

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Confirmation Journey  
2017-2019

My Faith, My Life



## Information:

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Check us out on:



**Confirmation room— on the top level of the building—watch for signs to be posted in the room if the location changes for a certain day**

**Confirmation mailbox—located on first floor by Fr. Bill's office, down the hallway from the main office**

**Confirmation board— located in the confirmation classroom on the top floor**



# My Faith, My Life

The journey you are about to embark on for the next two years will probably be filled with more questions than answers, and more seeking than finding; and that's okay! That is what this time in your faith life is all about; making sense of what you believe, asking questions, and wondering about God's place in your life. It's about taking an active role in looking at your own faith and then claiming it as uniquely your own.

Your confirmation class will provide a foundation of support, help and resources as you walk through your faith journey. Our meetings, activities and thoughtful discussions will help you discover your own strengths, questions and path as you find and build on your beliefs, discovering how your faith fits into and supports your day-to-day life.

Will it take time? Yes! Will it take work? Yes! Anything that is worthwhile takes time and work. As Jenifer Gamber says in the introduction to her book, "Being a follower of Jesus within a community of Christians promises everything material success cannot give— unconditional love, forgiveness, worth and purpose."

We will be using the book *My Faith, My Life* to learn all about the Christian faith you've been baptized into – and the Episcopal Church that offers you a spiritual home. With writing that's informative and never condescending, the book gives you all the basics you need to know to understand your faith – and claim it as your own. It covers scripture, church history, sacraments, the meaning of prayer and ministry in the lives of real teens today. It's a great book for your parents to read too, so leave it out at home in a place where they can have access to it!

With your community of fellow teens and guided by caring adults, you will explore:

Baptism– Starting at the beginning

The Bible

Knowing Our History

Faith: What Do We Believe

Worship

Sacraments

Spirituality

Local and Worldwide Church

What's Your Ministry

## Overview of the Journey

Confirmation is a process of faith formation leading to a young person's decision to affirm the vows made by his or her parents at baptism and to enter into the community of the church as adults. Confirmation is a voluntary program and is available for those who wish to learn more about their faith and their church. It is a time in which young people are able to explore their faith, their beliefs and the church community that surrounds them. At the end of the two year process, the young person will decide if they wish to affirm their faith. It is not simply a requirement or an accomplishment to be checked off one's list. It is an opportunity to deepen relationships; with God, with other members of the class, with their family, with the congregation and the wider church.

This does require a commitment on the part of the participants and their parents. This commitment is worth it. What could be more important than one exploring our relationship with God? The creation of an active faith that can endure a lifetime is well worth all the time invested.

There are several partners in this process; Karen Allison who is the confirmation guide, Sue Van Oss- Director of Christian Formation, Rev. Bill Van Oss- pastor, parents of the confirmands, members of the parish community who will share their faith journeys, mentors, and the Confirmands themselves. Expectations of each of these partners are taken seriously and are as follows:

### **EXPECTATIONS OF CONFIRMANDS:**

**WORSHIP:** Worshipping with the community is at the core of who we are and what we believe. Confirmands are expected to attend worship services at St. Paul's on a regular basis. As a way of reflecting on what has been seen, heard, felt and experienced and applying that to daily life, confirmands will be required to complete a total of 10 Worship Summary Sheets throughout the year. These summaries can be filled out by attending the 8 or 10am service on Sunday mornings, the 5:30pm Wednesday Service, or any additional seasonal Worship Services (Holy Week, Easter, Christmas, etc). The worship summary form can be found at [www.stpaulsfaithformation.org](http://www.stpaulsfaithformation.org) and extra copies are in the Confirmation mailbox. Forms can be filled out during the service or afterwards and can be turned in to the confirmation mailbox in the hallway on the first floor, or given to the confirmation teacher. They can also be filled out online; just make sure you hit "submit" at the end when you are filling it out. If you are acolyting during a service, feel free to bring your worship summary into church and leave it at your place before the service begins, and you can jot down notes during the service, or fill it in after the service.

**EDUCATION:** “Teaching” happens in all that we do, from service projects and worship, to having a meal together; but the main education component is the classes which are held on Wednesday nights; twice a month. Each one will focus on an important learning component, so youth are required to attend each of the 16 sessions. If you are unable to attend a session; you will be required to complete an online portion for the session you missed and submit it before the next session; so that you don’t get behind. The online work will be posted the day after the session is held. We have avoided scheduling classes on holidays, school breaks, etc so please put the session dates on your family schedules right away.

