



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

July 11, 2001

Welcome to confirmation materials based on Dan Erlander's *Manna and Mercy*. I make them available as resources which can be used and adapted by other pastors and instructors for non-profit purposes.

BACKGROUND

I developed these materials for use in the 2000-20001 school year with my class of half a dozen seventh and eighth graders at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Portland, Oregon.

Every student who stayed in class until the end learned to tell (orally) the whole story of the whole Bible. My method: Each week I combined oral storytelling (with interactive discussion) AND a visual summary of the main points.

The students' review: They liked the storytelling-interaction best, saw some logic in reviewing the main points, but didn't like the homework. Some of them didn't DO the homework ever, at all. Some of them did for part of the year, then dropped off in their consistency. But whenever students did the homework, they awed me with their grasp and application of Dan's themes.

A word of background and credit: To Dan Erlander, of course, for writing such a lovely book as *Manna and Mercy*. Dan knows I was working on this project last year and I have shared my curriculum with him.

I also want to credit Edward F. Markquart, pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, 22975 24th Avenue South, Des Moines, WA 98198, who self-publishes a three-year confirmation curriculum called *The Bible for Today*. From Pastor Markquart I took the expectation of daily homework (he combines it with daily devotions) and the modality of question-and-answer visual summaries on overhead transparencies. Please note that Pastor Markquart requires his students to memorize their printed summaries, to rehearse them with their parents, and periodically to be tested on them (verbatim).

Pastor Markquart also gave advice that I take more seriously year by year:

"The key factor to the effectiveness of this course is the commitment of the parent(s) to Christian education. Each week, they are involved in discussion, listening to recitation, nurturing daily devotions, and signing the homework. If parent(s) get busy or lazy after the first five or six lessons, the quality of the course quickly weakens. One of the pastor's/ instructor's responsibilities is to encourage parental motivation for the whole year, and not just the opening weeks."... [He suggests practical strategies for meeting this responsibility and continues,] "One crucial factor in all of this is changing the 'confirmation climate' in your congregation. Here at Grace Lutheran Church, through the years, both parents and students have become accustomed and 'acclimated' to vigorous learning and consistent preparation for every confirmation class and test. That's just the way things are done around here. That tradition of 'hard work' during confirmation has been passed down from older siblings to younger siblings and from family to family. But it takes time for that climate to change. When the instructor makes adequate time for confirmation preparation and 'telephone confirmation conversations' with the parents, the quality of confirmand-parent work increases dramatically."

OVERVIEW

I divided *Manna and Mercy* into eighteen units (sixteen chapters, with chapters 4 and 11 each divided into two units).

For each unit I developed three resources:

1. A homework page with five reading assignments.

The reading assignments are from *Manna and Mercy* and from the Bible. There is also a brief question to answer about each reading assignment. Answers can be put on the homework page or on a separate sheet, as you request or the student chooses.

On each page of homework I included a reminder to “pray often,” a vestige of Pastor Markquart’s requirement of daily devotions. Occasionally I suggested a Bible verse or part of Luther’s *Small Catechism* for memorization. Always, of course, you are free to revise these materials as your wisdom leads you.

Part of each homework assignment is a question to ask a parent. The student is supposed to initiate the conversation and write a brief report of the perspective offered by the parent. The hope is to get them talking about matters of faith and religion.

NOTE: The homework page can be given to students BEFORE the class session on the chapter, in order to get them prepared for the class session, or AFTER the class session, as a review. I used the homework page as preparation during the fall, then as review after the new year. It seemed to work both ways.

2. A question-and-answer review of the chapter (or half-chapter).

I tried to stick close to Dan Erlander’s insights and language. Over the course of the year my suggested answers moved away from full sentences toward phrases—easier to focus on—and to copy. Photocopy this page onto a transparency for the students to hand-copy during class. (Toward the end of the year I gave the students a printed copy of this page rather than have them hand-copy every answer.)

3. A page with only the question portion of the question-and-answer review.

Give this page to the students and they hand-copy the answers from the overhead, or write paraphrases in their own words.

Our confirmation class met for one hour each Sunday night, three Sundays per month. On the other Sunday we carried out a servant project in cooperation with the youth from another church.

I hope my resources will help you present *Manna and Mercy* in your own contexts and settings.

May God bless you and your students as you follow Jesus’ way of manna and mercy!

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PUT THIS ON LETTERHEAD

DATE

TO: (FILL IN THE NAMES OF YOUR STUDENTS!)

1. (WRITE SOME SORT OF GREETING TO YOUR FOLKS!)
2. Confirmation class will meet BUILDING, ADDRESS, ROOM, TIME. First class is WHEN. We will meet every DAY at that time, except for the DAYS when we do servant projects, which usually take place at a different time. **Regular class attendance is an expectation for confirmation.**
3. Servant projects this fall will occur on DATES AND TOPICS. Details will be provided closer to these projects. Servant projects are arranged by CONTACT, you can call for more information. **Participation in servant projects is an expectation for confirmation.**
4. **Supplies:**
 - Study book for this year is *Manna and Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe* by Dan Erlander. It is an overview of the whole Bible, told as a coherent, cohesive story. One copy will be provided for your student, and as they highlight and color in this book, it will become theirs forever. NOTE: YOU are invited to purchase your own copy for \$9.00 (at www.danielerlander.com) and join this excellent study!
 - Students are also asked to provide for themselves a three-ring notebook with pockets, highlighter, pen or pencil, and Bible. I can help you get an excellent NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) Study Bible for your student if he or she does not already have one.
5. There will be weekly reading and writing homework for confirmation. **Completed homework is an expectation for confirmation.**
6. Confirmation class will NOT be held on DATES. As soon as I can I will give every household a complete schedule.
7. The middle school students from OTHER CHURCHES WILL JOIN US FOR CLASS AND Servant projects. We may from time to time schedule other retreats and events with their students. We may get a youth group going yet. Pray for us!
8. My goal: To form these young people as followers of Jesus Christ, who practice a living faith in their world. To encourage them in the ways they become part of God's story on earth.

Any suggestions/ questions? Call me. See you on DATE!

Confirmation - Living Faith

Sample Schedule (for Fall 2000)

All sessions meet Sundays from 6-7 p.m. in the chapel at church except for **Servant Projects** that are at different times on Sundays.

- Oct. 1 Our first meeting.
- Oct. 8 Beginnings
- Oct. 15 **Servant Project** feeding homeless at Potluck in the Park
- Oct. 22 God Births a People
- Sat. Oct. 28 **Special event:**
 Dan Erlander teaches Bible at church from 9-4
- Oct. 29 The Wilderness School
- Nov. 5 The Covenant and the Covenant Gift (part 1)
- Nov. 12 The Covenant and the Covenant Gift (part 2)
- Nov. 19 **Servant Project** sorting clothes for Human Solutions
- Nov. 26 **No class**—Thanksgiving weekend
- Dec. 3 Graduation and Settling Down
- Dec. 10 Test, review, or project due (to be arranged)
- Dec. 17 **Servant Project** giving a party for underprivileged kids
- Dec. 24 **No class**
- Dec. 31 **No class**

Sample Confirmation Covenant: (Date)

Instructions: *Confirmand and parents please review, sign and return this covenant.*

To the best of my ability I intend to *grow* in faith by:

Attending I will attend our regular meetings, making them a priority.

Worshipping I will regularly attend worship at my congregation and participate in worship as acolyte, lector, communion preparer, taking sermon notes, etc., as I am given opportunity.

Preparing I will prepare for confirmation by reading the lessons in advance of our meetings, and by seeking to understand the material we are covering. To do this I understand I will be in conversation with my parents, pastor and possibly other adults.

Serving I will participate in servant projects which we decide to take on during the year as part of our confirmation ministry training.

Supplies I will get and bring with me to class a Bible (SPECIFY VERSION).
Three-ring notebook. Highlighting pen.
Pen or pencil. Workbook *Manna and Mercy* by Dan Erlander will be provided.

