



St. Andrew's Youth Confirmation Calendar 2022

Confirmation is a significant sacramental rite in the Episcopal Church in which young adults are invited to make a mature profession of faith. It is profoundly important for young people's spiritual development. A pervasive message in our culture is that we are not enough—not strong or smart or pretty enough. Church is one of the only communities where our young people are reminded of their true identities as God's beloved children who belong without reservation or qualification. It is also one of the few places that will remind them they are called by God to a life bigger than consumerism, entertainment, or ambition, a life that is part of God's mission of mercy and justice in the world. Our confirmation experience has been created to provide a safe space where our youth can learn about God and the Church, are welcome to ask hard questions and wrestle with what they believe, and are invited to a deeper life of faith, compassion, and service. It will also be fun, as laughter and joy are important parts of all we do.

Important Dates

- Confirmands should check in with our teaching team and pick up their Confirmation materials on Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022, after worship, to make sure they have everything they need when our seven-week series of classes begins the following week.
- Confirmation classes will be held weekly after church, from 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., beginning Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, and continuing through Sunday, Nov. 6, 2022. There is no class on Oct. 23, the Sunday of Confirmation Retreat weekend. The final class on Nov. 6 will include walk-through for Confirmation Sunday. (If you want to be confirmed, but cannot attend the Sunday classes, please contact Martha Chaires at martha@standrewsgso.org.)
- Our Confirmation Retreat is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 21 – Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022. Please carve out this time as a gift to your child. Plan now for your child to attend.
- Confirmation will be held on the day of the Bishop's visitation, Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022.

Requirements

- All candidates for Confirmation must be baptized (canonical requirement).
- All candidates must complete 12 hours of service (Glory Ridge will satisfy the service requirement).

- All candidates must attend a minimum of eight worship services at St. Andrew's between now and Confirmation Sunday.
- Candidates must attend at least six confirmation classes, as well as the retreat.
- Candidates must choose a mentor and inform us of this mentor by June 19, 2022 (Father's Day), or ask to be paired with a mentor from the congregation.
- Candidates must read one of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.
- Candidates must meet individually with Rev. Ginny Inman.

Guide for Mentors and Confirmands

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is a spiritual partner in the confirmation process at St. Andrew's who is willing to share their lived story of faith and who is continuing to grow. In serving as a mentor, the main thing you offer is a listening ear and an interest in this person's questions and explorations. You don't have to have all the answers—the greatest gifts you can offer are your own authentic faith and your honest questions. The mentoring process deepens the confirmation process and provides a young person with a companion who will help them explore and claim their faith.

Mentor Requirements

A mentor must be a confirmed Episcopalian and an active member of a congregation. A mentor should not be a parent or grandparent of the candidate for confirmation or a clergy member.

Mentor Expectations (General)

- *Prayer*—Prayer is one of the things that sets us apart as a people of faith. Pray for and with your mentee.
- *Challenge*—Ask your mentee to share what they are learning, feel free to challenge them to ask deep questions and to reflect on what this means for their life.
- *Encourage*—Please encourage participation in the larger church life. If you are sitting next to your confirmand during worship and they are not singing the hymn or engaged in the service, encourage their participation. Plan a service project together. If there are points during confirmation when the rigor of the journey or their life gets overwhelming, support them.
- *Share*—Share with them where you have encounters with God, why you chose to confirm your baptismal vows or why you joined the church, and how you serve. Mentees desire consistent, real relationships with adults. Do not be afraid to truly engage. You may be surprised how they pray for, challenge, and encourage you.

- *Care*—Care for them. We all have various love languages by which we show those we care about that we care for them. Send them a letter or postcard; share a meal with them after worship on a Sunday. Call them or plan an event you can do together.

Mentor Expectations (Specific)

- We encourage mentors and confirmands to get together in person or virtually at least three times between now and Confirmation on Sunday Nov. 13, 2022.
- Attend a worship service with your mentee.
- Assist your mentee in preparation of their Statement of Faith.
- Please plan to be present on Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022, for the morning service of Confirmation with the Bishop and a reception to follow in the Parish Hall.
During the confirmation worship service, mentors will be asked to “present” the confirmands to the bishop. Inability to attend does not exclude you from being a mentor, but that information should be shared with confirmands as early as possible.
- Make sure your mentee knows how to contact you and that you are an available resource, friend, and cheerleader throughout this season (and hopefully beyond).