**SERVICE:** Jesus taught through example and spent the majority of His time meeting the real needs of others. The Christian life is a life of service. To understand fully that being a part of a Christian community means being of service is not just an expectation but an assumption. We are called to do as Jesus did. We know many of our teens already are of service to the larger community in many ways; and their experiences add much to the group. In order to experience how broad the scope of service is within our church community confirmants must engage in five different parish based service opportunities each year of the program. There will be several opportunities presented for the entire class to engage in throughout the year, as well as ways that individual students can be of service. Details and suggestions for service opportunities are listed separately.

**MENTOR:** A mentor is a mature, faithful Christian who can share his or her own faith journey with youth and is someone other than a parent with whom youth can share questions and struggles. We will work with each teen to choose an appropriate mentor for them. Our church has many mature and faithful adults but not all have a gift for sharing their faith journey with young people or the time to do so. We will ensure that all mentors comply with Safeguarding God’s Children policies and will give a specific description to all mentors so they know what their commitment will be.

**PRAYER:** A relationship with your friends can only be maintained if you communicate with them. A relationship with God is the same- communication is key. Prayer is communicating with God. During the year, different ways to pray with God will be explored and students will be encouraged to continue to develop their prayer life when, where and in what style they would like.

**FAITH FOLDS/CELEBRATION:** As a final preparation step, students will be required to create a faith fold (think science fair project) in which you will create a board that shows your personal beliefs. Each board will be unique, taking into account the passions and interests of each teen, and will include a variety of faith topics; their favorite service projects, Bible story or verse, people they have met, etc. You will work on this in class and at home; and present it at a special Faith Celebration before the Confirmation Service in the spring of 2019.

**EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS:**

- Support your child by attending worship regularly and making it a commitment to get her or him to class sessions.
- Read along in the My Faith, My Life book as your child is reading it and share insights, questions. Be in conversation with your child about topics being discussed in class and share with them your faith journey.
- Provide transportation and chaperoning as needed for service projects and special events.
- Pray for your son or daughter on a regular basis.

**EXPECTATIONS OF GUIDES/PARISH STAFF:**

- Guides will come to class prepared and start and end sessions on time.
- Guides/staff will pray for each young person.
- Guides/staff will treat each confirmand with respect, welcoming questions, thoughts, challenges and ideas.
- Guides/staff will be accommodating and compassionate, while maintaining high expectations and standards for behavior and participation.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARISH COMMUNITY:**

- Parishioners will share their faith stories with the confirmands when invited to during class times and serve as mentors.
- Parishioners will pray for the confirmands throughout their journey.
- Parishioners will welcome and actively engage the confirmands in the various service projects of the church.

## Confirmation Service Projects

Many teens already share in the life of the congregation in many ways. They are acolytes, KidsWord/faith formation helpers, festival helpers, Wednesday Church Night helpers, etc. Being of service to others is an important part of knowing what your faith is all about. As part of your confirmation process, you will be required to participate in at least five different parish based service opportunities throughout the year. Choosing different service opportunities will allow you to see the wide spectrum of parish life that could not happen without those who volunteer. Positions where teens are paid would not count as service unless you decide to donate your pay. Serving as an acolyte, for example, would count as one of the five service opportunities. Being a VBS leader or attending Hands Across Duluth will count as 2-3 of the five projects because of the longer length of commitment for these weeklong events.

Listed below are just some of the many opportunities to be of service. A more complete list will be handed out during the sessions, and as new opportunities arise, they will be emailed out. Be creative! How would you like to get involved at St. Paul's? Is there a talent or skill you have that you would like to share with the community? Would you like to add a new feature to our parish website or other social media? Gather your school singing group and perform for our senior citizens? Teach the younger kids a skill you have? Use your artistic talent to design a bulletin cover? Paint a mural in a classroom? Create a fundraising event? Have a clothing drive for teens in need? The sky is the limit, so don't be limited by the lists below; come up with your ideas of how you be of service in your parish and share your ideas with Karen or Sue.