Growing Spiritually I will read my Bible, pray often, and take advantage of chances to grow spiritually. I will participate in our confirmation small group and make the effort to know others better.

Attending Camp If arranged by my church, I will attend confirmation camp, retreats, and/or a state-wide junior high youth event.

Christian Relationships and Respect for Others I will seek to build up the body of Christ by the way I will seek to let Matthew 18:15-20 be my guide in dealing with conflict. I understand that Jesus often gives us difficult people to love in order to help us grow.

(Confirmand signature)

Parent Affirmation

I have read the covenant above and I intend to support my son/daughter on their confirmation journey by supporting their participation in the program. To the best of my ability I will do this through: praying for my daughter or son, transportation, monitoring work and projects, reading and talking about materials, participating in any family aspects of the program that develop, e.g., reading Bible stories as a family; helping with memorization, etc. NOTE: Adults are welcome at class at any time and at servant projects by arrangement with COORDINATOR NAME, PHONE. *(All adults who will be involved in the support of this young person are asked to sign below.)*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 1

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework in one session, try to remember to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M (Manna and Mercy)* page 1. Highlight the word "Tov" which is pronounced "tove." What does it mean in Hebrew (the language part of the Bible was written in)? _____ List ten things God created that are, in your opinion, definitely tov. (You can include things that are NOT listed on page 1.)

Day 2 Read in the Bible **Genesis 1:1-2:4** (chapter 1, verse 1, through chapter 2, verse 4). Highlight the word "good" every time it appears. How many times? _____ What did God call very good?

Day 3 Read in the Bible **Psalm 8**. Highlight verses 3, 4, 5, 6. God made YOU just "a little lower than God or angels" (assuming that you ARE a human being!). Where do you see this in your life? How does it make you feel?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 2. Highlight the second paragraph, which tells how humans know if they are "big deals." Watch the news, check the newspaper, or think about your own life and find one story about a person or a group that is acting like a big deal this week. Who is it?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 3. Highlight the paragraph that begins "The Creator, in passionate love, decided on another way." When you do something wrong, what kind of reaction from your parent helps you more—destruction, terror, or love? Why?

Ask a parent and report their response: How can a Christian believe in evolution?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction.* _____

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 1 - Beginnings

Name _____

- 1. According to the Christian faith, what did God create?**
God created everything! God loved it all and said that everything was "very good."
- 2. For what purpose did God create human beings?**
God created us to be partners who live friendship with God, with each other, and with all creation.
- 3. How did God's plan for human beings get disrupted?**
People decided to find joy by becoming "big deals" over others, rather than partners and friends.
- 4. What are the marks of a big deal?**
Greed, taking power, exploiting, oppressing, doing violence, waging war; not caring, not sharing, not helping
- 5. How did God respond to the rebellion of the human race?**
Instead of destroying or terrorizing them, God decided to mend the universe through friendship and love.
- 6. Where do we learn the story of our betrayal and God's friendship and love?**
The Bible tells us the story of God's friendship and love for us sinful human beings. And Jesus Christ brings us God's friendship and love.

***Memorize:** "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth."
This is the First Article of the Apostles' Creed.

***Then memorize:** "I believe that God has created me and all that exists. God has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers. God provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil. All this God does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey God. This is most certainly true."

This is Martin Luther's explanation of the First Article.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 1 - Beginnings

Name _____

1. According to the Christian faith, what did God create?
2. For what purpose did God create human beings?
3. How did God's plan for human beings get disrupted?
4. What are the marks of a big deal?
5. How did God respond to the rebellion of the human race?
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This is Martin Luther's explanation of the First Article.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for (Chapter 2)

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework in one session, you are invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Sarah and Abraham were early believers in God. **Read in the Bible Genesis 12:1-5.** Highlight it all! It's God's four-part promise to Sarah and Abraham and their family. God would give them (1) a land to live in; (2) lots of descendants--"a great nation"; (3) a good reputation--"a great name"; and (4) a reason to live--"to be a blessing" to other families. I wonder what you think is the most important part of this promise? Why?

Day 2 **Read in the Bible Exodus 1:8-14 and 2:23-25.** Highlight Exodus 2:23-25. The Egyptian kings, called "pharaohs" (FAIR-ohs), did not recognize Abraham and Sarah's descendants as people of promise. But who did remember the promise? What difference does that make?

Day 3 **Read M&M page 4 and study the diagram.** The slaves suffered from the way things were set up in Egypt, and God took their side. But who probably enjoyed life in Egypt, because they benefited from it?

Day 4 **Read M&M page 5.** Highlight "Yahweh is our strength and our song, and Yahweh has become our salvation." Do you know why "Yahweh" is the name for God? (Can you find out, or guess?)

Day 5 **Read M&M page 6.** Why do people have to learn to get along with each other? What makes it hard for people to get along with each other?

Memorization: Review and finish memorizing the First Article of the Creed and Luther's explanation of the First Article.

Ask a parent and report their response: How was God there for you when you went through a challenging or hard time in your life?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction.* _____

Key Ideas in Chapter 2 - God Births a People

1. (Once upon a time) Why was God vexed with a nation called Egypt?

The big deals of Egypt lived in ease and luxury while the slaves at the bottom lived under heavy oppression. God detested this system.

2. Whom did God recruit to help with a liberation for the slaves?

Moses, his sister Miriam, and his brother Aaron led the people out of Egypt.

3. Tell about the Passover meal.

It was a hurried meal of lamb and unleavened bread that the slaves ate when they were waiting for the moment God would lead them out of Egypt. They marked the doorposts of their houses with the lamb's blood so that the angel of death would pass over them. Our Jewish brothers and sisters still celebrate a Passover meal each year, remembering God as the God who rescues people and sets them free.

4. Tell about the Exodus.

"Exodus" means "the way out." When the enslaved people were leaving Egypt and the Egyptians were chasing them, they came to a body of water they couldn't get across. God caused the waters to part, so the people crossed on dry land, but Pharaoh's army could not get through. The people were now free!

5. What waited for the people on the other side of the water?

They entered the wilderness. The good news was that they were a group of free people that God had saved. The bad news was that they didn't know how to live together as God's free people. But God would teach them how to live.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Key Ideas in Chapter 2 - God Births a People

1. (Once upon a time) Why was God vexed with a nation called Egypt?
2. Whom did God recruit to help with a liberation for the slaves?
3. Tell about the Passover meal.
4. Tell about the Exodus.
5. What waited for the people on the other side of the water?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 3

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read in the Bible Exodus chapter 16 verses 2-4 and verses 13-15. Highlight verse 4 and verse 15. What were the Israelites complaining about? How did God help them?

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 7. Highlight the headline, "Lesson One: God Gives Manna for All." What did the people learn by gathering manna each day for their clan?

Day 3 Read *M&M* page 8. Highlight the headline, "Lesson Two: Hoarding Stinks." If the United States uses more energy than any other country in the world, is that hoarding?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 8 again. Highlight the headline, "Lesson Three: The Gift of Sabbath." When in your week do you relax to experience the wonder of friendship with others? With nature? With God?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 9. What is God's dream?

Ask a parent and report their response: How do you take time for friendship with God, with others, and with nature?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction.* _____

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 3 - The Wilderness School

1. What happened when the people grumbled about food in the wilderness?

Yahweh God responded by showering them with bread from heaven. The people called it, "What is it?" or "Manna."

2. What were the three lessons God taught through the manna?

Lesson 1: God gives manna for all.

Lesson 2: Hoarding stinks.

Lesson 3: The gift of Sabbath

3. Tell what each lesson of the manna means, in your own words.

- We own nothing. All is God's. God will share it with us. All is gift.
- God gives enough for everything to be shared by everyone.
- Hoarding causes rot; it stinks. It's our job to share everything around so that everyone has enough—not too much, not too little.
- Work is helping God distribute manna. God uses our work to share the gifts that come from God.
- God gives rest so humans can practice what life is all about—friendship!

