



Five of our young people confirmed their baptismal promises on Sunday, May 31st, Pentecost Sunday.

During the service they each gave a statement of their faith that is shared below.

Please keep them in your prayers in their journey following Christ and inviting others to join them.

Collin Warke

Confirmation, it's a word we all know very well. We all know what it means to be confirmed. It means that we are said to have been given the knowledge of the past that has created this church. We go through the whole Bible, book by book, and discuss what is in each book and what it talks to us about. And another part is to know about what God and Jesus Christ had done for us long ago. This is all very important; all of it plays a key part in our religion and our faith in God. But it's not there just to give us information about God and his great history and then to have us never think of it again. It's there to give us the information and to teach us how we are to use what we have learned to the benefit of Christianity.

For example the Parable of the Talents. A landowner gives three servants each a certain amount of talents based on their abilities. He gives one servant five talents, another servant two talents, and the last servant he gives one talent. The man who received five talents put his money to work and earned five more. The man with two talents also put his money to work and also doubled his amount of money. However the man who received one talent dug a hole and waited for his master to return. Then he took it back to the house when the master had returned.

Just as the first and second servants did, I wish to take the talents God has given me and use them to bring in followers and show them the grace of God. Because I think that to act as the third servant acted would be a sin and a waste of my learning session in catechism. For all deserve a second chance in Christ, and to keep what I have learned to myself would not give those people a second chance.

Isaiah 63:7 states "I will tell of the kindness of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised. According to all the Lord has done for us— Yes the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses.

Collin Warke's confirmation verse: "Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger and he who believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35



Layne Hillesland

When I moved here from Pennsylvania I would have considered myself a good Christian. I thought going to church and believing in God was enough. When it came time for Catechism I was actually really sad. I knew it would take up a lot of my time and would make me have a lot of homework. I'll never forget the first day when Pastor gave us our first homework assignment. It said to know what the Gospel and the Law was and to memorize the first five books of the Bible. I guess that I didn't grasp the meaning of "memorize" because on the first quiz I got a D-. That is when I told myself to get my act together. I actually started to try. One of the many things I learned was time management. I was able to spread my assignments out over the week so that way I wasn't overwhelmed when something wasn't done. But I didn't notice something before my very eyes. I realized that I was actually seeing how going to church and believing in God was not enough.

Many times throughout my Catechism experience, Pastor has mentioned the phrase J.O.Y. This means Jesus, Others, Yourself. You must put Jesus above everything in the world, then put others above yourself, and put yourself last in everything you do. The first time I heard this I got kind of scared. I knew that I was not following this and I knew that I was putting myself above everything I do. So I began by trying to put Jesus above everything I do. Let me tell you, that is much harder than it sounds. From my Bible reading I learned that every action and every word out of my mouth must build up the body of Christ instead of bringing it down. So I started to do this and I realized that is really had to keep God on your mind throughout the day, but just like everything else, this took practice. When trying to put God in front of everything, I found that putting others before yourself came more naturally. I realized that I was talking and being nice to people that I never even thought to talk to before. People started to see a difference in me. I made more friends instead of enemies. Just recently the kids in my grade had to vote for one boy and one girl who they thought showed good character and had a nice personality. It was a biggest surprise to find that people that I wasn't necessarily close with, were voting for me! Never in a million years had I thought that anyone would vote for me. Two years ago, when catechism started, I would bet you no one would have voted for me. I asked one of my friends why she and any other person would want to vote for me. Her reply was "Are you kidding? You're like the first person everyone thinks of as nice." But I knew it just wasn't me being nice. I knew that the Holy Spirit was living through me every day and people could see it.

Another thing I read in the Bible was that Christ was the body and all of us are the body parts. We use our talents to build up the body and we use them together. If there are no arms, then how are the fingers supposed to work? Reading this, I thought to myself, "Am I using my talents to build up the Body of Christ? What are my talents? Do I have a talent?" The truth is, God blesses everyone with talents so that we may use them to build up the church. I found more than one way to build up the church with my talents. That was another thing I learned during catechism, there is always something I can do to help the church.

