

# CONFIRMATION

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH



## "GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES"

### IT'S A MINISTRY, NOT A PROGRAM

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church has uniquely designed a ministry of faith formation for young people, grades 7-10. Students develop the critical thought necessary to learn and live faith. Here, youth begin to take a magnifying glass to the concepts and stories they learned in childhood through Sunday School and other academic curriculum.

We envision Gloria Dei being a unique place for young people (and as a result, their families), to be mentored by caring adults who are interested in shaping faith for all of life.

Ours is not a content-driven process (as in some contexts, where students are tasked with lots of memorization or book-learning), nor is it merely a merit-driven process (as in some contexts, where students are required to do many exercises, such as sermon notes or keeping track of service hours), but one of integrated learning: where youth and adults will participate in a range of experiences, sights, sounds, and contexts to refine our ideas about God, our Lutheran tradition, and how we relate to one another because of the Cross. This is an invitation to explore and engage.

We believe the journey together is a model for life-long faith formation.

# START WITH THE END IN MIND

## DON'T COUNT THE MILE MARKERS - COUNT THE JOURNEY

Let's start with the end in mind. Picture this: By the spring of your tenth grade year, you've been stretched at GDLC. You've served in Sunday worship services as an acolyte, bearing the cross, lighting candles, and assisting with Holy Communion. You've participated in interfaith dialog, compared your

You are becoming more aware of God's movement in your family, your world, and your life. You've claimed both a creed and a community. You've explored the Scriptures deeply. You've discovered some of your life gifts and identified ways to put them into action. You still admit doubts and questions. You still are unsure of

You are saying that you are hopeful for a life of growing belief and support from your church. This is not the end. This is the beginning, and you are eager to step into it. Let's do it!

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traditions to other faiths. You've taken a Lenten journey to the cross to discover the passion story of Christ's death. You've made friends from several different schools in your small group, and have traveled by going on retreats, service learning trips, and intergenerational projects. You've chosen an adult mentor who has been honest about life (theirs and yours). You've talked about ups and downs, celebrations and disappointments. You've learned to talk with your family about God-stuff.

You are ready to begin to explain your own baptism through a personal Credo Project, an illustration for the whole church to see: how you were set apart by God, blessed to be a blessing. You come to believe you are sealed with the Holy Spirit and marked with the Cross of Christ - forever.

things, but you can begin to articulate what/how you believe, and that you can affirm God's grace for you!

You notice a church full of people who have prepared you for this step in your journey: not a graduation out of commitment, but entrance into a new level of church involvement. You have Sunday School teachers, pastors, friends and family all eager to pray over you, guide you, and walk beside you. You are ready to be involved as an active member of the church, providing service, leadership, personal generosity, your opinions and input, and time and attention.

In this, you affirm your baptism: and are "confirmed" by your church as having upheld your commitment.



*Above: small group service project writing letters to deployed troops. Below: Alec & his grandmother serve during worship*



## Build New Friendships

GDLC families are involved in the mission and ministry of our congregation from nearby Highland Park to the far reaches of the Twin Cities Metro. You may be involved in a small group on Wednesday evenings that includes students from several schools. We consider this both a benefit and a challenge to faith formation.

Confirmation retreats are an expected part of your journey. We have next year's calendar out far in advance so you can prioritize these interactive learning times.

It will become important for you to make choices about your family priorities in setting your calendar to include options for relationship connections beyond Wednesday nights and beyond the 9-month school year.

In addition to yearly Confirmation retreat expectations, we also invite you to serve as leaders of Water Tower

Sunday School, ushers, acolytes, Vacation Bible School crew leaders, Giving Garden harvesters, lectors, helping prepare a feast for a Native American Wacipi, preparing Giving Tree gift tags, going on summer mission trips, and Moonlight Madness (an all-night over-night party with 500 Lutherans from all over the place). In 2022, Minneapolis is hosting the ELCA National Youth Gathering with 30,000 Lutheran teens learning and serving together.

We have set aside several nights throughout the year for your small group to create your own service learning opportunity so take advantage of that time and make new friends! Since 2015, over 120 teens have been on summer trips to build faith and friendships. 11-12th graders at GDLC are invited to take active roles in leadership in many areas of congregational life. Our students were surveyed and nearly 100% of students said they wish they could make new friends here. You will, so get involved!

**Above**  
The 7th grade Sexuality retreat at Koinonia in South Haven **Below** Small groups work together



# FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Confirmation is a shared ministry between home and congregation

Parents partner with Confirmation in many ways. Make Confirmation a family priority. Periodically, there will be discussion sheets sent home with confirmand or via email. Set aside time to talk about these topics over a smoothie or breakfast before school.

Worship with your child each week and discuss insights and observations. Worship is essential to our growth as members of Christian community. We love to see students worship with their families regularly. Not members of GDLC? We'd love to talk to you about what membership means.

Support and reinforce the schedule of volunteer worship and service opportunities that come along. Sometimes this may mean making different arrangements with your school coaches or other activities in the community. For the season of Lent,

and Advent, we invite families to attend mid-week Lenten worship together. These focused services help us consider the Cross and are a vital part of the Confirmation journey. For these four years, don't look for ways to just "get by," help us help you thrive during your journey.

## Parent serve in many roles

Parents, grandparents, guardians, and extended family are invited to serve as small group leaders, Wednesday night meal cashiers, mentors, room hosts, drivers, retreat guides, Sunday School teachers, etc. We encourage parents to consider leading a different small group than the one their child is in, if possible.

## Family Resources are available at GDLC

Our pastoral and support staff team are eager to serve your family. Do you need crisis or transition support? Do you need job or housing assistance? Are you looking for grief or recovery support groups or pastoral care? Will your family be needing meals after an upcoming surgery? Is someone in your family struggling with emotional health or an eating disorder? Please do not face family challenges by yourself. We would love to walk alongside you.



SAVAGE RIVER TRAIL, DENALI STATE PARK  
ALASKA MISSION TRIP