

A photograph of a church interior during a confirmation preparation program. In the foreground, several young people are kneeling on a wooden floor, huddled together in prayer. In the background, a large wooden cross stands on a stage. A screen displays a prayer. The scene is lit with purple and blue light.

# PATH

Know God and know that you are loved

And show me who You are  
And fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in Your love  
To those around me

**LIGHT OF CHRIST CHURCH  
CONFIRMATION PREPARATION  
PROGRAM HANDBOOK 2022-2023**



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# LIVING FAITHFUL LIVES

At Light of Christ, we call our confirmation ministry "PATH," which indicates we are on a journey.

The goals of **PATH** are to:

- Disciple middle school students in understanding, owning, and living out what it means to be baptized (or become baptized).
- Follow Jesus as Leader and Savior of their lives using the Bible and Catechism as primary resources.

We believe that faith is best taught in the context of Christ-centered relationships with other youth and adults on this faith journey with Jesus. We work to build trust. We strive to create a safe space to talk about life and faith; the joys of being a middle school student as well as the challenges.



\*Sidebars contain results of surveyed middle school students, parents, and leaders across five denominations in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Light of Christ participated in 2015.

# THE BASICS

## Wednesday Nights:

All grades meet at the same time in the LOC Annex from September through early May.

**6th, 7th, and 8th graders meet from 6:30 – 8:00PM**

Please plan to have your student arrive 10 minutes before the session begins to sign in and get settled. Punctuality is important!

## Large Group:

The evening begins with a fun activity to get the night started right, large group time also includes worship, prayer, music, a movie clip, or skit led by the pastors, and other teachers and participation by students. The remainder of the time is spent learning the lesson of the week.

## Small Groups:

Each student is placed in a small group of 6–8 students that are grade and gender specific. They are guided by 2-3 leaders. Our goal is to have the group grow their faith and trust in God and in one another. These small groups meet together for the entire three years.

## Small Group Time Is...

- Where students develop a sense of belonging
- Where material from the large group time is discussed further and unpacked in how it's relevant to our daily lives
- Prayer is shared

What is shared of a personal nature in small groups is confidential except when a student is being harmed, harming others, or harming themselves. Leaders are instructed to bring those situations to the attention of PATH staff members.



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## WHAT IS TAUGHT OVER THREE YEARS?

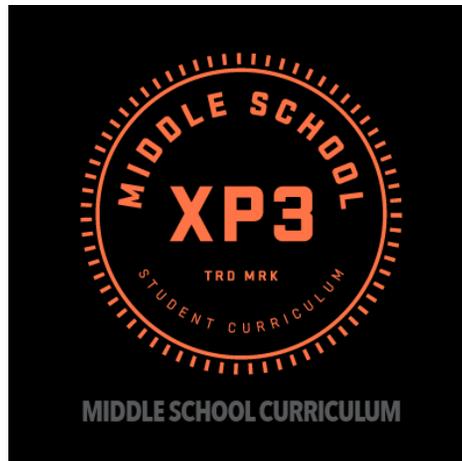
PATH uses XP3 Middle School, a key middle school curriculum component of the Orange Strategy! XP3 Middle School exists to help middle schoolers experience three things: wonder for who God is, discovery of who He created them to be, and passion for loving others.

The curriculum follows a **THREE** year cycle covering the following topics:

- **YEAR 1:** Move kids to LOVE GOD by inciting WONDER
- **YEAR 2:** Move kids to LOVE LIFE by provoking Discovery
- **YEAR 3:** Move kids to LOVE OTHERS by fueling PASSION

### Specific topics covered are:

- The Bible
- The 10 Commandments
- The Apostles' Creed
- The Lord's Prayer
- Sacraments of Baptism & Communion
- Authentic Faith
- Healthy Relationships
- Serving Others
- Ultimate Authority
- Wise Choices
- Sexual Integrity
- Lutheran Basic Beliefs



## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

We have one rule... **BE RESPECTFUL!**

It covers every situation. We respect each other by:

- not interrupting
- staying off cell phones
- not having side conversations while someone else is talking
- respecting other people's opinions which includes not telling others what was shared in small group of a personal nature
- respecting property - our own, other's, and the church

When problems arise these are the steps our leaders are trained to take:

1. Address the issue with the student
2. Involve a staff member
3. The staff member will email or call parents

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Attendance and participation in large and small group along with bringing your PATH materials (Bible, PATH journal, highlighter, and pen).

Attendance and participation annually in the PATH Bash, LOC Serve, Mini Mission, special worship services, PATH Retreat, and Faith Expression Night. Please contact Kim if missed.

Sixteen (16) worship reflections per year (2 per month). We do accept worship reflections if students attend worship at other churches (8th grade students are required to have a minimum of 10 worship reports recorded to be confirmed).

