

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Sunday School
2020-2021
Pre-K—3rd Grade

Dear Parents,

The *Pons Fabricius* is a famous bridge in Rome. It was constructed in 62 BC and is still fully functional today. Why? Because Roman engineers gave it a solid foundation.

As parents, you have hopes and desires for your child's future, and if that future is going to include the love of Jesus, they're going to need a good foundation, and Sunday school is a fundamental part of that good foundation. In Sunday school, kids are exposed to all the Bible stories that reveal a way of thinking and speaking which is foreign to the world, a way of thinking and speaking that reflects God's unconditional love for His people as seen in the death and resurrection of His Son. God still delivers this grace through His Word, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, renewing His people and bringing true hope and peace where the world offers only shallow emptiness.

We are thankful and excited to participate with you in the formation and growth of your child's faith, and to better support you in your role as the primary teacher of your child, we will be addressing three new developments for this year's Sunday School: **1) new Sunday school structure, 2) COVID-19, 3) parent/Sunday school staff covenants, and 4) parent volunteers.**

1. New Sunday School Structure

a. Class progression

- i. **Check-in and doughnuts and juice in basement craft room (9:15-9:30 am)**
- ii. **Start with crafts in basement (9:30-10:00 am).**
- iii. **Move up to Sanctuary for Bible story (10:00-10:15 am).**
- iv. **Stay in Sanctuary for music (10:15-10:30 am)**

b. Drop-off and pick up

- i. Kids need to be dropped off at the south (main) entrance **only**.
- ii. Kids need to be picked up at the north entrance **only**. When picking up your child, please enter the north doors and enter the Sanctuary, and when we see you at the entrance, we will send your child to the entrance.
- iii. Sunday school starts at (9:30 am and ends at 10:30 am).

c. Drop Off

- i. When parents and kids enter through the main/south doors, immediately to their left is a staircase leading downstairs. At the bottom of the stairs there will be a staffed table checking kids in. **Kids will need to check in every week** as we will be taking kids' temperatures prior to admission into the classroom.
- ii. On the first day of Sunday school for your child, we will need a **registration sheet** filled out and a **covenant agreement** signed. These are included with this letter but will be available at the check-in table as well.
- iii. Doughnuts and juice will be available downstairs in the craft room, so please feel free come up to 15 minutes early, so your child can still have his or her doughnuts!

- d. Explanation—this year’s model is based on the one room school, and this approach gives us many advantages.
 - i. It allows us to keep kids socially distanced in larger, more open spaces.
 - ii. Since Sunday school is for pre-K through 3rd grade, there is less of a development disparity between the older and younger kids. This allows all the kids to benefit from Bible stories, music, and activities without boring or neglecting some.
 - iii. This approach also allows for a more effective classroom experience. Rather than needing six to twelve teachers, we only need one Bible story teacher, one person for crafts, and one person from music. Other people (who might have been teachers) and parents can then help with what challenges Sunday school teachers the most: directing, guiding, and supervising the kids!

2. COVID-19

- a. Drop off at south doors and pick up at north doors in order to minimize social contact.
- b. Weekly temperature check-ins (with staff taking temperature at the table at bottom of the stairs).
- c. Hand sanitizer at south entrance, basement craft room (where each Sunday school session will begin), and at the north entrance for pick-up.
- d. The craft room and the Sanctuary will be wiped down after every class.
- e. All teachers and helpers will be required to wear masks.
- f. We will be practicing social distancing in the craft room and the Sanctuary.
- g. If a child or teacher test positive for COVID, we will cancel Sunday School for two weeks.
- h. We will be sending out emails and texts to parents to keep them informed, so filling out our registration form is imperative.
- i. If you or your child is experiencing any of the COVID symptoms, please do not bring them to Sunday school.
- j. If you or your child has a pending COVID test, please do not bring them to Sunday school until you have received results that say you or your child is okay.