4. What is life all about?.

Friendship with God, friendship with others, friendship with nature.

5. What is the SHALOM that God dreamed about and worked for?

Shalom means the kind of PEACE....

- Where people live in harmony with all of creation.
- Where there are no big deals and little deals, no rich and poor, no oppressors and oppressed.
- Where people live and work for the good of the whole.
- Where all receive, thank, and share.
- Where the universe is mended.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Key Ideas in Chapter 3 - The Wilderness School

1. What happened when the people grumbled about food in the wilderness?

2. What were the three lessons God taught through the manna?

3. Tell what each lesson of the manna means, in your own words.

4. What is life all about?

5. What is the SHALOM that God dreamed about and worked for?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Homework for DATES (Chapter 4A)

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

- Day 1** Read *M&M* page 10. Highlight Yahweh's plan, "I will bind myself" through "friends forever!" Where did "the wedding" between God and the people take place?
- Day 2** Read *M&M* page 11. Highlight the two tablets of the covenant gift from God (they're in the picture), These are the "ten words" or the "Decalogue." The first tablet describes a relationship with whom? _____ The second tablet describes a relationship with who else (list)?
- Day 3** Read in the Bible Exodus chapter 20, verses 1-17. Highlight all of it. I wonder which commandment you think is the hardest to follow? Why?
- Day 4** Read *M&M* page 11 (from below the tablet picture) to 12. There are many ways for the people to practice manna living. Number the paragraphs 1-4 in *M&M*:
1. One is giving a tenth of their crops back to God (tithing).
 2. Another is using the tithe specifically to help those who are most vulnerable (the poor, widows, orphans, immigrants).
 3. Another is harvesting in a way that leaves food for others.
 4. Another is sharing care and kindness with the animals.
- Who are some "vulnerable people" in Oregon? What is one way people help them?
- Day 5** Read in the Bible Deuteronomy chapter 15, verses 7-11. Highlight verses 7-8. Who could do this—an individual person, a neighborhood, a church, a school, or a government? Give an example.

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What role do the Ten Commandments play in your life?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 4A - The Covenant and the Covenant Gift

1. What is the covenant?

God's promise to live in loving partnership with the people, forever.
Given by God in the wilderness at Mt. Sinai.

2. What was the covenant gift?

The covenant Word, also known as the Torah.

It included the ten commandments also known as the "ten words" or
"Decalogue" or "ten best ways."

It described the blessed way people would live in God's love, freedom, and
guidance.

3. List the Ten Best Ways. Memorize them!

1. You shall have no other gods. (Trust only me!)
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. (Bring honor to my name!)
3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery. (You will not run after somebody else's spouse!)
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (You will not deceive.)
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house (possessions).
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse, workers, means of making a living, or anything that is your neighbor's. (You will not covet your neighbor's manna!)

4. The Torah said that tithing was a way to practice manna living. What is tithing?.

Giving the first and best tenth of the crops to God. Using the tithe for celebration, friendship, and helping the most vulnerable people.

5. The Torah said manna living would help vulnerable people and animals. How?

- The tithes of richer people would help the poorer people.
- Some of the crops would be left in the fields for the poor.
- Animals could eat while working.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 4B

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 13. Highlight "Sabbath, God's gift of time" through "friendships with God and others and nature." Fill in the blanks with the appropriate answer: Sabbath day, Sabbath year, or Jubilee year:

- The land will rest during the _____.
- The partner people will rest every week on the _____.
- Families who lost their land will get it back during the _____.
- Slaves will go free with help to start again during the _____.

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 14. Highlight the "RIGHTEOUSNESS" tag and the "MERCY" tag. These are two qualities people hold in balance for a good society. Think about your school. Your school expects you to be "righteous" (even if it doesn't use that word)—to get along together in fairness and to get your work done. Your school also expects "mercy" (without using that word either) when it tells you to be tolerant, to help another student, or to give to the clothes closet or food pantry. Which is harder for you, righteousness or mercy? Why?

Day 3 Read in the Bible Deuteronomy chapter 6, verses 4 through 9. Highlight verses 4 through 6. How would someone love the LORD their God with all their might (or strength)?

Day 4 Read *M&M* pages 14-15, starting with THE GIFT OF WORSHIP... Highlight the first and last sentences in the paragraph in the middle of page 15. Tell what stands out for you when you are worshipping at our church.

Day 5 Read in the Bible Luke chapter 10, verses 25 through 37. What does Jesus' story say about MERCY?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What religious activity or holiday do you enjoy the most, and how does it speak to you about you and God being in partnership?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 4B - The Covenant and the Covenant Gift

1. What is the Sabbath?

God's gift of time for resting and friendships with God and others and nature.

2. What do we learn when at least once every week we "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"?

We learn that God keeps the world going even when we are not working.
We learn to enjoy life and friendships with God and others and nature.

3. According to the Torah, when would there be a Sabbath year and what would happen then?

Every seventh year the people and the land would rest from farming.
Everyone's debts would be cancelled.
All slaves would go free.

4. According to the Torah, every 50th year everyone in society would start over with a new supply of land, wealth, and work. What year is this?

The Jubilee!

5. What is the Jubilee idea being promoted in the year 2000-2001?

For rich countries to forgive the debts of poor countries around the world.

6. Why do God's people worship?

To REMEMBER the stories of God's saving actions and give thanks for them,
and to RECEIVE the power to act as God acts—in righteousness and mercy.

7. What is righteousness?

The just way to live together in right relationships.

8. What is mercy?

Practicing compassion toward the most vulnerable in society.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 4B -
The Covenant and the Covenant Gift

Name _____

1. What is the Sabbath?
2. What do we learn when at least once every week we "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"?
3. According to the Torah, when would there be a Sabbath year and what would happen then?
4. According to the Torah, every 50th year everyone in society would start over with a new supply of land, wealth, and work. What year is this?
5. What is the Jubilee idea being promoted in the year 2000-2001?
6. Why do God's people worship?
7. What is righteousness?
8. What is mercy?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 5

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 16. Highlight the paragraphs numbered 1 and 2. Some people say that following God's ways is no fun, but Moses says it brings happiness and blessing. What is your opinion about this, and why?

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 17. Find and highlight the name of the leader who replaced Moses, leading the people into the promised land. He was _____. Find and highlight the name of an oppressed foreign woman (a prostitute) who helped the army of Israel. What was her name? _____. How did the covenant community find new members?

Day 3 Read *M&M* page 18. This page describes two things the people of Israel did that God was happy about. What are they?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 19. Highlight the paragraph about "liberators"—temporary leaders—that God raised up for the people. Study the picture showing "Shalom" or a healthy peaceful life in a biblical village. What do you think makes life healthy and peaceful for people in a modern city?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 20. In worship and other gatherings (maybe around the campfire!), the people of Israel remembered and talked about how God had made the world and helped their ancestors. We know their stories from the Bible. What is one Bible story you are pretty familiar with, maybe your favorite? Tell about it.

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Remember and tell a story about one of your ancestors that inspires you or gives you hope. (An "ancestor" might be as recent as a parent or grandparent, you don't have to go far back.)

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 5 - Graduation and Settling Down

- 1. What was the "graduation" from the wilderness school for the people?**
Entry into the land where they would live the way they had learned in the wilderness. (At least, God hoped so.)
- 2. Who was their commencement speaker and what did he say?**
Moses told them:
 - When you follow the way of righteousness and mercy, you will bring blessing and happiness to yourselves and to your society.
 - When you do not follow the way of righteousness and mercy, you will bring sadness and curse to yourselves and to your society.
- 3. Who led the people into the promised land, across what boundary?**
Joshua led the people over the Jordan River.
- 4. How did the covenant community find new members?**
Through army attacks, collaborations, and unexpected victories, former slaves from Palestinian cities and former slaves from Egypt became one family. Sad to say, many of the oppressors died.
- 5. What was God's gift of "manna" for them in the promised land?**
They now had their own land and cities—larger areas for larger clans, and smaller areas for smaller clans.
- 6. Did they remember the covenant?**
They did renew their covenant partnership with God at Shechem in the new land. And at first they lived in quite a bit of simplicity and equality.
- 7. Who were their leaders during those years?**
Individuals called "liberators" (or "judges") were temporary leaders during times of crisis. They served as leaders within (not above) the society. They saw God as their only true leader and liberator.
- 8. Why did they tell stories about their ancestors, stories that became our oldest Bible stories?**
The stories reminded the people again and again what God is like—righteous and merciful. These stories helped them understand themselves through their past (memory) and their future (hope).

