

Confirmation 2019-2020

“Confirmation is an opportunity to respond to the grace of God available to us, as acknowledged in baptism, and to promise to live as a person of faith.”

-From, *Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means to United Methodists*

The goal of Confirmation class is to help students learn about Christian faith, the love of God, and what membership in the Church means. This is a time for students to begin to make their faith their own, and to take on for themselves the promises made at their baptism.

Important information for Students and Families

Attendance Policy

Class meets on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 in room 202. Class will begin on time, so please be prompt. We pack a lot into this hour and missing the beginning will be detrimental to the experience of both the students arriving late and the students whose class time is disrupted by those arriving late.

This class will meet 31 times. Each student is allowed 5 absences.

Field Trips

This year we will have three field trips

Field trips happen outside of regular class hours, usually beginning immediately after a class meeting. If students have scheduling conflicts with the field trips please contact Ahnna Lise Stevens-Jennings as early as possible.

The field trips are a very important part of the students' confirmation experience. Attending all three of them is important and should be the goal, but we understand that this may put a burden onto a family with a tight Sunday schedule. Please place the trips on your calendar early and identify conflicts as soon as possible.

Worship Attendance Requirements

Each student is required to attend worship **15 times** between September 8th and May 24th.

There are multiple ways to provide evidence of the students' worship attendance. At least one of them is required for each time a student attends worship.

Option one: A Worship Summary and a Bulletin. Worship Summary worksheets consist of a series of questions that the students must answer about the worship service. They can turn them in with a bulletin from the service (if applicable) throughout the year as they are completed. We will periodically send home a progress note letting you know how many have been turned in. Worship Summaries do not have to be exclusively completed about services held here at Aldersgate. Any church service of any Christian denomination can count towards the total as long as a worship summary and bulletin are provided. If the service does not provide a bulletin, then the students may just turn in a worship summary.

Option two: Acolyting: Students may choose to acolyte instead of filling out worship summaries. If they choose this option instead of turning in a worship summary, they will simply turn in the bulletin from

the service with a note from a parent or guardian letting us know that the student was an acolyte in the service. This option is only available for students who are acolyting here at Aldersgate for the 8:30 or 11:00 o'clock services on Sunday mornings.

If a student is interested in acolyting, please contact Elaine Woods at elaine@aldersgate.net. Acolyte training for new acolytes or returning acolytes who want a refresher will be on September 29th following the 11:00 o'clock service in the Sanctuary.

An acolyte recognition and commissioning ceremony will be held on October 20th at the 11:00 o'clock service for returning and new acolytes to prepare and thank them for their service to Aldersgate.

Option three: Ushering or Scripture Reading: Students may choose to serve as an usher or a lay reader instead of filling out worship summaries. If they choose this option instead of turning in a worship summary, they will simply turn in the bulletin from the service with a note from a parent or guardian letting us know that the student was an usher or reader in that service. This option is available for students ushering or reading scripture here at Aldersgate at any of our worship services, except the 9:30 service when we will be in class.

If a student is interested in ushering, please contact Paul Amos at pamos703@gmail.com. If they are interested in being a lay reader, please contact Deborah Jones at djones@aldersgate.net.

Retreat Attendance is Mandatory

One of the most important aspects of our year of confirmation is the retreat. It is the place where all of the studying, learning, preparing and decision making come together. Therefore, attendance is mandatory for all students. The retreat will be held February 20 through the 22nd. It will be held here at Aldersgate.

The Lock-In

September 27-28 we will have a Lock-In here at Aldersgate. This will be an opportunity for the students to get to know one another and their leaders. This event falls outside of our regularly scheduled classes, but it is no less important than all of our other meetings.

Class Behavior

We have worked hard to create a class that is fun, interactive and transformative. We need the help of parents to convey to students that this is not an experience to be taken lightly. This is a class and we ask that students respect each other, volunteer leaders, and teachers by acting accordingly. We will strive to create the best environment and learning opportunities for the students, and we need parents and students to help us to maintain that environment with respectful behavior.

Parent Participation

Parents have a key role in the confirmation process. Teachers, Pastors, and parents have to work as a team to help students engage their faith in new ways through this class. That means this is not just a commitment for your student, but it is also one for you. We want the parents of confirmands to know each other and to know us, the teachers, as well so that we can all support each other. Throughout the year we will have parent meetings to give you important information, and we will have parent get together to help us form community and care well for one another. Parents are encouraged to drop by

the class for a week or two (and maybe even bring some treats if you feel led) and see what the class is all about.

We also need you all to sign up to drive students to the field trips, to chaperone the field trips, and to chaperone the Lock-In and the Retreat. Per our child protection policy, we need at least two unrelated adults in the room with students at all times. This will mean that we need extra hands from time to time. We will ask you to sign up to drive and chaperone at our first parent meetings.

Writing a Credo

Towards the end of this class, students will write a personal statement of faith, also known as a credo. Students will be invited to share their credo with the class during some of our last meetings.

Parents and other family members will be important sources of guidance for students in the process. A guidebook will be provided to students and families to help with this process.

Service Projects

We will be offering several service opportunities as a part of this class. More details to follow.

Art Projects

Artwork has been a means of faith expression for centuries. We think that tradition has a lot of value and we would like to keep it up. We are looking for opportunities for students to participate in art projects for use in worship or in our church's informal gallery space through the year, especially around Easter and Pentecost. We will give you more information on what that looks like as the year goes on.