Church services are on Saturday's 5pm, Sunday's 9am & 10:30am.

Serving others at least 8 times per year and completing the serving chart. Participation at serving events both inside Light of Christ, at home, and in the wider community are a part of being God's hands and feet in the world.

## GROWING, FRIENDSHIP, AND SERVING...

### **PATH Bash:**

In the fall, students and leaders come together for fun to help students live into, the image of Jesus through practices of discipleship. They build community and connection in their small group through fun, faith based activities led by volunteers, and we wrap up our evening together with food, music, prayer, and worship. This is a day where students grow more confidently in their connection with God and one another.



### **Serving Events:**

Serving Joyfully is a fundamental mark of being a Christ follower. A Service Chart needs to be filled out for each serving opportunity; they are located at the Connection Center in the Welcome Center. There are weekly opportunities to serve at Light of Christ in the Toddler Care, FaithLand (Sunday School), or other ministries. Service at home and in the larger community should be from a giving heart and unpaid.

## ...ON THE JOURNEY WITH JESUS.



### **Mini-Mission:**

A mini-mission event is a grade specific one day serving event in the community that is another way your student will learn to Serve Joyfully. For all grades, we partner with Feed My Starving Children in Schaumburg to provide students the opportunity to work together for positive change in our wider world. We have partnered with various non-profit organizations in the community.

### **LOC Serve:**

LOC provides your student a one day opportunity to serve at Light of Christ. This has often involved grounds clean up and beautification projects in the fall and spring. Serving at this event fulfills our obligation of caring fo our church community.

# SERVE

one another humbly in love. Galatians 5:13

## GROWING, FRIENDSHIP, AND SERVING...

### **P.O.O.P. (Pop On Over Peeps) Nights:**

This is a not-to-be-missed evening where leaders, students, and their friends can connect with other one another in fun and deep ways. Don't forget to invite you friends!

### **PATH Retreat:**

Something powerful happens when we get away from our daily environment and spend time together as a community of believers.

Our small groups gather for a little less than twenty hours each year, while our annual retreat lasts Friday night through Sunday morning. So it's not surprising that group dynamics, relationship building, and spiritual development can surpass in one retreat what might otherwise take a year to accomplish.

The PATH Retreat is an event that is held in the spring. This retreat is led by Pastors, leaders, speakers, workshop leaders, and includes music by our LOC Praise Team members. Each retreat theme is chosen to be an expanded, relevant, and creative application of the key focus teaching of the year. There is also time for fun and team building in a beautiful outdoor setting.



## ...ON THE JOURNEY WITH JESUS.

### **Faith Expressions:**

Through prayer, thought, and assistance from small group leaders and parents, 8th grade students select a Bible verse that helps them individually express who they understand God to be in their lives. This verse is then presented at an event known as Faith Expressions. Using the Bible and their graphic organizers each 8th grader expresses their faith in a variety of ways which include but not limited to many creative arts, writing and performing songs, creating videos, poetry, drawing, and painting as a way of sharing how they have seen God at work in their lives.



## CONNECT

### Registration:

All registration is done through the LOC website or the church app and is complete with a \$60 registration fee payment. Medical forms are downloadable to be completed and turned into Kim Carrera. There will be separate registration and additional expense for the PATH Bash and the PATH Retreat. Contact Pastor Mo to share need-based requests for full or partial scholarship for PATH events.

Stay connected to the PATH page of the church app by downloading the Light of Christ app on your smart phone. Information regarding serving events, PATH Bash, and the PATH Retreat will be available under the PATH button on the app.

### Absences:

Absences from PATH should be emailed to [kimc@locchurch.com](mailto:kimc@locchurch.com) by 5:30pm on Wednesdays. If your child cannot attend a PATH event (i.e. mini-mission, PATH Bash, etc.) please communicate that with Kim as well.

### Emergency Closings:

Weather related or other closings can be found by:

- Watching for an alert from the LOC app (see downloading the app below)

[Download Church Center App in your App store](#)



- Checking the Light of Christ website ([locchurch.com](http://locchurch.com))

We also respect the judgment of parents with regard to the safety of their children and driving in bad weather. If you choose to stay home, please send an email to Kim.

### Weekly Emails and Facebook:

Each lesson night an email will be sent to parents. These will include the lesson focus and upcoming events. Please read these, as it is important information and will keep you up to date with us. Please request to be added to the PATH Facebook page. It is called [PATH \(Light of Christ Confirmation Program\)](#).

### eNewsletters:

You can subscribe to receive Light of Christ's weekly pastoral communication by going to [locchurch.com](http://locchurch.com) and scrolling to the Quick Link at the bottom of the home page. Then select "Join Our Mailing List" and complete the information.

## PATH STAFF



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**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.