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 5 -
Graduation and Settling Down

Name _____

1. What was the "graduation" from the wilderness school for the people?
2. Who was their commencement speaker and what did he say?
3. Who led the people into the promised land, across what boundary?
4. How did the covenant community find new members?
5. What was God's gift of "manna" for them in the promised land?
6. Did they remember the covenant?
7. Who were their leaders during those years?
8. Why did they tell stories about their ancestors, stories that became our oldest Bible stories?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 6

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 21. Highlight the last two sentences, "The two decided to work for a new possibility—". If you had gotten to vote, would you have been pro-king, or anti-king? Which argument for or against a king would have been the most convincing to you?

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 22. Highlight the name of the first king and copy it here: _____. The second king: _____. The third king: _____. What made David a good king?

Day 3 Read in the Bible Psalm 72. Highlight verses 1-4 and 12-14. This is a job description for King Solomon. Did he do these things (review *M&M* page 22)? _____
Would these verses be a good job description for the President of the United States?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 23. Study the picture showing the land after the people began ignoring their partnership with God. Compare it to "Shalom" or a healthy peaceful life in a biblical village shown on page 19. What's so bad about the life shown on page 23?

Day 5 **Challenge.** Look back at the drawings on pages 22 and 23. Draw your own cartoon, maybe similar to these, that shows relationships between different groups of people in your school, neighborhood, city, or world. If drawing is not your gift, write a poem or description about some people who have a hard life compared to others.

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What is the biggest change that would result if more of *God's wishes* were put into practice in the United States of America?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 6 - We Want a King

- 1. It was about 1000 BC and the people wanted a king. Why?**
To protect them from their enemies.
- 2. Other people didn't want a king. Why not?**
They were afraid the king would oppress them.
- 3. Why did Yahweh God let the people have a king?**
God hoped that the king and the people would be able to stay faithful to God, living in righteousness and mercy.
- 4. Did God's hopes for faithful kings and faithful people work out?**
Yes and no. Some faithful kings, some not. Some faithful people, some not.
- 5. Who was Samuel?**
A special friend of God, a prophet, who anointed the first two kings.
- 6. Who was the first king, and how did he do?**
Saul. He had a lot of problems being a king.
- 7. Who was the next king, the greatest?**
David. God loved him, and David followed the covenant of righteousness and mercy for the people. He brought the people together, and when he was wrong, he cried for forgiveness.
- 8. The third king was David's son. His name, and how did he do?**
Solomon. He became a filthy rich emperor. Although many people thought this was glamorous, God didn't like it because Solomon forgot about having righteousness and mercy toward his people.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 6 -
We Want a King

Name _____

1. It was about 1000 BC and the people wanted a king. Why?

2. Other people didn't want a king. Why not?

3. Why did Yahweh God let the people have a king?

4. Did God's hopes for faithful kings and faithful people work out?

5. Who was Samuel?

6. Who was the first king, and how did he do?

7. Who was the next king, the greatest?

8. The third king was David's son. His name, and how did he do?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 7

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 **Review M&M page 23.** Highlight the names of the two rival nations that God's people split into, _____ in the south and _____ in the north. Both nations had their own series of kings. The Bible book of 2 Chronicles (say it, *Second Chronicles*) focuses on a series of courageous kings in Judah from approximately 900-600 B.C. These kings excelled not so much because of military or political strength, but because of their faithfulness to God. See if you can track down their names by reading the first few verses of each section.

2 Chronicles chapters 14-16 King's name (3 letters) _____

2 Chronicles ch. 17-20 King's name (11 letters) _____

2 Chronicles 24 King's name (5 letters) _____

2 Chron. 29-32 King's name (8 letters) _____

2 Chron. 34-35 King's name (6 letters) _____

Day 2 **Read M&M page 24.** How about the United States—in your judgment, which Biblical group is it more like, the remnant or the majority? Give reasons.

Day 3 **Read M&M page 25.** Highlight the second sentence about "A small remnant still remembered..." Highlight and memorize Joel 2:13, the Bible verse printed in large boldface letters in the middle of the page. Copy it here.

Day 4 **Read M&M page 26.** Are you part of the remnant people? Do you still dream about God's wondrous future? Which part of this dream inspires you the most?

Day 5 **Read in the Bible Jeremiah chapter 1, verses 4-10.** Why did Jeremiah think he couldn't be a prophet? How did God reassure him?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Name some people who have functioned as prophets in the United States or global community in your lifetime. What were they passionate about?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 7 - Yahweh Sends Prophets

- 1. The tribes king David had united split into two nations after king Solomon's death. What and where were they?**
Judah in the south and Israel in the north.
- 2. The people and the kings left the liberator God Yahweh. What did they start to worship instead?**
Their manna piles (money and possessions) and the gods of the people around them.
- 3. What did God do when the people said they were worshiping him, but didn't show God's righteousness and mercy in their lives?**
God talked to the people through the prophets.
God said their religious rituals were disgusting.
God also said, Come back to me!
- 4. What do we call the small minority of people who remembered God's covenant promise and longed for a society of righteousness and mercy?**
The remnant.
- 5. Who were the spokespeople for the remnant?**
The prophets
- 6. Does the Bible include stories and speeches from the prophets?**
Four "major" prophets (long books)—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.
Twelve "minor" prophets (short books)
- 7. Name three of the "minor" prophets?**

Hosea	Jonah	Zephaniah
Joel	Micah	Haggai
Amos	Nahum	Zechariah
Obadiah	Habbakuk	Malachi

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 7 -
Yahweh Sends Prophets

Name _____

1. The tribes king David had united split into two nations after king Solomon's death. What and where were they?
2. The people and the kings left the liberator God Yahweh. What did they start to worship instead?
3. What did God do when the people said they were worshiping him, but didn't show God's righteousness and mercy in their lives?
4. What do we call the small minority of people who remembered God's covenant promise and longed for a society of righteousness and mercy?
5. Who were the spokespeople for the remnant?
6. Does the Bible include stories and speeches from the prophets?
7. Name three of the "minor" prophets?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 8

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 27. Highlight the last two sentences of the first paragraph ("First the Assyrians destroyed Israel...Later the Babylonians destroyed Judah...") and the first sentence of the last paragraph ("Yahweh's passionate love..."). What would you feel like if you were an exile or a refugee in a strange country?

Day 2 Read in the Bible Psalm 137. This is a sad and angry song sung by the exiles who had to go to Babylon. Verses 1-6 are especially sad, and verses 7-9 are so angry that they wish God would bless anyone who knocks a Babylonian baby's brains out. This wish may seem too bitter to belong in the Bible. What do you think about it? How does this outburst fit into God's Word?

Day 3 Read in the Bible Isaiah 40:1-5 and Isaiah 43:1-2. What is one promise God makes here that would be inspiring to Exiles?

What is one promise here that you believe God is making to you personally?

