



# **The Confirmation Journey**

## ***St. Alban's Episcopal Church***

### ***Oakland, New Jersey***

(revised September 2010)

*Almighty God, we thank you that by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you have overcome sin and brought us to yourself, and that by the sealing of your Holy Spirit you have bound us to your service. Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at their Baptism. Send them forth in the power of that Spirit to perform the service you set before them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (Service of Confirmation, page 418. Book of Common Prayer)*

Confirmation is the Sacrament of the Church that acknowledges a person making a public affirmation of his/her intention to follow in the way of Jesus Christ as it is outlined in the Baptismal Covenant. This is typically celebrated in the teen years. At Confirmation we take on the responsibilities of Baptism which our parents and godparents took on for us if we were baptized as infants or young children. Confirmation involves standing before a bishop, making vows, and kneeling to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands by the bishop.

At St. Alban's Church we encourage youth in the seventh grade or above to consider enrolling in the Confirmation Journey. Sometimes youth are ready to make the decision to begin this earlier. In some cases, after a conversation with their parents and a member of the clergy, the young person may enroll in the Confirmation Journey.

Candidates for Confirmation are enrolled at the 10AM Sunday liturgy on the Feast of All Saints' which is the first Sunday in November.

The Confirmation Journey is an important milestone in your life. It needs to be your decision to enter the process towards Confirmation and it must be your decision to make your Confirmation. Parents, sponsors, godparents and clergy may - and will - encourage and support you in any way we can. However the decision to be Confirmed must be

## Basic Structure for Class Meetings



We have developed a two fold meeting format. One meeting will be held during the regular Sunday morning Christian Education time. These lessons, taught by the Sunday School teachers, will be specifically chosen to meet the needs of the Confirmation journey process. These lessons will be identified in advance by topic and date so that you can be sure to be present. The second type of meeting will include sharing a simple meal and last about 2 ¼ hours. These sessions will be scheduled by the group to be held either on Sundays after church, Saturday mornings, or weekdays. If, for some reason, you miss a class it will be your responsibility to get the material from me, read it and complete the exercise independently, and then to arrange to meet with me to go over the material. For our group classes we will gather and begin with a form of Daily Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. This will be followed by a simple meal and check-in time. Each class will cover topics as indicated on the schedule and will involve a participation and hands-on approach. We will all engage in active learning together so come ready to get involved.

Additionally, we will participate in an overnight retreat (Friday after supper to Saturday mid-afternoon). The retreat is required by the Diocese and will include time with the bishop, The Right Reverend Mark M. Beckwith. You will need to make this a priority and attend from beginning to end.

For each class or retreat meeting you need to:

- remember that you are loved and valued beyond measure
- share your growing understanding of your faith
- be on time and ready to engage in the program
- bring your Book of Common Prayer, Grow in Grace, your Confirmation Journey note book, and Keeping the Promise



Sponsors are encouraged, but not required, to attend meetings and retreats with you. We welcome the opportunity for this learning to happen in an intergenerational setting and we want to be sure the individual meetings between you and your sponsor are a priority. So, if time allows for both, wonderful, if not then please encourage your sponsor to concentrate on the

## Class Themes

**Heel, Toe, and Away we Go!**: Getting to know each other and starting on our way

**Christians are Made Not Born**: Baptism, Confirmation, and us

**Kneeling and Standing For Our Rites**: Prayer and the Book of Common Prayer

**The Reason For The Hope That Is In Us**: The Christian Scriptures and Jesus

**Waiting For The Messiah**: The Hebrew Scriptures and the Prophets

**Sacraments and Symbols (double session)** Just what it says! We'll cover Holy Eucharist, Marriage, Ordination, Anointing of the Sick, and Reconciliation of a Penitent

**Who We Are and How We Came to Be**: Church History and Anglicanism

**The Way We and Our Neighbors Worship (double session)**

The Liturgy of the Episcopal Church and The Liturgy of Other Communities of Faith

### **HOLY WEEK AND EASTER**

Each candidate is expected to attend the Maundy Thursday evening service; the Good Friday liturgy of their choice; and Easter. Each candidate needs to participate in at least one of the services as an acolyte, reader, usher, etc. Please speak to me as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made.

### **Keeping Watch With Friends**

We will come together to pray, prepare, and offer a vigil with those who will be presenting themselves for Confirmation on Saturday. We will also share a meal the location and format of which is yet to be determined. sponsors, parents, and siblings are encouraged to attend.

## **Meeting with Your Sponsor**

Now that you have made the decision to enter the process toward Confirmation you will be continuing in a very specific way the process that began at your Baptism.

sponsor. This is a person with whom you will spend time in prayer, conversation, and fellowship specifically with an eye toward your shared decision to live the life of following Jesus Christ. This person needs to be active in a faith community; regular in attendance at worship; intentional in the stewardship of his/her time, talent and treasure; and be willing to actively engage in this important journey with you. It is an honor and privilege to be asked to be a sponsor and a commitment that must be made prayerfully.

You and your sponsor should plan to meet at least twice a month throughout your preparation time. The benefit you will each receive from this relationship will be directly proportional to the openness and integrity you each bring to it. There will be topics and exercises we will expect you to complete with your sponsor, but they are just a 'springboard', a way to get the conversations rolling. It is our desire and intent that you will discover in each other and share with each other the 'aliveness' of Christ that can only be experienced with another person. That mutual discovery is the true blessing of the candidate / sponsor relationship.

To assist in your meetings we will be using ***Keeping The Promise, A Mentoring Program for Confirmation in the Episcopal Church***. It contains nine sessions that cover:: The Old Covenant: God and Israel; The New Covenant: Jesus and the Holy Spirit; Baptism and Confirmation; The Holy Eucharist; Spiritual Life; Turing Points: Matrimony, Healing, Death; The Church; Ministry.

Each of the sessions is designed to help you gain the basics and become familiar with the language and concepts of each topic. The sessions will guide you and your sponsor through a survey approach more than an in depth study. The intent is for you both to have an opportunity to talk and form questions that you may or may not be able to answer together! It is the seeking that is most valuable! These thoughts and questions will then enhance your ongoing meetings and our group discussions.



### **One Last Thing ...**

There is one more very important resource you must utilize. It is You! This is your Confirmation journey. You are the one who knows the questions you want to ask and have answered. Part of coming of age in this tradition is taking the initiative to use the mind God has given you to ask questions