

Confirmation 2019-20
General Information

Dear Confirmation Discerner,

Welcome to Confirmation at St. Paul's! To help you, we want to make sure you know EVERYTHING before making your commitment! If you have questions or concerns during the year, PLEASE let us know!

First, our vision of youth ministry, in brief, is that we want to create opportunities and a community for youth that will encourage and nurture them to participate in the life of the church beyond their tenure as a youth. With this, we looked at everything we do with youth as they transition from childhood to adulthood. We want to make sure that the Confirmation experience is unique compared to our other offerings but we don't want to make Confirmation and ONE-STOP-SHOP. In other words, Confirmation can't be a Formation, EYC, youth trip, and fellowship all in one. We still encourage you to participate in other facets of our youth ministry opportunities.

Second, we looked at the core understanding of Confirmation - Confirmation literally means "to strengthen" one's faith, idea of community, and even self identity. Third, Confirmation is a response to our Baptism. As part of the Anglican community and as Episcopalians, we believe in infant Baptism because we believe that our relationship and covenant with God is a communal one rather than being individual. That being said, we understand that we make a decision for Baptism (entrance into the Body of Christ and the community of believers) for those who are unable. Because of this, Confirmation is the opportunity for one who has already been Baptized to take time to discern what it means to be a part of the Christian community, their particular body of belief, and even their specific parish. We need to understand that everyone's walk with Christ is unique and that our experiences and revelations happen at different stages in life. Because of this, Confirmation at St. Paul's is available for any youth 8th grade and older. We need to understand that not everyone is ready to be Confirmed at the same time. Some may feel led at an older age - even adulthood. This is not a change logistically as much as a change in language. We had older youth in our classes last year and it worked out great; we just simply don't want to feel that youth should be pushed to make such an important decision at a particular time because that is when it is offered. Now, if you're a parent of an 8th grader that is ready and excited to be a part of the awesomeness of Confirmation, then this is not a change for you at all!

So what does Confirmation look like this year? Before we look at logistics, we need to understand that the Confirmation experience is a discernment process. We want to provide youth and adults the opportunity to experience different ministerial opportunities while they think about whether or not they want to be confirmed. This fall, is our "early discernment" time. During this time, we want our confirmation candidates to think about how they picture themselves in the community of St. Paul's. Is our church a part of their identity? Do they have personal connections? That being said, we will provide a few opportunities for youth to get

involved with other discerning youth. At this time, we want our candidates to think about who they want their mentor to be (more on this later).

Fall 2019

- Sunday Formation (Begins Sept 15)
- Commitment Form (Oct. 13)
- Rise Against Hunger (Oct. 27)
- Pilot Mtn. Eucharist Trip (Oct. 27 3:30-6:30)
- Clergy lunches (Sunday's on Oct. 20, 27 & Nov. 3)
- Blanket Outreach (Nov. 18)
- Form and Mentor deadline (Dec. 01)

Requirements of a confirmation candidate:

This fall, anyone beginning the process of discernment are considered confirmation candidates. If they fulfill the fall requirements and wish to continue the process, they then become confirmands. Below are the requirements:

EYC & Sunday formation:

Confirmation is about commitment, because of this, we are asking our candidates to participate in Sunday formation during their discernment. There are 14 Sundays of formation and EYC and we are requiring that candidates participate in at least 10 of these classes in order to participate in Confirmation classes in the Spring semester. Candidates must participate in at least 5 EYC's (Sunday's or Thursdays) and 5 Sunday Formation OR EYC's. Candidates will participate in the Sr. High class in the youth room during formation.

Clergy lunches:

We will have signups for candidates to meet with a priest in October or November after the 11am service. We will assign no more than 3 candidates at a time to have lunch with our clergy so that they can have a personal conversation about what Confirmation is. This is required to be in the spring Confirmation class.

Forms:

Advent 1, December 01, will be our deadline to have a mentor chosen and to turn in the form for Confirmation class.

Mentors:

Mentors are a great way for our confirmands to have a personal connection with their home church that is outside of their immediate family. Because of this intention, mentors have to be Episcopalian as this is an Episcopal confirmation experience. Mentors must also be a member of St. Paul's. If you have trouble finding a mentor, please contact Nick.

We encourage our youth to meet with their mentor at least once every two weeks while the confirmand is in Spring classes. For each class, the confirmand will have questions pertaining to that weeks lesson in which they are expected to go over with their mentor. These will not be turned in.

It is not a requirement for mentors to be in class with confirmands but they are are welcome to. If a mentor chooses to be present in the class, we ask that they take a step back in the classroom conversation allowing confirmands to engage.

Spring 2020:

Classes (Begin Jan. 12)

Lock-Out (Jan 24 6-11pm)

Spaghetti Dinner (March 15)

Annual Meeting (Feb. 2)

Special Wednesday Class (April 1)

Confirmation Sunday (April 26)

Requirements of a Confirmand:

Classes:

If a candidate has fulfilled the requirements from the Fall and has turned in their form by Advent I, then they will be able to participate in our Spring classes. These classes will begin on Jan. 13. We will have 10 classes on Sundays during the formation hour and a special meeting on **Wednesday, April 1** for a lesson and we expect confirmands to attend all classes. These classes will be led by the clergy and myself beginning in Colhoun A and moving to the Chapel after the Sunday of the Annual Meeting.

We understand that while Confirmation is a commitment, things happen where we can not make every class. **(Please see commitment letter for more information.)** Confirmands are allowed to miss up to three classes BUT must listen to the class lecture and turn in a one page reflection paper to Nick by the following Sunday missed. If you miss more than 3, the Confirmand will be asked to meet with the Rector.

Annual Meeting:

During our annual meeting, we do not have Sunday formation for Sr. High (including Confirmation class) but it is a part of the confirmation experience for our confirmands to attend this meeting with their mentors. The annual meeting expresses the true uniqueness of

our Episcopal heritage and we feel that this is a great way for confirmands to witness the structure of the church they are committing to. This is counted as a class.

Spaghetti Dinner:

Each year, the Confirmation class has a Spaghetti dinner early in the year to raise funds for the youth scholarship fund. This is one of the largest youth events and a great experience for the church to see our confirmands in action. This also provides a service opportunity with their mentors.

Holy Week:

During Holy week, we have many opportunities for worship. On Maundy Thursday, we have a service observing the last supper and the next Jesus was taken. On Good Friday, we have a two services observing the crucifixion of Christ. Confirmands are expected to come to one of these worship services.

Confirmation Sunday:

If a confirmand chooses to be confirmed, they will meet early on the Confirmation Sunday to learn the logistics of the service along with their mentors. We will provide a celebration after the service and invite the whole church to congratulate our newly confirmed!

That's it! Just kidding - I know it's a lot but we have months to accomplish our tasks. Remember, confirmation is a personal response to our communal Baptism. This means that, by being confirmed, you are dedicating your life to the church. There are expectations when doing so. Confirmation is not a means to an end but rather a public promise to participate in the life of the church. I hope you will take this process with great maturity and that, if you do decide to participate in Confirmation this year, it will be a great experience for you and we hope you can take the opportunity to witness how the Holy Spirit is working in you and your church community!

Blessings,



The Rev'd Nicholas M. VanHorn
Associate Rector & Dir. of Youth
St. Paul's Episcopal Church