Day 4 Read *M&M* pages 28-29. One of the prophets who worked for God during the Exile described a "servant of Yahweh-God" who would usher in God's new day. Think about the description inside the frame on page 29. Do you think this servant will be an individual, or a group of people working together? Does it sound like any individual or group you know?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 30. Highlight the sentence, "God chose Cyrus..." When they got back to Jerusalem and the countryside around it, what shape did the people find it in, and how did they feel? **(Over)**

Ask a parent and report their response: Did you ever have high hopes about something—some person or plan or dream—that ended up as more of a disappointment than you had expected? How did you handle it? How did God help you handle your disappointment?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 8 - By the Waters of Babylon

- 1. Name the two great world powers that destroyed Israel and Judah.**
Assyria destroyed Israel in the north in 722 BC.
Babylon destroyed Judah in the south in 586 BC.
- 2. What is Exile?**
When people are forced to leave their own country and live somewhere else.
- 3. Where were God's people exiled?**
In Babylon.
- 4. Four ways the exiles kept their identity as God's people during the exile.**
 - **PROPHETS.** They listened to prophets who helped them understand why they'd ended up in such trouble and told them about God's promises to help once again.
 - **CREATIVE ARTS.** They wrote new songs and stories about their experiences of exile and hope.
 - **SCRIPTURE.** They gathered their new and old stories into the Holy Scripture.
 - **SABBATH.** They kept the Sabbath and followed other practices that reminded them who they were and whose they were.
- 5. How did the Exile come to an end?**
God decided to set the captives free—like a repeat of the Exodus.
God chose Cyrus, king of Persia, to help with the liberation.
The Exile lasted about 50 years, ending in 539.
- 6. What did the exiles find when they got back to Jerusalem?**
Houses, farms, towns and cities lay in ruins.
They had to rebuild everything—including the manna society.
God was hopeful for them!

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 8 -
By the Waters of Babylon

Name _____

1. Name the two great world powers that destroyed Israel and Judah.
2. What is Exile?
3. Where were God's people exiled?
4. Four ways the exiles kept their identity as God's people during the exile.
5. How did the Exile come to an end?
6. What did the exiles find when they got back to Jerusalem?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 9

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read **M&M pages 31-32**. Back at home after Exile, the partner people led by Ezra (a priest-leader) went too far in trying to keep themselves separate from other nations. Choose either the Book of Ruth (discussed on page 31) or the Book of Jonah (p. 32) and tell how it reminded the partner people to remain open-minded?

Day 2 Read **M&M pages 32 (bottom) through 34**. This is a world history lesson! After the Persians, the Macedonians (or Greeks) ruled the holy land. What is the name of the family of brothers that led the Jews to freedom for a time? _____. How long did they remain free? _____. Then which empire took over and conquered them? _____.

Day 3 Read **M&M pages 34-36**. Under Roman rule many common families fell into terrible debt (page 34, bottom). Things were so bad that they hoped for a deliverer from God. What did they call the one they were waiting for? _____.

Day 4 Read **M&M pages 36-37**. Highlight the paragraph at the bottom of p. 36, "Besides pushing...." This says that the people were concerned to be "pure." Spend some time understanding how society was organized according to "purity" as described in the boxes on page 37. I don't think we expect people to be "pure" any more; it's not a term we use. What does it take to be "nearest to God" now?

Day 5 Read **M&M page 38**. Note especially the box that says "Also:" Popular wisdom 2000 years ago said women were inferior; illness was a punishment for sin, and poverty was a punishment from God. Does American popular culture (our popular wisdom) still act with discrimination toward women? contempt toward sick or disabled people? lack of respect for the poor? Explain your answer with an example.

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: In the Gospels, Jesus is often portrayed over against the "Pharisees." What is your understanding of who the Pharisees were and why they and Jesus stood in opposition? (Hint: If you want to follow up on this question, check your student's workbook, pages 36-38!)

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 9 - Home Again

- 1. Name the great world powers that ruled the holy land after the Exile.**
 1. Persia let the Exiled people go home around 539 B.C.E.
 2. The Greek empire ruled from about 330 B.C.E. for about 170 years
 3. The Maccabeus family NOT a world power--a century of independence (164-63 B.C.E.)
 4. The Roman empire ruled the Jews from B.C. to A.D. (and they destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.)
- 2. How did God's partner people react when they got home after Exile?**

Ezra led the people in closing their society to outsiders.
Others urged the society to remain more open-minded.
(Examples: the stories of Jonah and Ruth)
- 3. How did they respond to the great persecution of the Greek King Antiochus?**

Some people gave up their faith and way of life.
Others held on to God and to one another through resistance and protest.
(Example: the Book of Daniel)
Led by the Maccabeus brothers, they fought for freedom.
- 4. The rule of the Roman empire became a terrible burden for many Jews. Why?**
 - HIGH TAXES drove many common people into terrible debt.
 - SOCIETY WAS DIVIDED between those who benefited from the system (and found a way to get along with the Romans) and those who didn't (and became poorer and more discontent).
 - VIOLENCE. The example of the Romans and the people's wish to get rid of them both created a war mentality.
- 5. When the people organized themselves by following "purity" laws, who was in and who was out?**

The "clean" people were the ones who had the time and money to keep the laws pretty well. Including: Essenes and Pharisees (reform groups).
The "unclean" people included those too busy or poor to keep all the laws, and those who had to deal with "outsiders." Including: shepherds, tax collectors, prostitutes, people sick with diseases such as leprosy, thieves, etc.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 9 -
Home Again

Name _____

1. Name the great world powers that ruled the holy land after the Exile.
2. How did God's partner people react when they got home after Exile?
3. How did they respond to the great persecution of the Greek King Antiochus?
4. The rule of the Roman empire became a terrible burden for many Jews. Why?
5. When the people organized themselves by following "purity" laws, who was in and who was out?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 10

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 39. Highlight any of the phrases or sentences that you want to emphasize. Instead of sending the struggling people a prophet like Elijah and then a king like David, God is coming to the earth in person. Color the picture of God's partner for this plan. What's her name?

Day 2 Read in the Bible Luke chapter 1 verses 46-56. Put a box around it! This is the song Mary sang when the child was conceived. What does she say about the kind of help God likes to give people?

Day 3 Read *M&M* page 40. Again, highlight the phrases or sentences that speak to you. When we come to celebrate Christmas in December, what aspects of this story get lost in the rush to party and buy? What changes would you suggest to help people get back to this story? Is it important to get back to this story?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 41. This page is about someone we usually call _____ the _____. Highlight his clear message.

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 42. Jesus was baptized. Think about how your baptism was the same as his, or different from his. Then Jesus overcame the temptation of Satan, God's adversary, to follow the love of power instead of than the power of love. Highlight Plan B. Which is more attractive as a way of life to you, Plan A or Plan B? Why? Why would you or anyone choose Plan B?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Say, "Tell me the story of when I was baptized! Where was it? When? Who was there? What did I do? What else do you remember about my baptism? What did it mean to you, why did you have me baptized?"

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 10 - God's Surprise

- 1. Who were "the Anawim" and what did they do?**
They were poor people who trusted in God's promises.
They cried out to God to help them with a new prophet and a new king.
- 2. How did God answer the cry of the Anawim?**
God came to be with them in person.
- 3. Who is "God in person" and what does his name mean?**
Jesus is "God with us" ("Immanuel" in Hebrew).
"Jesus" means "the one who saves" ("Joshua" in Hebrew or "Jesus" in Greek).
- 4. Name some of the Anawim people who recognized Jesus as the one God sent, even while Jesus was still very young.**
Mary his mother and his stepfather Joseph (Luke 2)
Shepherds (Luke 2)
Anna and Simeon (Luke 2)
- 5. Who was the prophet who prepared the way for Jesus in the wilderness, and what did he do for Jesus?**
John the Baptist (also sometimes called John the Baptizer)
He baptized Jesus.
- 6. What did Satan do to Jesus immediately after Jesus was baptized?**
Satan tempted Jesus to help the people through force rather than love.
Satan tempted Jesus to buy their loyalty by doing magic for them.
Satan tempted Jesus to worship him instead of God.

