

## **Why I will remain a Lutheran Christian.” (1 Thessalonians 5:5)**

Hello! My name is Chloe Doherty and I am 14 years old. I have been here at Epiphany since I went into 6<sup>th</sup> grade which was around 2 or 3 years ago. I have made so many new friends over this time and I am very excited that I am able to be confirmed today. I have 2 sisters, Alice and Stella. They are truly my best friends, and I know they are super excited for me right now. My parents are Brittany and David Cliff. They have made such a great impact on my life and have helped me to discover many of my favorite moments. I also have my grandma and grandpa here who love and support me in everything. Some things I enjoy doing are practicing basketball with my best friend Alex, playing video games with my sisters and Dad, and baking alongside my Mom and Grandma. Additionally, I am learning French, where I'm finding joy and even fun as I learn all the new words and accents. Another activity I enjoy happens every Sunday night. On Sunday nights I bowl on a Youth Scholarship league with my Grandpa, best friend Isaac and his Dad, Mister Jimmy. Out of everything I find myself involved in, I most enjoy the camaraderie and joy of sports. I love to play basketball, and was honored to be chosen as Aragon Middle Schools 8<sup>th</sup> grade B team captain. In addition to basketball, I also love running track; my specialties are long jump and triple jump. Outside of school, I play piano and have recently tried to be proficient with the oboe (starting in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade). As I reflect on the many ways God blesses my life, I realize how very blessed I am to have so many friends, in and out of the church.

As I stand here today, I feel the need to be honest with what has happened to me. When I first arrived at Epiphany, I was a bit unclear about Who Jesus was in my life and how He really impacted me. I now realize that Jesus is super special and He is in everything! He is Someone I can talk to no matter where I am or what I'm doing. He has helped me in strengthening my beliefs and loving others. I am able to stand here today and be confirmed because I am certain that God led me to faith. I have learned through my confirmation experience that I can trust Him for anything and everything. He forgives me for all my sins and I know that He will always be there for me when I need Him. I can always find Him in the Bible and can experience His love, comfort and protection. Not only that, but I also know that God loves me and remains with me through everything and He is doing the same for everyone else, as well.

Baptism is a really amazing part of the Bible to me. It shows that God forgives us no matter what and that He believes in us and wants us to be able to make our way into his loving arms. This to me is a great symbol of the forgiveness and love that He shows and provides for us. We are taught that from the moment we take our first breath all the way until our

final one that He loves us more than anything and that He went to the cross with us in mind to save us and I believe that the act of Baptism greatly reveals this!

I am very excited to be able to start high school next year because of the many opportunities I will have to make new friends and grow in my faith. I look forward to the upcoming National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. I'm certain that it will be a great opportunity for me to grow in faith and meet new people. Locally, I will place my name as one of the readers in the church service. I also will continue learning piano, hoping to play during future worship services. One thing I know for certain is that I will definitely continue hanging out with all of my friends at Impact and Elevate youth events here at Epiphany. Personally, I look forward to reading my Bible as I know that it will help me grow in my ability to find God in every event and person. I am excited to be confirmed as I have come to realize what I am confirming...mainly that Jesus loves me and has rescued me from my sins. Knowing that, I will continue to come to services every Sunday and join in during Sunday school.

To conclude, thanks to Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa, My sisters and all those who walk with me every day showing me the love of Jesus. But, most of all thanks goes to God as I know that He will stand by my side through my life no matter what. Amen