St. Mark’s Confirmation

2019-2020

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Dear Confrmands and Parents:

As we embark on the confirmation year, this is the time when we start to begin our journeys into adulthood. People start having relationships and begin searching for identities. Social groups form and fall apart. Social media starts to play more and more of a role in telling us what we need to be, do, or have in order to be “ok”.

Walking through life (school usually) we can sometimes struggle to feel that we are “good enough”. Self-esteem and self-confidence begin to play a larger and larger role in our lives. We may experience what it is like to feel judged by other people and God forbid judge others, or even ourselves!

My hope is that the confirmation program this year will help bring the idea (and reality) that there is something more to life than the above experience. George talks about this idea of “True North” and what is it we are really here on do this Earth? How do we know what it is we really want, and how does living with connection to a Higher Creative Power (God) allow us to live life with more meaning, trust, and beauty?

Looking forward to the confirmation Year

-Justin
St. Mark’s Confirmation Schedule for 2019-2020

**Sunday, September 15, 12:00 pm** Confirmation Lunch Meeting with Parents and Youth

**Thursday, October 3, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Kick-Off and Ice-Cream Social

**Sunday, October 13, 12:00 pm** Mentor Lunch

**Thursday, November 7, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Group, Parts 1 and 4 of Baptismal Covenant

  - Section 1- I believe in God- Creator of Heaven and Earth. Star Wars clip of Yoda explaining the force
  - Section 4- Prayer and the Bible (Word of God?) Apostles Teaching

**Thursday, December 5, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Group, Parts 2 and 7 of the Baptismal Covenant

  - Section 2- Belief in Jesus Christ and the Stories. (Christ Story from Dominic Crosson)
  - Section 7- Serving Christ in All Persons (Loving as Jesus Loved, self-emptying, protest, pacifism)

**Thursday, January 9, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Group, Parts 3 and 6 of the Baptismal Covenant

  - Section 3- Belief in the holy spirit (Soul), God is present for all Via the Soul.
  - Section 6- Good News of Christ, Life is a Big exercise in connecting to the Spirit/Soul/God

  Seeing God in the functioning of the physical body, in the makings of an atom

**Thursday, February 6, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Group, Part 5 of Baptismal Covenant

  - Section 5- Resisting Evil, Sins, Forgiveness, Repentance, Entering into intimacy and relationships consciously, greed

**Thursday, March 5, 7:00 pm** Confirmation Group, Part 8 of Baptismal Covenant

  - Section 8- Striving for Justice and Peace, Dignity, Social Justice Awareness, The Interrupters

**Wednesday, March 25, 5:00**, Instructed Seder Meal

**Thursday, April 9**, Agape Feast and Confirmation Retreat

**Sunday, April 26, 9:45 am** Confirmation with the Bishop

**Sunday, May 3**, Confirmation Reflections (all services)
The Baptismal Covenant

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. Celebrant:</th>
<th>Do you believe in God the Father?</th>
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<tr>
<td>People:</td>
<td>I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. Celebrant:</th>
<th>Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?</th>
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| People:       | I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
|               | He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.  
|               | He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.  
|               | He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.  
|               | He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
|               | He will come again to judge the living and the dead. |

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<th>3. Celebrant:</th>
<th>Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?</th>
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| People:       | I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
|               | the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
|               | the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. |

| 4. Celebrant: | Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
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<th>in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?</th>
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<tr>
<td>People:</td>
<td>I will, with God’s help.</td>
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| 5. Celebrant: | Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin,  
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<th>repent and return to the Lord?</th>
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<tr>
<td>People:</td>
<td>I will, with God’s help.</td>
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<th>6. Celebrant:</th>
<th>Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?</th>
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<tr>
<td>People:</td>
<td>I will, with God’s help.</td>
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<th>7. Celebrant:</th>
<th>Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?</th>
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<tr>
<td>People:</td>
<td>I will, with God's help.</td>
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| 8. Celebrant: | Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,  
|               | and respect the dignity of every human being? |
**What is a Mentor?**

A mentor is an adult who is a spiritual friend and advisor to a confirmand. It can be someone that you know from church, or not from church, an uncle, aunt, or cousin. Most importantly they are someone who is willing and able to talk to a youth about his or her experience of God.

