

St. David's Episcopal Church

Guidelines for Mentor/Confirmand Program

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is an adult Christian who is a spiritual friend and advisor to one or more of our confirmands. A mentor is a mature Christian who is willing and able to talk to a youth about the mentor's experience of God. A mentor models the living of the Christian life for the confirmand. Ideally, when a confirmand has a question about what a Christian would do in any given set of circumstances, he or she ought to be able to look at the life of his or her mentor and see the answer.

What is a Confirmand?

A confirmand is a person, usually a youth in grade 8, who is receiving instruction in the fundamentals of the Christian faith and will choose to be presented to a bishop for confirmation in June.

What is confirmation?

Confirmation is the rite in which individuals declare their mature commitment to Christ. At baptism the vows which make one a child of God were taken for them by parents and godparents, who agreed to be responsible for seeing that their godchildren were raised in the Christian faith. At confirmation the candidates themselves assume responsibility for living out their baptismal vows. Confirmation marks the moment in which one begins the process of living the Christian life no longer as child but as an adult. This process is one of developing skills and acquiring knowledge in the Christian tradition, and it will be the confirmands' chief occupation for the next several decades. Thus in this rite they receive strength for their renewed commitment to Christ through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Because you have agreed to take on this important relationship for the next nine months we want to make sure you get all the help you will need.

Mentor Basics include:

- Praying continually for your confirmand
- Helping your confirmand make the transition from a being a child to an adult member of our congregation; supporting your confirmand's present involvement and encouraging future increasing involvement in worship, study and prayer.
- Relating to your confirmand in a caring, responsible way.
- Helping your confirmand apply the lessons taught in confirmation class to their lives.
- Sharing with your confirmand your own spiritual journey.
- Helping your confirmand discover the talents God has given them.
- Being a good friend and listener.

What are the confirmands studying in class?

The instructors for the Confirmation Program will be the Revs. W. Frank Allen, Tom Pumphrey, Matt Holcombe, the Rev. Dr. Bill Duffey, David Partridge and Andrew Kuhn. They will be using a combination of materials and strategies to teach:

- Bible Basics, in particular the life of Christ
- Understanding the Sacraments and the doctrine of grace
- Church History and tradition
- Understanding the historic Creeds

In addition the students will participate in a series of three Outreach Events, write the prayers of the people for one Senior Sermon Service (January 8, 15, 22 and 29), and they will write a "Rule of Life" and meet with one of the clergy to discuss it.

How often should I meet with my confirmand?

Between mid October and mid May you should have a total of six to eight one hour sessions.

Important Mentor Dates include:

1. Confirmation Team Building, September 18, 10:30 a.m., Offsite TBA, meet in the Undercroft
2. Mentor Training October 16, 8:00 a.m. in the Harrison Room
3. Confirmation Rite of Admission, October 16, 9:15 a.m., Chapel
4. Outreach Projects, November 27, December 4 and December 11 (location and time TBA)
5. Confirmation Vigil, June 9, (tentative), 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel. This is a special service where mentors will be asked, "How is my confirmand going to live out the Christian life and faith?"
6. Confirmation, June 10, (tentative), 11:15 a.m. in the Chapel

What should I cover as a mentor?

We ask that you reinforce what is being taught in the class by using the text *Questions on the Way: A catechism based on the Book of Common Prayer*, that will be provided at the Mentor Training. This is an expanded version of the Catechism found in the Book of Common Prayer. The confirmands will be referring frequently to the Prayer Book and especially to the Catechism. Your text provides you with additional understanding of the questions and answers in the Catechism. If you want to take a more casual approach we suggest you talk about:

- Who God is for you?
- What is prayer? Why do we pray?
- The uniqueness of Christianity in relation to other religions?
- What your confirmand is studying in class and their understanding of it?
- Last week's sermon
- What is their favorite (least favorite) part of confirmation?
- What are they confused about? What would they like to know more about?

What is the best way to get started?

- Be supportive of confirmation process
- Get Acquainted
- Explore mutual interests (sports, music, etc.)
- Talk about your families (parents, brothers, sisters, etc.)
- Talk about your church background
- Read and discuss a story about Jesus together
- Talk about what confirmation means

Other Activities

Not all meetings need to be discussions. You may want to spend time together on one or more of the following activities:

- Involve the confirmand in your own church activity—ushering, altar guild, coffee hour, choir
- Attend a church activity together, a special worship service
- Attend a relevant concert, movie or sports event together
- Attend a different church together
- Participate in an additional outreach activity together

HAVE FUN!!!

Thank you for being part of our Mentor/Confirmand Program. May God bless your efforts to initiate and develop a relationship with our confirmands.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Andrew Kuhn
Director of Family Ministries
610.688.7947, ext. 230
akuhn@stdavidchurch.org