3. Parent/Sunday School Staff Covenant—Setting Expectations

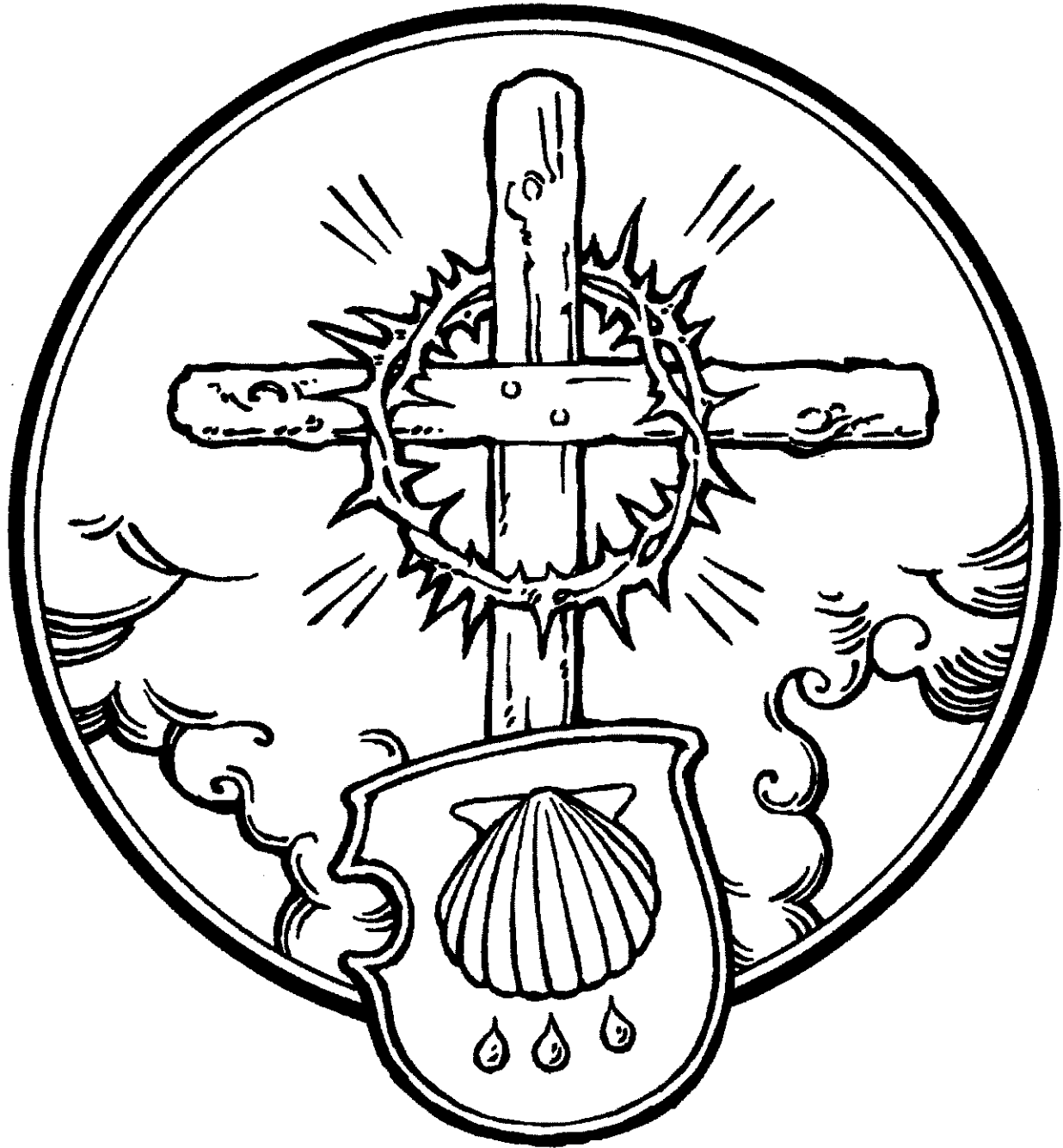
- a. A covenant is a biblical way to establish expectations between parents, kids, and the Sunday school staff.
- b. Covenants are based on promises, so we as the Sunday school staff make promises to do our best in our roles, and you as parents make promises to do your best in your roles as well (the details are outlined in the included covenant).
- c. What is wonderful about covenants is that if either side fails to keep their promises, we can sit down and discuss why this happened, forgive one another, and then recommit to the promises. In other words, covenants help establish clear expectations but also lead to Christian forgiveness if expectations are violated.

4. Parent Volunteers

- a. While the one room school model requires less teachers, it does require more helpers, and this is where parents are key!
- b. Parent volunteers would help direct, guide, and supervise kids in their different settings (craft room and Sanctuary). This will include:

- i. Helping kids transition from downstairs to upstairs.
 - ii. Helping kids with crafts.
 - iii. Helping kids with singing.
 - iv. Helping kids to pay attention during the Bible story.
 - v. Helping wipe down craft room and Sanctuary after use.
 - vi. Supervising kids (where appropriate) when they need to go to the bathroom.
 - vii. Helping kids find their parents when Sunday school ends.
 - viii. Helping kids with their juice and doughnuts.
- c. Volunteers can sign-up if they wish (we will have a sign-up sheet), but they can also come every Sunday too.
- d. We need at least five volunteers per Sunday.
- e. All volunteers will need to wear masks!