**What are Mentors asked to do?**

Get to know their confirmand- their hopes and dreams, what they like and don’t like.

Meet at least 4 times during the confirmation year for 20 min to an hour

Share their own “God Journey” with the mentor.

Talk and reflect to the confirmand about what their “gifts” may be. What does the confirmand feel they are good at or tend towards and help develop that.

**Below is a suggested guide that we hope will encourage a respectful exchange of ideas:**

- Read together the Baptismal Covenant.
  - Discuss what it is and what you think it means.
  - Most importantly what are the questions that come up?
  - What parts of it do you like and maybe not so much relate to?

- Read the Gospel of Mark. Plan how to tackle your readings. Discuss the chapters when you get together. Consider the attached comments and questions.

**Important Dates for Mentors**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 13</td>
<td>Confirmand, Mentor, and Parent Lunch at 12:00 pm</td>
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<td>Apr. 9</td>
<td>Agape Meal and Maundy Thursday Service 6:00 pm</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Confirmation at St. Mark’s 10:30 am and 1:00 pm</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Confirmation Recognition Sunday 8:00 am, 9:15 am, 10:30 am and 1:00 pm</td>
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*Feel free to come up with some of your own suggestions.*

*Also, remember it is okay and encouraged to question, and it’s okay to have and express doubts. Episcopalians can work in gray areas!*
What does it mean to be Episcopalian?

So you’re Catholic?
Yes, and no. The Episcopal Church is catholic in the sense that we maintain the ancient structure, like the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do. While we uphold the continuity of tradition, the Episcopal Church is not part of the Roman Catholic Church. The Episcopal Church is also Protestant, a product of the English Reformation back in the 16th Century.

What do Anglicans stand for?
What is unique in Anglicanism is our source of authority. Roman Catholics find their authority in the tradition, in the pope whose office gives him the authority to speak for all members of the Roman church. Many Protestants would maintain that scripture alone can be our guide. Yet scriptural interpretations can change – at one time, for example, most Christian churches believed that slavery was a divinely sanctioned institution. To these two sources of authority, scripture and tradition, Anglicans add a third: human reason. Our ability to reason, the insights of science and psychology – these are brought into conversation with the other two, that God’s will may be discerned.

So where does the Episcopal church stand on the hot issues?
Any who can reason are free in this church to make up their own minds. Consequently members of the Episcopal Church find themselves passionately on all sides of any issue. The Episcopal Church decides issues slowly, always with room for dissension.

What does the Episcopal church believe about the Bible?
Quite simply, for Episcopalians, Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation. This means that God has been fully revealed in the words of the Bible. We cannot add doctrines or rules that are not supported by Scripture. However, this does not mean that the Bible is inerrant, that is, without error, needing no translation or interpretation. The Word of God speaks to each age with a different emphasis, not a different message. We are in the process of learning each day what that Word means to us in our time. All of us, using our reasoning powers to the best of our ability, are part of the journey of discerning and doing God’s will.

Can’t you be Christian without joining a church?
Certainly the beliefs of one’s heart matter more than fulfilling certain rituals. “I can pray just as well on the golf course,” a non-churchgoer will protest. True. The problem is, we rarely go to the golf course for the purpose of praying, nor are our souls transformed by the prayers we might offer there. Alone a believer can easily get lost, confusing one’s desires and thoughts for God’s. Alone it is easy to forget God’s presence or not recognize God. We grow in faith when we are challenged and supported by others trying to walk the same road. Yes, you can probably be a Christian without joining a church; it’s just twice as hard to do.