

Youth & Adult Confirmation Process

The Family Packet

St. James's Episcopal Church, Richmond, VA

2020-2021

We're honored and excited to walk with you through your confirmation preparation process. Whether you've been here long, or are new to this church community, we're glad you're here. We hope this family packet explains what you can expect for this process, but we're always happy to answer any questions along the way. We are looking forward to getting to know all of you better.

Mary Beth Abplanalp
Director of Youth Ministry
mbabplanalp@doers.org
703-470-6832

Cheryl Redmond
Confirmation Leader
cherweb22@aol.com
804-467-5245

Hilary Streever
Senior Associate Rector
hstreever@doers.org
804-355-1779

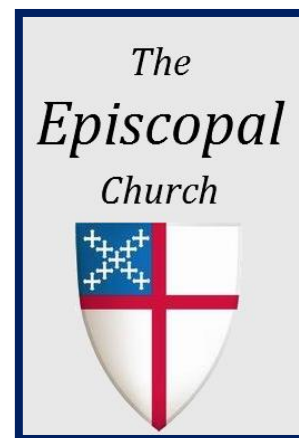
Trey Sibley
Confirmation Leader
gsibley@hunton.com
804-402-2597

Overview of 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. 86o).

A sacrament is an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace. Episcopalians recognize seven sacraments: the two great 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). Baptism precedes confirmation for youth; but as an adult, baptism and confirmation can occur at the same time.

Before you receive the sacrament of confirmation, it's important, and required by church canons, that "confirmands" (someone seeking confirmation) goes through a preparation



process. Preparation for confirmation allows candidates to discover the meaning of Christian commitment in their lives, and explore ways that their Christian commitment can be lived out. The candidates reaffirm their renunciation of evil, and renew their commitment to Jesus Christ. They reaffirm the promises made for them at their infant baptism. Those present in the congregation also promise to do all in their power to support the candidates in their life in Christ.

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 your meal ticket or a prerequisite for receiving Holy Eucharist (or 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 in terms of a mature, public reaffirmation of the Christian faith and the baptismal promises. Confirmation is not graduation from faith formation, but rather marks the beginning of mature participation in the mission and ministries of the church.



Confirmation Sunday 2019

Confirmation at St. James's 2020-2021

St. James's is committed to offering a meaningful (and fun!) confirmation process in spite of the pandemic. Here's what this process entails this year.

- All sessions will be virtual.
- Youth and adults seeking confirmation at St. James's will participate together in one mixed-age process led by clergy, staff, and volunteers.
- Youth are welcome to participate beginning as 9th graders. If this year doesn't feel like a good fit, you're welcome to come back any time in the future now that this is a mixed-age process.
- 10th graders whose confirmation process was interrupted by the pandemic are welcome to participate in this year's program as an extension of what you started last year, but it is not required.
- Participants in the confirmation process must already be baptized in the Christian faith (any denomination).

- Any youth in grades 9-12 who participate must attend every session with at least one parent/guardian. Parents are the most significant influence in the faith formation of their children, so the church is committed to equipping parents with the knowledge, language, tools, and confidence to teach the faith to your own home.
- At the end of the confirmation preparation process, it is the confirmand's responsibility, not the parents', to decide to be confirmed when the bishop comes to St. James's this year.
- Adults seeking confirmation who participate in this process will be organized into virtual small groups with other adults.
- The process will consist of 5 two-hour virtual sessions on the following themes:
 - Baptism and Confirmation
 - Book of Common Prayer & Eucharist
 - Love God & Love Neighbor
 - Church & Prayer
 - Holy Week
- Each session will be synchronous. There will be some live discussion, prerecorded video, and interactive activities for you to do at home. Sessions will last two hours from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- We'll offer session #1 in October, #2 in November, #3 in January, #4 in February, #5 in March. Each session will be offered twice during that month for your scheduling convenience, once on a Tuesday night and once on a Sunday night. Dates for 2020-2021 are listed below. You can switch the day you attend from month to month (i.e. Come on Tuesday in October, and Sunday in November.)
- Participants will each get a "confirmation kit" with material to use at home during virtual sessions. Arrangements will be made for registered families to pick up their "fall" kit in October and "spring" kit in January.
- Our class content comes from the program *Confirm not Conform* (www.confirmnotconform.com) and other Episcopal based resources.
- Attendance at all 5 sessions is expected so be sure to mark your calendars early.
- In the spring, we hope to have a confirmation rehearsal



Confirmation Banquet 2019

and banquet on Sunday, May 2, 2021 from 5:00-7:30 pm depending on health and safety guideline at that time. Confirmands and parents would be expected to attend, and mentors will be invited.

- The bishop is tentatively scheduled to come to St. James's for confirmation on Sunday, May 16, 2021.
- We hope to offer Confirmation Camp in spring 2020 depending on the course of the pandemic.