Sunday School Covenant
2020-2021



The Gift You Give by Taking This Covenant Seriously

As a Christian parent, you want your child to see things differently. You want your child to have a good foundation that will allow him or her to stand firm on the hope of Christ even in the darkest time. You want your child, likewise, to have the comfort and peace of a perfect love when the love of others fails, as it most certainly will. Part of the reason parents have their kids in Sunday school is because they love them, but the love of a parent for a child is but a dim reflection (1 Corinthians 13:12) of the love God has shown for us in Christ. Sunday school and an ongoing connection with God's Word is imperative in helping the young Christian gain and maintain a strong foundation in Christ that protects them against the wind and waves of false, worldly promises and temptations. When parents take their role as Christian models seriously, it becomes the best way to help young Christians take their future role seriously as well, and it helps them to see themselves as lifelong members of God's family in Christ's Church.

Covenant—Generally

As **pastor(s), Sunday school staff, and Sunday school parents**, out of the realization of how precious God's gifts are, we promise to give thanks to God for this opportunity to have these young people engage in Christian learning and formation, even when such opportunities present challenges to schedules and convenience.

As **pastor(s), Sunday school staff, and Sunday school parents**, out of the recognition that the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh constantly war against God's people and His church (purchased by Jesus's blood), we promise to pray for one another as much as we can. We will pray for courage, patience, insight from the Holy Spirit, protection, and divine guidance for all involved.

As **pastor(s), Sunday school staff, and Sunday school parents**, we recognize that this opportunity for Christian teaching and formation exists in part through the faithfulness of those who have gone before us. Therefore:

- Out of respect for our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents whose faithfulness made our recognition of Sunday school's importance even possible, and
- Out of respect for the faithful saints of St. Paul's whose support and commitment make having a building, staff, resources, and a Sanctuary even possible, and

- Out of respect for all the Church Triumphant who have preceded us into glory—Apostles, martyrs, prophets, patriarchs, priests, and kings—whose faithfulness gives us strength to run the race before us (Hebrews 11-12:1),

we promise to look at the bigger picture of God's work in our own lives and the lives of all the kids involved. We promise that we will, to the best of our ability and through God's grace, recognize that God's work, which He works in us and in the children in Sunday school, is much bigger than ourselves even though God has called us by name into the joy and work of His kingdom.

Covenant—Specifically

As the **pastor(s)**, you promise, to the best of your ability and with the help of God's grace:

- To make sure all the Sunday school staff have good, Godly materials based on God's Word, and
- To work, in whatever way is necessary, with the staff, parents, and students to help them grow in faith, and
- To help in any Christian reconciliation that may be necessary, and
- To seek feedback for ways to improve the Sunday school experience, and
- To regularly evaluate Sunday school to ensure it is achieving the goals for which it exists.

As **the Sunday school staff**, you promise, to the best of your ability and with the help of God's grace:

- To be prepared for all classes and staff duties, and
- To always model good Christian behavior with kids and other staff, and
- To do your best to connect the child to Jesus through the materials, and
- To treat all children with respect and dignity, and
- To go to the parents first if there is ever a problem, and
- To regularly pray for the children and their families.

As **parents/guardians**, you promise, to the best of your ability and with the help of God's grace:

- To be on time for Sunday school (which we all know requires a lot of God's grace!), and
- To make Sunday school a priority for our parental vocation, and
- To let the church-office know if you will knowingly be gone on a Sunday, so the Sunday school staff can have a decent expectation of who will be attending, and
- To engage your child throughout the week with what they have learned, and
- To occasionally volunteer to help support the Sunday school ministry here at St. Paul's, and
- To come to the pastor first if there is any problem or struggle.

If any party in the above covenant breaks their promises, we (all appropriate parties) will spiritually assess why the promises were broken, so the appropriate person or people may name the sin or failure, confess and speak forgiveness, and then recommit to these promises.

Please indicated your willingness to let these promises guide you through your time of confirmation by signing below.

(date)

(date)

(print name)

(print name)

NB: Practical details can be modified at the discretion of the pastor(s) based on special circumstances.