

Confirmation 2013

Immanuel Presbyterian Church

What is it?

Confirmation is the process by which students become full members of the Presbyterian Church. At IPC, this means a Sunday evening class from January to May in which 8th graders will explore the Bible, what we believe as Christians, and how we live as Christians. At the end of the class, if a student chooses to do so, s/he may make a profession of faith before the Session of the church to be admitted as a member of the congregation.

The purpose of confirmation classes is to expose students to our Christian heritage and theology, with a special emphasis on what it means to be part of the Presbyterian tradition. Because being a Christian is something that we do, rather than something we just think, we will emphasize discipleship – how do we live as followers of Jesus Christ? Because being a Christian is a journey, not an ending point, we will value questions, doubts, alternative insights, and will respect wherever you are on your journey. Because being a Christian is an act of faith and trust, we will encourage students to consider whether they can authentically trust the God revealed to us in Scripture and fully in Jesus Christ, and if so, profess that faith. That choice is fully theirs.

Should I do it?

You are not obligated in any way to do Confirmation to be a part of youth ministries or any other ministry in the church! Therefore, doing this class should be a choice – do I want to explore more about Christianity? Am I willing to make the commitment every Sunday night? Am I willing to explore my personal faith? If you answered “yes” to these questions, then Confirmation is for you! We want you to both be able to think critically about your own faith, but also understand the fundamentals of Christianity as expressed in the creeds of the Church.

When is it?

Confirmation meets Sunday evenings concurrently with Youth Group, from 6:30 – 8 p.m. From 6:30 – 7 p.m., students will have a meal and fellowship with the whole Youth Group. At 7 p.m., we'll break off by ourselves for class. There are also a few special events and trips during the class.

What can I expect?

You should expect thoughtful teaching, an open environment that values everybody regardless of what they believe, opportunities for fun and fellowship, and an opportunity for relationships with adults in the church that can mentor you through the process of discipleship. You should expect a safe environment for faith exploration.

What will be expected of me?

You will be expected to attend every class or schedule a make-up class and let a teacher know if you won't be at a particular class. Except for exceptional circumstances, you will be expected to attend the lock-in, retreat, weekend in the city, dinner with Session, and confirmation Sunday. You will be expected to actively participate in all areas, including completing any assignments and readings on time.

You will also be encouraged to be open and honest, bringing your uniqueness and insights with you to the group. Though we may not always agree, we will be respectful to one another and listen to one another. You will also be expected to engage in some forms of spiritual disciplines, including prayer, meditation, and reading Scripture.

You'll be expected to express your faith journey in some way. For some, it will be a faith statement. For others, it will be artwork or poetry. Recognizing that we're all in different places in our journey, you may choose your medium of expressing with the consent of

the leaders, remembering that members of Session will ask you about your faith journey before you can become a member.

Finally, you'll be expected to have a mentor. In this packet is a list of possible mentors from the church. Please feel free to ask one of them to be your mentor, or to choose another person (not a family member) by the end of November. If you're unable to find a mentor by then, we will assign you one.

What will be expected of my parents?

The journey of exploring faith is one that we do in community, and for most of us, our families are our first community. Parents will be expected to be active participants, having regular conversations with the students about the things they're learning and talking about in class. Parents will also be expected to participate by volunteering to help lead one of the special events, or attending at least one of the classes.

What will be expected of my mentor?

A mentor is somebody who walks alongside during a journey. Your mentor will share his or her story, listen actively to your story, and meet with you at least once for a meal during the confirmation process. Together, you'll be expected to coordinate a time for this. Your mentor will also attend some of the Sunday night classes.