This past Easter I went to my aunt's house to celebrate. While waiting for dinner she let me look at a book. At this time all I could think of was "EWW! A book?? Where's the food??" But I started to read it anyway and it was about a young girl who was raised atheist, but saw visions from God of heaven and angels. This girl was four years old at the time of her first vision and she started to draw what she saw. Her mother and father were of course worried because they didn't know where she would even hear the word "God". But this little girl was able to make her parents believe. The pictures she drew were magnificent! At the age of four she had the artwork of a 16 year old art student. At the age of 5 her pictures could have been in a magazine or book. At the age of seven her pictures could have been in a museum. I thought to myself,

“Wow! Look at what God gave her! He gave her not only visions but also the ability to draw the visions and draw them very well.” I was, well, I was jealous. But then I stopped and realized that I don’t need to draw magnificent pictures or have visions of heavens. I know in my heart that there is a heaven and God is waiting for me. Maybe I don’t have the best art skills, but I know that I do have skills that God has blessed me with to build up the church. If you were to ask me two years ago I would have said that I have doubts. I would have said that I wasn’t sure if God was real and there was a place such as heaven. Now, there is no doubt in my mind that God is my only Savior and I love him.

Layne Hillesland’s confirmation verse: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” Revelation 1:8



Jacob Bettenhausen

“For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son, so that whoever believes in him shall never die, but have eternal life”.

To me, it’s amazing to think that God would have this much love for the world we live in, even with all the evil, hatred, greed, and anger. But thankfully he does, God being slow to anger and forgiving, gives us new hope and new beginnings and always give us a path, a way back to him through Jesus. He gave us that ultimate sacrifice of his only beloved son, and a promise that we will always have another chance through his Love.

As we face our day-to-day life we are often faced with many challenges and road blocks, but God is always there to show us the way. It is, however, up to us to seek the way and look for God’s direction; for it may not be printed on a billboard or spoken words to us but it may be a whisper in the wind or even something that we may view as bad luck. We need to remember that God has purpose and guidance for us and that he is in control at all times. Even at some of the darkest times in our life, he is always in control. There are times when dark clouds overshadow our life and we seem all alone, but God will be there to move the clouds and allow his light to shine into our hearts and give us the ability to find our way. We must always remember that we also need those clouds, for they bring us the rains which wash away our sins and sustain our lives and give us the living waters that are so precious to us. Again, God has purpose and meaning, he is truly the only one that knows what is right and just and what is best for us even if we don’t agree. Even Jesus had doubts before his capture. As he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, he asked God to take this cup away from him and to take away the burden that he faced, but he then realized that it must be by God’s will and not his won and he told God that his will be done and he made this ultimate sacrifice and the sacrifice for the whole world and for all people because of his Love, that through him we might all be saved. This is what I will be taking with me from Catechism, this strong yet simple message. It is a great gift and one that I know I have; these simple words that will guide me for the rest of my life.



Jacob Bettenhausen’s confirmation verse: “Again Jesus spoke to them saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

Elizabeth Snyder

Somewhere in the middle of catechism, pastor made us read chapters in the Bible and do reports on them that would later be discussed in class. At first I did not enjoy these reports. But later I got the message pastor was trying to get to us and I understand why we had to write them.

When you read the Bible, it means you're growing in your faith and every chapter makes you understand more of what life means. When I read my Bible, I see it as a story, I can see the plot in my head as the story unfolds. I see an older man about to sacrifice his son to God, another man leading thousands of people through the desert, a baby lying in a manger, our savior being murdered on Calvary's cross. I have heard time over time that history is important, Jesus' history is very important.

Romans 12:1-2 says "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

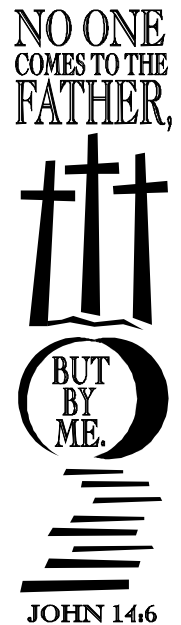
This verse, I believe, applies today more than ever. Our faith is being tried every day by false teachers, and negative influences.

Every Monday I go to school, everything from the bus ride to the ending bell is carefully positioned around religion. Why, is my only question. Why should I have to give up my beliefs so that someone else can feel comfortable. Giving up my beliefs makes me feel uncomfortable.

Just recently Miss California said that she believes in a traditional marriage and thinks gay marriage is wrong. After she said that, many people were outraged and made negative comments. She did not listen to these comments and stood by what she said. That is showing positive Christian influence in today's American culture.

I stand before you today showing that I am a Christian believer and I am proud to be a confirmed member of this church.

Elizabeth Snyder's confirmation verse: "Jesus said to him, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father, but by me." John 14:6



Kristina Rome's confirmation verse: "Jesus stood up and proclaimed; If anyone thirst let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:37-38