Jesus chose to worship and trust God,
and Jesus chose to love the people as their friend and servant
rather than their king.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 10 -
God's Surprise

Name _____

1. Who were "the Anawim" and what did they do?.
2. How did God answer the cry of the Anawim?
3. Who is "God in person" and what does his name mean?
4. Name some of the Anawim people who recognized Jesus as the one God sent, even while Jesus was still very young.
5. Who was the prophet who prepared the way for Jesus in the wilderness, and what did he do for Jesus?
6. What did Satan do to Jesus immediately after Jesus was baptized?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 11A

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 43. Highlight the last two sentences on the page as well as anything else you wish to emphasize. This is about the beginning of Jesus' work, and an overview of it. Do you think Jesus would have been more or less effective if he had lived in this television age? Why?

Day 2 Read *M&M* pages 44-45. Highlight the four lines that define what parables are. Jesus told parables, and he lived like a parable, with unlimited love showing the unexpected, upside-down nature of God's merciful reign. Does the church as you are familiar with it live like this today?

Day 3 **Where is it written?** The nine parables that are described at the bottom of page 44 can be matched with the nine references from the gospel of Luke that are listed in the lower left corner. Do it! You may write the reference beneath each description.

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 46. Who is included in the embrace of God? Copy the answer given: _____, _____, _____.
How is it possible for God to love enemies?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 47. Jesus did an act of mercy on the Sabbath for a woman who had been bent over for 18 years. He healed her. What did Jesus' adversaries object to, and why?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Jesus said that God's reign was wildly inclusive. Which groups in our society do you think are most inclusive, and which are the most exclusive, and why? You might think about government and civic organizations, churches, schools, health care, media, businesses....

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 11A - Manna and Mercy for All

- 1. In the first part of his ministry, what did Jesus do as he went from town to town?**

Taught and preached

Healed diseases and liberated from demons

Gathered a community of disciples

"He brought the good news of the reign of God!"

- 2. What is a parable and how does it work?**

A kind of story Jesus told

which enters the ears of the listeners and surprises them with the crazy, upside-down nature of God's reign.

- 3. Name a few of the parables.**

There are more than 25 of them!

- 4. According to Jesus, who is welcome in the reign of God?**

Who is NOT welcome?!

"Everybody, absolutely everybody is included in the embrace of God."

- 5. Whom do PEACEMAKERS and IMITATORS OF GOD (God's sons and daughters) even love?**

Their enemies

- 6. Is there ever a time when it's wrong to show mercy?**

No, never.

Mercy is appropriate even for enemies.

Even on the Sabbath. (That makes it a beautiful day of friendship.)

Even for women, men, old, young, insiders, outsiders, everyone.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 11A -
Manna and Mercy for All

Name _____

1. In the first part of his ministry, what did Jesus do as he went from town to town?
2. What is a parable and how does it work?
3. Name a few of the parables.
4. According to Jesus, who is welcome in the reign of God?
5. Who do PEACEMAKERS and IMITATORS OF GOD (God's sons and daughters) even love?
6. Is there ever a time when it's wrong to show mercy?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 11B

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 48. Jesus came to restore manna society (highlight that sentence in your book). Jesus fed 5000 people with bread and fish. What about this miracle reminds you of the original story of manna in the wilderness?

Day 2 Read *M&M* pages 48-49, the list with points marked by crosses. In terms of the world, you are among "the rich." How do you plan to respond when Jesus tries to teach you to do something like sell your possessions and give to the poor?

Day 3 Read *M&M* pages 49 (bottom half)-50 (top half). Maybe you sang the kids' song in Sunday School, "Zacchaeus was a wee little man." In verse 1, the "wee little man" climbs a tree. In verse 2, Jesus tells him, "I'm going to your house today." What is the rest of the story, the point of the story, that's not included in the song? (Challenge: Write another verse!)

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 50 (bottom half). The Lord's Prayer begins, "Our Abba in heaven...." "Abba" is an intimate word for God, something like "daddy" or "papa." How intimate is the Lord's Prayer for you? Do you feel close to God when you pray it? Which part of it means the most to you?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 51. Highlight "Their presence and the voice of Yahweh affirmed the path Jesus had chosen—the way of manna and mercy for all, the way of the suffering servant." What kind of savior do you wish Jesus was?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Talk about your charitable giving. (It's one way we "share our manna.") What good organizations and causes do you support with gifts of money? Why are these organizations and causes important to you? What important work do they do that you believe in? How do you decide how much to give?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 11B - Manna and Mercy for All

1. **Tell about Jesus feeding the 5000. What does that have to do with "manna and mercy"?**

Five thousand men and their families who had gone to hear Jesus were stuck without food at the end of the day. Jesus took a boy's small lunch (five loaves and two fish), blessed God, and handed the food around. There was enough for all, with some left over!

It was a manna-type miracle because just like in the old days in the wilderness, the food came from God; people shared; and everyone had enough.

2. **Tell the story of Zacchaeus. What does that have to do with "manna and mercy"?**

Jesus went home for supper with a short, hated man, a tax collector, he found in a tree. In response, the man, whose name was Zacchaeus, repented of cheating others and began to return his manna to the poor. Jesus called this his "salvation."

3. **What does the Lord's Prayer have to do with "manna and mercy"?**

Jesus taught his disciples to speak to God intimately and trustingly (as ABBA or "daddy"). He taught them to ask for what God wants most to give the world: abundant bread and abundant mercy for all. ("Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us as we forgive others.")

4. **What was the Transfiguration of Jesus and what did it have to do with "manna and mercy"?**

When Jesus went up a mountain to pray, his face glowed with God's glory and Moses and Elijah came to visit with him. Peter, James, and John were there. God's voice from the cloud affirmed him and the path Jesus had chosen—the way of manna and mercy for all, the way of the suffering servant. Afterwards, Jesus headed to Jerusalem, where he would die as a prophet.

5. **How did Jesus teach throughout his ministry that ALL (rich and poor, worthy and unworthy) are invited into the manna society?**

- He talked to the rich, urging them to sell their possessions and give alms and encouraging them to invite the poor to their meals.
- He told stories about the foolishness of manna hoarding.
- He taught his family of disciples to trust the Creator for daily bread.
- He ate at meals with rich and poor together. He gave meals for the poor and hungry and sinners and outcasts.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 11B -
Manna and Mercy for All

Name _____

1. Tell about Jesus feeding the 5000. What does that have to do with "manna and mercy"?
2. Tell the story of Zacchaeus. What does that have to do with "manna and mercy"?
3. What does the Lord's Prayer have to do with "manna and mercy"?
4. What was the Transfiguration of Jesus and what did it have to do with "manna and mercy"?
5. How did Jesus teach throughout his ministry that ALL (rich and poor, worthy and unworthy) are invited into the manna society?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 12

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* pages 52-53. There is a point-counterpoint pattern presented here of who was blind to the ways of God, and who could see. The disciples of Jesus—were they blind, or could they see God's way (underline the answer)? The man in love with his manna pile—blind, or ready to go God's way? The blind beggar healed by Jesus—blind, or seeing God's reign? The people in the city of Jerusalem who welcomed Jesus as a king—blind, or seeing what God was up to? The big deals determined to get rid of him—blind, or seeing God in Jesus? How about you most of the time—blind to what God is doing, or able to see God at work in your world?

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 54, a description of the day Christians call "Maundy Thursday." The date of Maundy Thursday this year? _____ According to *M&M* what does it mean to "do this in memory of me"?

Day 3 Read *M&M* page 55. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane; Jesus betrayed, arrested, on trial, and condemned. The world view of the big deals was trying with violence to stamp out Jesus' world view. Can violence or torture ever be used to support a world view like Jesus'?

Day 4 Read *M&M* page 56. These are the events of Good Friday, observed what date this year? _____ Was God the Father (called Abba and Yahweh Sabaoth in this book) glad that Jesus died?