Expectations of Mentees

It is your responsibility, not your parents’, to contact an adult you know and ask that person to be your mentor or to ask Rev. Ginny or Martha Chaires to pair you with a mentor. Once your mentor accepts, arrange to meet in person with your mentor at least three times between now and Confirmation Sunday, with one of those meetings being a time to share and listen to each other’s spiritual stories. We hope this adult is someone with whom you can discuss matters of faith, school, ethics, and areas of shared interests.

Confirmation in the Episcopal Church

Confirmation is a sacrament, or a sacramental rite, in which the candidates “express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop” (BCP, p. 860). A sacrament is an outward, visible sign of an inward, spiritual grace (the God-given desire and the power to do God’s will). Episcopalians recognize seven sacraments, the two major ones being Holy Baptism and Eucharist. Individuals who were baptized at an early age are given the chance to make a mature public affirmation of their faith, recommit themselves to the responsibilities of their baptism, and receive laying on of hands by a bishop at confirmation (BCP p. 412). Youth who have not been baptized can still participate in our confirmation preparation program and be baptized and/or confirmed when the Bishop comes.

The Episcopal Church's theology of confirmation has continued to evolve along with its understanding of baptism. Confirmation is no longer seen as the completion of Christian initiation/membership, nor is confirmation a prerequisite for receiving communion. Baptism is now understood as full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's body the Church (BCP, p. 298). Accordingly, confirmation has been increasingly understood as an intentional and discerned public reaffirmation of the Christian faith and our baptismal promises. Confirmation is not graduation from faith formation, but rather marks the beginning of fuller participation in the mission and ministries of the church.

What is Confirmation?

To understand the importance of Confirmation, we have to first consider the promises of Baptism. At our baptism, each one of us is named before God and the congregation. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and we are marked as Christ's own, God's beloved, forever. We choose to be formed and transformed by Christian life and community by making the following promises at baptism:

The Baptismal Covenant

- 1) *Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
People I will, with God's help.
- 2) *Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
People I will, with God's help.
- 3) *Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
People I will, with God's help.
- 4) *Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
People I will, with God's help.
- 5) *Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
People I will, with God's help.

As Episcopalians, these are our core promises. They lie at the very heart of who we are as a people and who we believe God calls us to be in the world. If there is a membership criteria or bottom line, this is it.

1) **The participation promise:** Christians value community. This is the only way we can continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the only way we can be part of the breaking of bread and the prayers. This promise includes coming to church regularly, forming relationships with the people in our community, and supporting the life of the whole church community with our time, talent, and treasure just like the apostles did.

2) **The humble human promise:** Even though we want to do the right thing, we won't always get it right. We are called to resist evil, admit when we have made a mistake, repent, and then trust that the God who loves us also forgives us. This is a pattern of humility and return. We all need a chance to start again, to let go of our mistakes, and to know that we are still inherently good and beloved in the sight of God and our community.

3) **The personal responsibility promise:** What we do and say matters. We covenant to live in the world in such a way that we make Christ's light and love known to others. To do this, we have to first know and claim the Good News of Jesus, to connect his story to our story, and to be transformed by grace. The Good News of Jesus is that God has made a way for all people to know peace, experience joy, and live in harmony. The Good News of Jesus is that God has the last word and that word is eternal life. The Good News of Jesus is that all people are God's beloved. No exceptions. It isn't someone else's job to be Jesus' hands and feet—it is ours and it is a task that belongs to each of us. We proclaim God's Good News through our own words and deeds.

4) **The love promise:** In the Episcopal Church, we believe that we are called to love and serve all of God's people no matter who they are, where they come from, what color their skin is, what language they learned first, how they come to us, or who they love. All means all. Everyone belongs. Everyone matters. This part of the good news is so important that it gets its own promise. Time and time again, Jesus makes it clear to his followers that we are responsible for caring for one another.

5) **The world promise:** All people are worthy of justice, mercy, and peace. This promise drives home the point that even people who aren't Christians are our neighbors. We are called not just to believe this, but to build a world where this dream of God is a reality on earth, a world where we treasure and cherish the dignity of every human being.

At Confirmation, we ask people to make a "mature confession of faith." That means that they get to choose now, for themselves, if this is the way they want to live their lives. Do they want to make these promises the central way in which they will live out their faith? Does this feel authentic to them? Do they want to follow the Way of Jesus? Do they believe in the Way of Love? As a Confirmand kneels before the Bishop to receive a blessing and the gift of the Holy Spirit, this is the covenant that they are confirming. They are choosing a way of life and it is important that they understand the choice and that the choice is theirs to make.