Pentecost Weekend

May 30th and 31st will be Pentecost weekend this year. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. Not just Aldersgate, but the whole Christian Church around the world. Christians mark Pentecost as the day that we celebrate the gifting of the Holy Spirit to creation in a new way. You can read the story in the book of Acts, but suffice it to say, Pentecost is the perfect day to celebrate confirmation. On this weekend, students will have an opportunity to participate in worship in various ways and to take the vows of confirmation. Those vows can be found in the United Methodist Hymnal or online.

On May 30th we will have a banquet in honor of the students and families as they come to the end of the confirmation process and start their journey into youth group and what it looks like for students to truly take on their faith as their own.

Summer Mission Trips

Our Summer mission opportunities are a great way for a freshly confirmed student to start living out their faith in new and exciting ways. We have two different trips available to students; Jeremiah Project and the Highland Support Project.

Jeremiah Project is a work camp for rising 7th through rising 9th grade students. We do home repair, upkeep, and maintenance for families in need in either Winchester, Virginia or Romney, West Virginia. This trip is geared towards middle school and rising middle school students and it offers a great balance of hard work and hard play all wrapped in faith and community. We'll need one adult for 5 students of each gender for this trip, but otherwise students can go on their own without a family member.

Highland Support Project is a week long mission trip to Ft. Apache, Arizona. On this trip we have two main areas of focus; one is on leading a camp for children on the reservation, the other is working on a large community farm called The People's Farm (Ndee Bikiyaa in the Apache language). Our youngest member of the team from Aldersgate last year was six years old, and our oldest was in his nineties. Truly all are welcome. For this trip, students who are not yet in High School will need to go with at least one adult from their family.

More information about both trips will come to you throughout the year.

Cost of the Class

Participation in Confirmation class costs \$150.00 per student. This covers supplies for the class, the retreat, the lock-in, and field trips.

Permission Form

Permission forms must be filled out by parents/guardians and returned to Ahnna Lise Stevens-Jennings by September 27th. They are available on the Aldersgate.net and at the parent meetings.

How to contact us

Deborah Jones, Molly Johnson and Ahnna Lise Stevens-Jennings will be teaching this class.

Ahnna Lise is the Director of Youth Ministries and can be reached at Aldersgate by phone at 703-765-6555 extension 615, by email at ahnna@aldersgate.net or youth@aldersgate.net and in her office in room 140 Monday- Thursday from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm.

Molly Can be reached by email at txmollina@gmail.com

Deborah can be reached by email at djones@aldersgate.net

What we will Cover In Class:

- +The Bible
- +Church History
- +Methodist History
- +Methodist Doctrine
- +Methodist Polity
- +The Church year and liturgy
- +The Vows of membership
- +The Creeds

Daily Class Schedule:

- Check-in: Signs of God's presence
- Prayer Practice
- Verse of the Day
- Liturgical Calendar
- VIP (Historical Figure that we will study that day)
- Lesson
- Benediction

Calendar:

September:

- 8: Kick off Sunday. First Week of Class. Parent Orientation following class at 10:30
- 11: Wednesday: Parent Orientation for any families that miss Sunday's Orientation
- 15: Lesson: What does it mean to be a Christian?
- 22: Lesson: Bible 1. Introduction
- 27-28: Lock-In. Lesson: Bible 2. Old Testament
- 29: Lesson: Bible 3. Old Testament

October:

- 6: Lesson: Bible 4. New Testament. Field Trip: Bible Museum.
- 13: Lesson: Bible 5. New Testament.
- 20: Lesson: Church History 1. History of the Early Church
- 27: Lesson: Church History 2. The Church in the Middle Ages

November:

- 3: No meetings; Four Day Weekend
- 10: Lesson: A Sanctuary Study. Field Trip: The Basilica
- 17: Lesson: Church History 3. The Reformation
- 24: Lesson: Church History 4. The Great Awakening

December:

- 1: No meetings; Thanksgiving Holiday
- 8: Lesson: Methodist History
- 15: Lesson: Methodist Doctrine
- 22: No meetings; Christmas
- 29: No meetings; New Years

January:

- 5: Lesson: Methodist Doctrine
- 12: Lesson: Methodist Music
- 19: Lesson: Methodist Polity
- 26: No Meetings; Four Day Weekend

February:

- 2: Lesson: What we do in worship
- 9: Lesson: Sacraments
- 16: Lesson: Vows of Membership
- 21-23: Confirmation Retreat; Discovery Weekend

March:

- 1: Lesson: Creed 1. God
- 8: Lesson: Creed 2. Jesus
- 15: Lesson: Creed 3. Holy Spirit
- 22: Lesson: Methodist History. Field Trip: Lovely Lane
- 29: Lesson: Creed 4. Church

April:

5: No meetings; Palm Sunday

12: No meetings; Easter

19: Lesson: Creed 5. Kingdom of God

26: Lesson: Wesleyan Love Feast, Sharing our Creeds

May:

3: Lesson: Pentecost Preparation 1

10: Lesson: Pentecost Preparation 2

17: Lesson: Pentecost Preparation 3

24: No Meetings: Memorial Day

30: Confirmation Banquet. Pentecost and Confirmation Service at 5:30

31: Pentecost and Confirmation Services at 8:30, 9:30, and 11:00

June

7: No class. Welcome to Methodist Youth Fellowship Party

13-20: Potential Dates for Ft. Apache mission trip

July

5: Game Night

19-25: Potential dates for Jeremiah Project Mission Trip