Confirmation Sunday 2019

Mentors: Each confirmand will select a non-parent adult mentor (sometimes called a sponsor) who is willing to support them throughout the confirmation process. Students will learn more about the role of a confirmation mentor during Session one this fall, so please wait until then to ask someone to be your mentor. Youth will be expected to meet with their mentor 3-5 times in-person or virtually over the course of the year. These meetings can happen anytime between now and confirmation Sunday, at a time and location that's convenient for you and your mentor. During these meetings, we encourage students to tell their mentor about their confirmation experience, ask their mentor about their faith life/spiritual journey, and discuss any questions students may have. We also encourage students and mentors to go to church together if possible. A great opportunity to do this is during Holy Week. These “meetings” can also be relaxed and fun – perhaps an outing to a farmers market or ice cream. Mentors are invited and encouraged to attend the Confirmation Rehearsal & Banquet and Confirmation Sunday in the spring to “present” the confirmands to the bishop. If that’s not feasible, the confirmation leaders can stand in as your sponsor that day.

Partnering with Parents: Parents are the #1 influence on their child’s faith formation process. This is why we stress the importance of attending worship services regularly as a family. Don’t worry, the church doesn’t expect you to navigate this road alone. The St. James’s clergy, youth staff, and confirmation leaders are here to support you as parents, just as much as your child in the confirmation program. Please let us know how we can help you along this journey.



Confirmation Camp 2018

Confirmation is one piece of the Faith Formation puzzle

Confirmation is intended as one element of a more integrated faith formation process including spiritual practices, faith community, and service to others. If you're committed to growing in your faith and having a deep impact experience, we encourage regular church attendance and involvement in community building experiences (like youth group or bible studies), and mission and outreach ministries.

- Worship is being held online Sunday at 10:00 AM. In-person outdoor worship in the parking lot St. Francis Open Air Chapel is offered at 8:30 and 10:00 currently. For updated worship schedules visit www.doers.org.
- Youth Groups are a great opportunity for building relationships with peers and God, and putting your faith into action through service and mission. "SYF" or Senior Youth Fellowship is our youth group for 9th-12th graders that meets most Sunday mornings. Currently we're meeting from 10:00-10:45 virtually over Zoom. See www.doers.org for updated information. The fall 2020 SYF schedule is below.
- Our website has detailed information about [Youth Ministry Offerings for 2020-2021](#). Information about [Adult Formation Opportunities](#) is also on the website.
- We also encourage you to join the "St. James's Youth Ministry" Facebook group so you can keep in touch while we are apart.

SYF Youth Group Schedule

Zoom on Sundays 10:00-10:45 AM

- September 20 First JYF & SYF – Celebrity Hour – People & Life in a pandemic
- September 27 *Servant Sunday; No Youth Groups*
- October 4 Blessing of the Animals & Creation Care – Bring your pet!
- October 11 Doubting our Faith & Why do bad things happen?
- October 18 Love God & Love Your Neighbor- talking about racism
- October 25 Halloween Party with costume contest (joint JYF & SYF)
- November 1 Unconventional Saints
- November 8 Service Project part 1
- November 15 Service Project part 2
- November 22 Thanksgiving Party & Birthday Card Photo
- November 29 *Thanksgiving weekend; Advent 1; No Youth Groups*
- December 6 God chose Mary – How to be a godbearer
- December 13 Year in review – looking back at 2020, the good, the bad, & the ugly
- December 20 Christmas Party (joint JYF & SYF)

Confirmation Process 2020-2021 Schedule

All confirmation sessions will take place from 6:30-8:30 p.m. online via Zoom. Zoom links will be emailed to all registered youth, adults, and parents the morning of each session. It will be a new Zoom link each time.

Session	Tuesday	Sunday
Confirmation Parent Meeting with Clergy	October 6 (5:00-5:30)	
#1 Baptism and Confirmation	October 13	October 18
#2 Book of Common Prayer & Eucharist	November 10	November 15
#3 Love God & Love Neighbor	January 26	January 31
#4 Church & Prayer	February 23	February 28
#5 Holy Week	March 23	March 28
Confirmation Camp	Spring 2020 (<i>tentative</i>)	
Rehearsal and Banquet	Sunday, May 2, 2021 evening (<i>tentative</i>)	
Bishop Visit & Confirmation service	Sunday, May 16, 2021 morning (<i>tentative</i>)	

Confirmation Kit Schedule

Each confirmand (participant) will receive a “Confirmation Kit” (*think: swag bag*) with props and materials for use at home during sessions. (Twins? You each get one!) You’ll need to come pick up your kit during the following dates:



Fall Pick Up (for sessions 1 and 2)

- Thursday 10/8, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm at Michaux House. Call 703-470-6832 on arrival.
- Sunday 10/11, 8:30 - 11:30 am at in-person worship. Ask an usher or clergy for kit from inside the building front lobby.
- Tuesday 10/13, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm at Michaux House. Call 703-470-6832 on arrival.

Spring Pick Up (for sessions 3, 4 and 5)

- Thursday, January 21 (business hours TBD)
- Sunday, January 24 (during morning worship TBD)
- Monday, January 25 (business hours TBD)