Day 5 Read *M&M* page 57. Who seemed to be the winners when Jesus died?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What is your understanding of why Jesus died on the cross? What was the meaning of his death?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 12 - Jerusalem

- 1. Why did Jesus have to come to Jerusalem?**
For a final confrontation with the big deals.
- 2. How did the disciples feel about the big deals?**
They wanted to BE big deals.
- 3. How did many of the poor people feel about Jesus?**
They hoped he would be their king.
- 4. Why were the big deals afraid of Jesus?**
They thought that either he would succeed in establishing a society based on his ideas, or he would bring the entire nation to ruin.
- 5. What did Jesus do when he "cleansed" the temple?**
He drove out the business people selling things.
- 6. What did Jesus do with his disciples on Thursday evening (Maundy Thursday)?**
He shared a special meal of bread and wine with them. It was given to help them incorporate his life of manna and mercy.
- 7. What did Jesus decide when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane?**
To follow the way of suffering love
- 8. How did Jesus end up crucified and dying on a cross?**
The big deal leaders of religion and politics decided that he would be silenced if they executed him, and so they did.
- 9. How did Jesus handle his death?**
He continued his practice of mercy for all and manna for all.
He forgave his killers. He promised paradise to a criminal. He committed his spirit to God.
- 10. Where was God in all this?**
God was with Jesus, bearing the pain of the world together.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 12 -
Jerusalem

Name _____

1. Why did Jesus have to come to Jerusalem?
2. How did the disciples feel about the big deals?
3. How did many of the poor people feel about Jesus?
4. Why were the big deals afraid of Jesus?
5. What did Jesus do when he "cleansed" the temple?
6. What did Jesus do with his disciples on Thursday evening (Maundy Thursday)?
7. What did Jesus decide when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane?
8. How did Jesus end up crucified and dying on a cross?
9. How did Jesus handle his death?
10. Where was God in all this?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 13

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

- Day 1** Read **M&M pages 58-59**. This is about Jesus' resurrection. What does "resurrection" mean? _____
Highlight the whole first paragraph, and then highlight the first sentence in every paragraph. What were some of the people, things, and/ or actions the resurrected Jesus used to meet and teach his disciples?
- Day 2** Read **M&M pages 60-61**, This is about Pentecost and its power. What happened on Pentecost? Fill in the blanks: AND _____
_____. WITH THE _____. Highlight the first paragraph on page 61, which tells the results of Pentecost.
- Day 3** Read **M&M pages 62-63**. This is about how Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians became one church community rather than two. What is your answer to the question at the bottom of page 63? How can it happen?
- Day 4** Read **M&M pages 64-66**. This is about 9 ways the partner people lived in **CONTRAST** to the culture around them, lived as a **COUNTERCULTURE**, and how they were persecuted by the big deals for their non-conforming ways. Many (or most, or all) of these "Christian counterculture" ways are still uncommon in our society. Which two do you think God's partner people nowadays should emphasize, and why?
- Day 5** Read in the Bible **1 Peter 2:9-10**. Highlight it in your Bible, and memorize at least verse 9. Do you think it is a privilege to be a Christian?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Do Christian beliefs and churches contribute more to unity in society, or disunity? How do you feel about this?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Chapter 13-A Risen Jesus, a Risen People

- 1. What was God saying by raising Jesus from death to new life?**
God was saying YES to Jesus and to Jesus' way of living and dying.
God was saying YES to Jesus' life of mercy for all and manna for all.
- 2. What people, things, and actions did the resurrected Jesus use to meet and teach the disciples?**
An angel told the women that the tomb was empty and that Jesus was risen.
The first human messengers were the women. Then the risen Jesus met with his disciples himself. He ate with them. He opened the scriptures to them.
He gave them a mission.
- 3. How did Jesus' followers get power to live and work for God?**
God filled them with the Holy Spirit, and they were baptized.
- 4. What liberating insight did the Holy Spirit give the first churches so that people who were different could live together as one?**
The Jewish Christians came to understand that Gentile Christians could be welcomed into the family of manna people without ever practicing Jewish cultural ways. Their oneness was in Christ and Christ alone.
- 5. What were some of the CONTRASTING, COUNTERCULTURAL ways the Christian community practiced?**
 - 1. "LIVING FOR THE WHOLE" or LOVE**—They gathered as equals, everyone using their talents for building up the whole group.
 - 2. LEADERS** were people who had the gifts the group needed, and they could be leaders regardless of their social status or gender.
 - 3. MORALITY AND SIMPLICITY**—Christians did not take part in the excesses of the Roman culture they lived in.
 - 4. MINISTRY OF HEALING**
 - 5. NON-VIOLENCE and LOVE OF ENEMIES**
 - 6. GATHERING FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY**, whether Christian or not.
 - 7. HIGH SEXUAL STANDARDS**—They treated women with dignity and marriage with respect and commitment.
 - 8. CELEBRATING GOD IN THE FLESH**—They did not see the body as evil; they saw creation as very good and believed God met them in physical ways such as water (baptism), bread and wine.
 - 9. CELEBRATING THE PROMISE OF RESURRECTION**—They did not believe that death would have the last word.

Confirmation - Living Faith
Key Ideas in Chapter 13 -
A Risen Jesus, a Risen People

Name _____

1. What was God saying by raising Jesus from death to new life?
2. What people, things, and actions did the resurrected Jesus use to meet and teach the disciples?
3. How did Jesus' followers get power to live and work for God?
4. What liberating insight did the Holy Spirit give the first churches so that people who were different could live together as one?
5. What were some of the **CONTRASTING, COUNTERCULTURAL** ways the Christian community practiced?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 14

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

Day 1 Read *M&M* page 67. In this chapter of *Manna and Mercy* we learn how the partner people almost lost some of their edge through ACCOMMODATION. Find the definition on page 67 and highlight it. Who was Paul and why did the Holy Spirit send him out?

Day 2 Read *M&M* page 67 again. Also read in the Bible 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 17-34. An example of ACCOMMODATION is what happened in the church in Corinth (in Greece). At the Lord's Supper, the rich ate all the rich food they brought, and the poor did not have enough. It would be like a church potluck where you could eat only what your family brought (bummer!). Paul says that kind of sharing is inadequate among Christians. Why?

Day 3 Read *M&M* pages 68-69. The next example is how the churches RESISTED accommodation, when those with more than enough manna/money sent support to those who did not have enough. The offerings we give at church—how do they get used? How should they?

Day 4 Read *M&M* pages 69-70. Highlight the last two sentences on page 69 and the last paragraph on page 70. The seven points on the top of page 70 describe worship among the partner people following the way of Jesus. How is our worship similar to and different from what is described here?

Day 5 Read in the Bible Romans chapter 16. How many people does Paul mention by name, his partners in God's work?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: Why should Christians be concerned about world hunger? What are the best ways to help? Do you see how Holy Communion might be connected with Christians trying feed hungry people?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Ch. 14-The Danger of Pharaoh's-Egypt Way

1. Who was Paul? When and where did he live and work?

A Jewish rabbi (teacher) who followed Jesus—

an "apostle" (someone "sent out") by the Holy Spirit

to challenge the partner people to live as God's contrast society.

He worked in Palestine, Turkey, Greece, and Rome, during the first century.

About half the books in the New Testament are connected to Paul.

2. What is ACCOMMODATION?

When the community of faith gradually adopts the ways of Pharaoh's-Egypt world. It's the "inside threat" to living with manna for all and mercy for all.

3. Give an example of accommodation that Paul challenged.

The Lord's Supper was celebrated "separate and unequal" in Corinth, Greece.

The rich and the poor did not live on equal terms in the church there. Paul told them to "discern" or recognize the body of Christ as being not just in the bread of the Lord's Supper, but also in the other believers. If they did that, they would know they had to care for one another and share with each other.

4. Give another example of accommodation that Paul challenged.

The Christians in Palestine (mostly Jewish) did not have enough to eat because of a famine. At the same time the Christians in Asia Minor (Turkey) and Macedonia (Greece) had more than enough. Paul challenged the Gentile communities to share their excess manna. They did, and Paul personally collected it and delivered it to the community in Jerusalem.

5. How did Christian communities worship in those days?

GATHERING. They came together weekly on the first day of the week.

WORD. They listened to the Hebrew scriptures, stories about Jesus, sayings of Jesus, and writings of the apostles, and were helped to think about how to follow them. They prayed for the needs of the whole world.

