start around Noon after the students are dropped off and eat their pack lunch. We will end at 2:30 pm.

Curriculum

Two years ago we began a new 3-year curriculum. The first year we covered the basic timeline of the Bible from Creation to Pentecost. Different parts of the Catechism were introduced with each lesson. Last year we began our directed study of the teachings of the Bible using a curriculum called *Applying Luther's Catechism* from CPH. This year, we will conclude that directed study of various teachings of Scripture.

Assignments

Assignments for the entire year are found on the Catechism Class Schedule which was handed out on the first day of class and can be found on the Catechism page on our website (stjohnvalmy.com). The due date for assignments is found on the Catechism Schedule.

Sermon Notes— A template, both online and printed, will be provided for the students. The printed version will be available at church on the small table just to the right in the church library on a clipboard. The student may either put their completed Sermon Notes in my church mailbox after the service, or they can hand it in at class on Wednesday. If you cannot attend our church that Sunday, the student will fill out a Sermon Note Sheet on the church you attended, or read my sermon from that Sunday which will be posted on our church website on Monday every week.

Memory Work— Each year the students will build on what they learned the year before. Instructions about the assignments can be found on the top of each page of the Memory Work Schedule. The weekly assignment can be found on the Catechism Class Schedule.

Parents are expected to work with their children on their memory work during the week so that they are prepared when they come to class. Should your child fail *a portion or all* of their memory work for a given week, they will need to redo what they failed. They will have the option of redoing it either before Sunday School, or at the beginning of the next class. Their grade will be averaged between the two. Should your child fail again, their grade will be recorded as such and they will need to write out that portion of their memory work 5 times and hand it in the next class period. I will do my best to inform you if your child needs to redo their memory work before Thursday evening of every week.

Catechism Connections— This is “new” this year. These assignments are essentially worksheets that take the place of the worksheet and Reading Log from years past. Every week students will receive this assignment which will consist of one piece of paper front and back. The goal is to get our children more familiar with the new Catechism itself and to review the lesson just taught. Every week the sheet will consist of four parts:

1. **Catechism Questions**— students will read the corresponding question in their Catechism and the passages below the question. Then, do their best to answer the question in their own words having read the passages.
2. **A Closer Look**— these are sections in the Catechism which go more in depth about what has been read, often making applications. Two questions are asked for each occurring *A Closer Look*. The first is “What questions do you have from “A Closer Look” on page ___?” and “What is something you want to remember?” Both questions are expected to be answered thoughtfully.
3. **Connections**— these are sections that both tie in what has been read, make application and also connect what has been read to particular narratives of Scripture. A portion of Scripture is read and at least one question on that reading is asked to help apply that reading to the lesson and the student’s life.
4. **Luther**— a quotation from Martin Luther will close the portion of study. Like *A Closer Look*, two questions will be asked and are expected to be answered thoughtfully.

These worksheets will be due at the beginning of the following class. Late work will result in a reduced grade.

Tests / Quizzes— Tests and quizzes will be a straight forward matter. For each test, a study guide will be distributed to the students the week before the test. Tests will consist of being prepared for all their memory work from that section, as well as the lessons covered. All this is also noted on the schedule.

Class Attendance

Attendance in Catechism Class is mandatory if confirmation is something you and your child desire. We only have a short time to get our work done in a very tight schedule. Should your child be sick and miss class, or should there be a family emergency or funeral, this class will be made up with me, one on one if necessary. Should your child miss class for any other reason, it will be dealt with on a case by case basis and will call into question the commitment to class and jeopardize the requirements for the year. If need be, summer classes will be required to consider the year complete. The number of classes will be addressed on a case by case basis.

A snow day in the public school system does not necessarily mean that Catechism Class will be canceled. If the weather continues to make travel conditions dangerous, there will be no class. But as sometimes happens, the expected weather never materializes or clears up long before our scheduled class time. Email, text and phone calls will be the method of contact in these situations. In the event that class is canceled because of snow, we will make up that class either during that week, or during one of our few "off" weeks.

Worship & Sunday School Attendance

Worship attendance and Sunday School attendance are expected every week. First and foremost because of the great importance for us to constantly be in the Word of God and joining together with fellow believers to be built up in faith and encouraged in faithful living. The failure to regularly attend Worship and Sunday School will call into question the commitment to class and God's Word. Such behavior will jeopardize the school year. The goal of this requirement is to reinforce the importance of regular Bible study and worship in our children's lives now and for their future.

Grades

Grades cumulate throughout the semester and the year as a whole. In order for a student to pass into the next "grade" and/or be considered to be prepared for confirmation, the student must have a passing grade in every aspect of their work. A report card will be sent home after each semester. If concerns arise, they will be communicated with you, the parents. If ever you want information about the grades of your child, please contact me. Should a student finish a year of instruction with a failing grade in any part of their work, summer classes will be required to consider the year complete. The number of classes will be addressed on a case by case basis.

How can you as parents help?

- God wants parents to nurture the children he entrusted to them.
 - “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)
 - Impress [God’s Word] 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. (Deut. 6:7)
- God wants His Church to assist in the nurture of children.
 - Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” (Jn. 21:15)
 - It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and 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, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-13)
- God wants to Strengthen Parents’/Students’ bond through His Word.
 - Parents / Students grow in their faith as the Holy Spirit works through the Word.
 - The example given by parents for their children in studying God’s Word, attending Worship and the Sacrament is noticed by their children.
 - When Children see how important God’s Word and Worship is to parents, they also will see how important it is to them.

Supplies

The supplies your child will need to bring to class are: 1) their own NIV, ESV or EHV Bible; 2) their Gatechism from last year (if applicable); 3) a writing utensil. Everything else will be provided on the first day of class. May the Lord richly bless us this year as students, parents and pastor dive into God’s Word!

Communication

The primary method of communication between myself and you, the parents, will be via email. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me right away. If it is a serious concern, please ask to see me in person, as I will do the same should I feel something of great importance needs to be discussed.

Contact Information

PHONE

920-743-5343

EMAIL

pastor@stjohnvalmy.com

WEB

www.stjohnvalmy.com

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