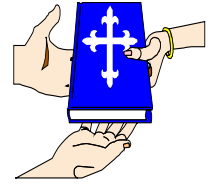


# Immanuel Lutheran Church

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To: ALIS/Immanuel 7th Grade Confirmation Students and Parents

The 2011-12 school year is here, whether we are ready or not. Summer seems to have gone by quickly, at least for me, but I am looking forward to another year of Confirmation instruction at ALIS.

As you may already know, we at Immanuel, along with the other congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, put a great amount of emphasis on educating the children and adults of our church in the great truths of God's Word as written in the Bible and further explained in the Lutheran Confessional documents of the church and Luther's Small Catechism.

It is because of this educational emphasis that the LCMS is known for its faithfulness to the Scriptures. Most of our Lutheran children and adults have "a much better than average understanding" of who Jesus is and what God is doing in our lives everyday and how we can rightly respond to His love.

There is nothing that we can do to "earn" our way to heaven. Eternal life is a free gift to those who believe. It has also been said that God has no "grandchildren" -- only "children". In other words, each child of God must believe for him/herself. Sincere, firm belief is not inherited from parents, grandparents, etc. Having a thorough knowledge and love of God's Word will anchor each child's faith firmly in Christ, our Savior. It is a goal of Immanuel's Confirmation Instruction Program to help you, as parents, to continue this instruction process.

The learning will be challenging for your child, although not to the point of discouragement or boredom. The learning must be understandable, enjoyable and "faith building" in order for it to be meaningful and lasting.

We ask for your support both in what we are doing together and for your child's spiritual growth. Always give a lot of encouragement and help when needed. Parents should ask questions and review assigned work. Also assist your child in learning the Bible verses and other memory work. If, at any time, you have questions, please feel free to contact me at home or at the church office.

As you may already know, each pastor is responsible for their own congregation's Confirmation program again this year. For Immanuel students, I will be teaching the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class and Pastor Wright will be teaching the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. All confirmation classes will be taught at the same time on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays during the first period of the school day.

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Your child will need an NIV Bible and Luther's Small Catechism (1991 NIV blue edition, which he/she should already have). We are not switching to the ESV at this grade level, since this class has already memorized from the NIV version. If you need a catechism, the ALIS office has only the new 2005 {red} edition, which is the only one still available. The content of the new edition is almost the same (*same numbered questions/answers, Bible passages in NIV version, wording, etc.*). The only significant difference is the page numbering. This will not be a problem.

Also bring some notebook paper, a theme folder with pockets, and a couple of pencils every day to class.

My class will again meet in a classroom in the lower level of the Parish Hall as we did last year.

I will be available to answer any questions you may have on Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, following the 6 p.m. (and 7 p.m. new students) Orientation Meeting of ALIS parents and teachers.

Please read through the accompanying sheet for an overview of the class requirements.

I strongly encourage faithful church and Sunday School/Bible Class attendance both for your child and for you as parents. Your example is the best learning experience any child can have.

Beginning at about the jr. high years, many young people find it easy to complain about going to Sunday School and church. Sometimes parents give in to those complaints, at a time when the teens need God's Word the most. Your example of faithful church attendance and every week in-depth Bible study while they are in Sunday School is the best learning tool you can provide.

During these years the students begin to feel the need to be more independent, and also start to question their personal beliefs as they come into more contact with others of differing beliefs or with those with no belief in God's Word.

So the next few years are extremely critical for your child's Christian education. Today's young people can have a difficult time avoiding the temptations that Satan presents to them through their peers and the media. It is almost impossible to not "give in" when faithfulness to Bible study and worship is lacking. That void will not just "sit there empty". Satan will take that opportunity to fill that void with other things such as partying, alcohol/drug use, and immoral sexual activity, that can have a lifelong negative impact.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me by phone, email, or in person.

I look forward to working with you and your child this year in Confirmation instruction.

Serving God and His children,

Vern Spilker