

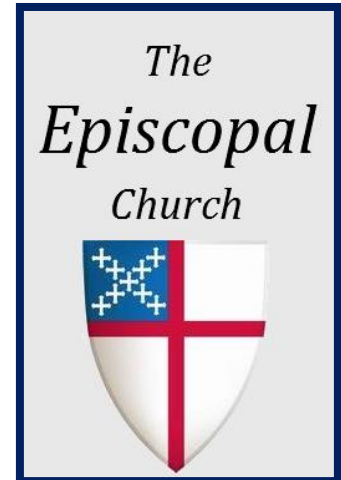
Youth Confirmation Process 2021-2022

The Family Packet

St. James's Episcopal Church, Richmond, VA

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 during this process, but we're always happy to answer any questions along the way. All of us at St. James's are looking forward to getting to know you better.

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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) go 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 on their behalf 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, 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 at St. James's 2021-2022

St. James's is committed to offering a meaningful (*and fun!*) confirmation process. Here's what this process entails this year.

- **Register online by September 27:** [Register for Confirmation 2021-2022](#)
- **Complete the online [Universal Permission Form](#)**
- **Pay \$115 registration fee online at [St. James's Episcopal Church](#)**(details below)
- St. James's offers a family-based and mostly virtual confirmation model. We tried this out during the pandemic *and everyone really liked it!* It was highly engaging, accessible, and impactful on youth and their parents last year, so we're doing it again. Participants will attend 5 Zoom sessions with a parent and a few additional in-person gatherings will also take place.
- Youth may participate beginning as 9th graders. If this year doesn't feel like a good fit, you're welcome back any time later in high school.
- 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, tools, and confidence necessary to foster a life of faith in their own home.



Confirmation Sunday 2019

- Participants in the confirmation process must already be baptized in the Christian faith (any denomination). For information about getting baptized, please contact our director of children’s ministry, Becky Page, at bpage@doers.org.
- 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.
- The process will consist of 5 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 last two hours, from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Attendance at all 5 sessions, the parent meeting, overnight Confirmation Camp, and the banquet are expected so be sure to mark your calendars early and plan accordingly. Dates for 2021-2022 are listed below.
- Participants will each get two “confirmation kits” with material to use at home during the 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.
- In the spring, we plan to have a confirmation rehearsal and banquet on Sunday, May 1, 2022 from 5:00-7:30 pm. Confirmands, mentors, and parents would be expected to attend.
- The bishop is *tentatively* scheduled to come to St. James’s for confirmation on Sunday, May 15, 2022.
- We will have an overnight Confirmation Camp at nearby Camp Hanover Friday, November 12 at 6:00 pm – Saturday, November 13 at 1:30 pm. So fun!



Confirmation Banquet

Mentors

Each confirmand will select a non-parent adult mentor (sometimes called a sponsor) who is willing to support them throughout the confirmation process. More detailed information about this will be explained in session 1. There's nothing for you to do at this point, so please wait until further instructions before asking someone to be your mentor. We just want to paint the picture of what's to come.

Youth will be expected to meet with their chosen 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, your next soccer game, or for ice cream. Mentors are expected 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. Mentors will be provided with a mentor guide to equip them in this role.

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. This is why we're grateful for your attendance and participation at the parent meeting and 5 confirmation sessions. Confirmation Camp is just for youth and parents do not attend. Please let us know how we can help you along this journey.



Confirmation Camp

Confirmation is one piece of the Faith Formation puzzle

Confirmation is intended to be just one element of a bigger puzzle. 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.

- For Sunday worship schedules, visit www.doers.org.
- **Youth Groups** are a great opportunity for building relationships with peers and God, while putting your faith into action through service and mission. St. James's youth group for 9-12th graders is called "**SYF**" or **Senior Youth Fellowship**. It meets most Sunday mornings. We like to cook, plan projects, share stories, and explore how God is at work in the world around us. See www.doers.org for our detailed SYF schedule.
- In addition to confirmation St. James's also celebrates **one time milestones** for youth including "**Blessing of the Keys**" for sophomores as they gain independence and are old enough to drive, as well as the "**Senior Blessing**" to celebrate our graduating high school seniors.
- Our website has detailed information about [Youth Ministry Offerings for 2021-2022](#). Come join in!



We also encourage you to join the "St. James's Youth Ministry" Facebook group, and follow us on Instagram @youthofsjecrichmond

Cost to Participate

St. James's is committed to providing a high quality confirmation experience for youth and their families. To do this well, we must pay for confirmation kit supplies, videographer, overnight Confirmation Camp fees and chaperone costs. This registration fee covers all expenses for the entire year-long process.

Registration Cost: \$115

Pay Online:

Payment can be provided online only using credit or debit card (*checks are no longer accepted*). Go to the church website www.doers.org > GIVING > ONLINE GIVING > Amount: \$115 > Gift Type: Give One Time > Giving Type: YOUTH MINISTRY PAYMENTS > Memo: Confirmation (youth's name) > NEXT. Then enter your payment information.

Payment due by September 27, 2021

Confirmation Process 2021-2022 Schedule

The 5 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 just prior to each session.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>
Registration and Payment due	September 27
Confirmation Parent Meeting with Clergy	October 3 (5:00-6:00 In person) & Kit Pick-up
#1 Baptism and Confirmation	October 17
#2 Book of Common Prayer & Eucharist	November 7
Confirmation Camp	Nov 12-13 (6:00 pm Fri – 1:30 pm Sat)
Kit Pick-up	January 23 at 10:15 am
#3 Love God & Love Neighbor	January 30
#4 Church & Prayer	February 27
#5 Holy Week	March 27
Rehearsal and Banquet	Sunday, May 1, 2022 evening (<i>tentative</i>)
Bishop Visit & Confirmation service	Sunday, May 15, 2022 morning (<i>tentative</i>)

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 at the following times:

- **Sunday, October 3, 5:00 pm:** Fall Pick Up (for sessions 1 & 2) at Parent Meeting
- **Sunday, January 23, 10:15 am:** Spring Pick Up (for sessions 3, 4 & 5) at Youth Group