Here are just some of the many service opportunities at St. Paul's:

### Events not on a specific day:

- Join the choir or choristers for a few weeks prior to a holiday like Christmas or Easter
- Play an instrument or sing a solo during one service
- Help parishioners in the fall or spring rake their leaves at their home
- Help prepare a meal for one of our weekly Wednesday community nights
- Help with an special worship Service
- Help with an GIFT Night on a Wednesday night
- Help with a Seasonal Festival
- Serve coffee hour on a certain Sunday
- Be an usher during a Sunday service
- Be a lector during the a Sunday service
- Help the altar guild keep the church beautiful
- Be a Christian Formation helper for a Sunday
- Twelve Basket collections— help collect and distribute items
- Giving Tree Program—make tags for the trees, sort gifts when the come in
- Help maintain the Celtic garden
- Help with rummage sale
- Help altar guild

### **Events on a specific day:**

- Vacation Bible School– help for a day or the whole week
- Pet Blessing October 8 at St. Paul's, help during the service or serve treats afterwards
- Fall Fest, October 26, help serve the dinner
- Pumpkin Carving, October 29– help set up and help younger kids carve pumpkins
- SOS Serving Others Sunday, November 5, 2017
- Night at Bethlehem Advent Festival December 3– help set up, run an activity booth
- Greening of the church, December 17
- Happy Birthday Jesus party, December 17 – help the little kids
- Christmas Pageant– December 24 help kids get into costumes 3:30-4:30pm
- Annual Meeting– January 28, 2018 help with childcare for kids whose parents go to the meeting
- Lent Festival February 11, 2018– help with activity booths
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner February 13, 2018 – help serve
- Stuff Easter egg– week of March 27, 2018
- Egg Hunt/Alleluia Festival-March 31 2018 help hide eggs and activity booths
- Easter Brunch–April 1, 2018 help set up for brunch, or clean up
- Rummage Sale– April 2018, help bring stuff into garage or help the day of the sale
- Fifth Wednesday Service projects– November 29, 2017, January 31, 2018

As other projects come up, you will receive information on them also!

Is there a service project you would like to create or take a lead on? Jot down your ideas here:



# Worship Summary

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today's sermon teaches me:

Who do I see that I know? Write at least one name from 3 of the 5 different generations:

(younger than you, teens/young adults, 20's-30's, parent age, older adults)

Don't know someone's name? Ask!

Who can I pray for today?

A song I liked today was:

Questions for Fr. Bill or Karen:

# Confirmation Service Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Type of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who participated in the event? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours was the event? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what you did:

What did you learn from the service project?

How was God honored in your service?

2. Type of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who participated in the event? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours was the event? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what you did:

What did you learn from the service project?

How was God honored in your service?

How was God honored in your service?

3. Type of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who participated in the event? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours was the event? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what you did:

What did you learn from the service project?

How was God honored in your service?

4. Type of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who participated in the event? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours was the event? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what you did:

What did you learn from the service project?

How was God honored in your service?

5. Type of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who participated in the event? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hours was the event? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what you did:

What did you learn from the service project?

How was God honored in your service?

## Schedule for 2017-2018

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Wednesday, September 13 | 6:30pm 1 <sup>st</sup> session with parents |
| 2. Wednesday, September 20 | 6:15pm session                              |
| 3. Wednesday, October 4    | 6:15pm session                              |
| 4. Wednesday, October 11   | 6:15pm session                              |
| 5. Wednesday, November 1   | 6:15pm session                              |
| 6. Wednesday, November 8   | 6:15pm session                              |
| Wednesday, November 29     | 6:30pm 5 <sup>th</sup> Wed. service project |
| 7. Wednesday, December 6   | 6:15pm session                              |
| 8. Wednesday, December 13  | 6:15pm session                              |
| 9. Wednesday, January 10   | 6:15pm session                              |
| 10. Wednesday, January 17  | 6:15pm session                              |
| Wednesday, January 31      | 6:30pm 5 <sup>th</sup> Wed. Service project |
| 11. Wednesday, February 7  | 6:15pm session                              |
| Wednesday, February 14     | Ash Wednesday                               |
| 12. Wednesday, February 28 | 6:15pm session                              |
| 13. Wednesday, March 7     | 6:15pm session                              |
| 14. Wednesday, March 14    | 6:15pm session                              |
| 15. Wednesday, April 11    | 6:15pm session                              |
| 16. Wednesday, April 18    | 6:15pm session                              |