MEAL. They brought their gifts of food and drink to the table. These were shared in a meal of thanks to God ("Eucharist" means "thanksgiving").

SENDING. They took the bread and wine to those who were absent because of illness, and they gave the rest of the gifts to any who were in need, both inside and outside the community of faith.

6. How did Christian communities grow in those days?

The Holy Spirit empowered apostles, evangelists, missionaries, and other believers to witness through their lives and their words, and to baptize.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Key Ideas in Ch. 14-The Danger of Pharaoh's-Egypt Way

1. Who was Paul? When and where did he live and work?
2. What is ACCOMMODATION?
3. Give an example of accommodation that Paul challenged.
4. Give another example of accommodation that Paul challenged.
5. How did Christian communities worship in those days?
6. How did Christian communities grow in those days?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 15

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

- Day 1** Read *M&M* page 71. Highlight either the second or the third paragraph, whichever one you prefer. "Koinonia" is a Greek word that means "sharing in something," "community," or "fellowship." What do you think it could mean to "have koinonia" or be "united in love" with the whole planet, or even the universe, because of Christ?
- Day 2** Look at *M&M* page 71 again. Then read in the Bible any one of the four passages illustrated at the bottom of the page. Which passage did you read? Try to re-state its idea here, in your own words:
- Day 3** Read *M&M* page 72. Highlight the confession of faith, "Jesus is Lord." The first Christians were persecuted for their faith in Jesus as Lord. Around the world today, some Christians still are persecuted. Do you experience persecution, or prejudice, from others because of your faith? Do you try to hold your faith where others can see it, or hide it? Why?
- Day 4** Read *M&M* pages 73-74. Highlight the last sentence on page 74. These two pages are about the last book in the Bible, the book of Revelation. Before reading *M&M*, did you ever try to read Revelation? or hear an explanation of what it was about? According to *Manna & Mercy*, what IS it about?
- Day 5** Read in the Bible Revelation chapters 4 and 5. What do you like best about this picture of cosmic koinonia?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What do you know about the book of Revelation, and what do you think about it?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Ch. 15-The Risen People Share God's Dream

1. What is "koinonia"?

New Testament Greek word for "community," "fellowship," or "sharing in something." The term that describes the special friendship Christians share with one another and with God as a gift of Christ.

2. What is "cosmic koinonia"?

God's dream for the entire universe, when it is mended through Jesus Christ. "The new reality where everything in all creation is reconciled—plants and animals, earth and water and sky, planets and stars living together as one universal household united in love."

3. What conflict did emperor worship present to Christian believers?

Christians confessed Jesus as Lord. The big deals of the Roman empire expected people to worship Caesar (the emperor) as Lord. Rome viewed the Christian confession as subversive and dangerous to society. Christians who followed their consciences and refused to worship the emperor were subject to persecution and death.

4. How did the book of Revelation help Christians caught in this conflict?

"Revelation" means a secret made known or a truth brought into the open. The "revelation" came in the form of visions from the Creator to John, a dreamer who was imprisoned on an island called Patmos. The visions were messages of amazing good news, words of hope to the oppressed believers.

5. What are some of the main themes of the book of Revelation?

Revelation said that even though Rome was strong, the truth was that its power would not last.

Revelation said that God had already won the victory in Christ, whose secret was the way of suffering love rather than violent power. "The Lamb who was slain has begun to reign."

Revelation said that even though Christians were suffering, the truth was that God was on their side, so they should keep the faith.

Revelation said that the future would turn out the way God had promised—the truth would be the reality of cosmic koinonia!

Revelation uses visions of angels, beasts, and battles to reach the final vision of a new heaven and new earth, a new city (called Jerusalem) where there is light and peace and the full presence of God, a river of life, and trees full of fruit whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Key Ideas in Ch. 15—The Risen People Share God's Dream

1. What is "koinonia"?
2. What is "cosmic koinonia"?
3. What conflict did emperor worship present to Christian believers?
4. How did the book of Revelation help Christians caught in this conflict?
5. What are some of the main themes of the book of Revelation?

Confirmation - Living Faith

Homework for Chapter 16

Name _____

If you spread your homework throughout the week, doing it can remind you to pray to God often. If you do all the homework at one time, you're invited to pray to God often anyhow!

- Day 1** Read *M&M* page 75. "Shalom" means "peace," but this is a very BIG idea of peace, as we have already seen in *M&M* (—review, for example, pages 9, 19, and 29, and the biblical references on pages 6, 27, and 29). Now at the end of our reading, what do you believe GOD means by "Shalom"?
- Day 2** Read *M&M* page 75 again. Highlight the end of the longer paragraph, "Refusing to give up...life and salvation" and then highlight the border of THE ORDER OF LIFE. Give one example of where The Order of Death is powerful in the world today. Then give one example of where you see The Order of Life at work!
- Day 3** Read *M&M* page 76 top. Highlight "a special people, a covenant people." Does this description of God's "special covenant people" remind you of your church? Why or why not?
- Day 4** Read *M&M* pages 76-77. Highlight the eight underlined announcements, "You are not alone" and so on. Which one of these is especially good news for you personally? Why?
- Day 5** Read in the Bible Ephesians 1:9-10 and Hosea 2:18. Highlight all these verses. What is your role or what is your place (as you understand it now) in this great picture of everything gathered together in safety in Christ?

(Over)

Ask a parent and report their response: What is God's purpose or vision for human beings and the whole creation?

Parent initial: *I have reviewed my confirmand's homework and talked through the discussion question. This assignment is completed to my satisfaction. _____*

Confirmation - Living Faith

Key Ideas in Ch. 16—God's Dream Will Come True

1. What is "shalom"?

Hebrew word for "peace." A big idea of peace—the mended universe, the entire cosmos living in harmony and unity and love in God's Order of Life

2. Compare THE ORDER OF DEATH	and	THE ORDER OF LIFE
alienation from God		reconciliation to God
big deals control little people		all are partners with God
manna hoarding		manna sharing
domination of creation		unity of all creation
excessive consumption		God's abundance for all
justice for some		God's mercy for all
blessing for the deserving		blessing for all
privilege for the few		one family in Christ
self-righteousness		forgiveness for sinners
religion benefits rich and powerful		good news for poor and powerless
trust in human power		trust in God's power
use others for your own advantage		love others for their good

3. What is the way out of THE ORDER OF DEATH, into LIFE?

The way is Jesus' death and resurrection, which becomes our way through baptism.

MEMORIZE WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN FOR DAILY LIVING?

It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.

(St. Paul writes in Romans 6:4: "Therefore we have been buried with Him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.")

4. Why is there joy when God gathers all things up in Christ (Eph. 1:9-10)?

You are not alone.

The Holy Spirit continues to create, heal, gather, mend, enlighten, unite.

God continues to act.

Everything and everyone has dignity.

Hope is certain

Grace abounds.

All are needed.

All are invited.

Confirmation - Living Faith

Name _____

Key Ideas in Ch. 16—God's Dream Will Come True

1. What is "shalom"?

2. Compare THE ORDER OF DEATH	and	THE ORDER OF LIFE
_____ from God		_____ to God
_____		all are partners with God
manna _____		manna _____
_____ of creation		_____ of all creation
excessive _____		God's _____ for all
justice for _____		God's mercy for _____
blessing for _____		blessing for _____
privilege for the few		_____ in Christ
self-righteousness		_____ for sinners
religion benefits rich and power _____		good news for poor and power _____
trust in _____ power		trust in _____ power
_____ others for _____ own advantage		_____ others for _____ good

3. What is the way out of THE ORDER OF DEATH, into LIFE?

MEMORIZE from Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*:
WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN FOR DAILY LIVING?
It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires,
should be drowned through daily repentance;
and that day after day a new self should arise
to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.
(St. Paul writes in Romans 6:4: "Therefore we have been buried with Him
by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead
by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.")

4. Why is there joy when God gathers all things up in Christ (Eph. 1:9-10)?