

The Lily Pad

"I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys." Solomo



CONFIRMED

'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. Matthew 10:32-33



Congratulations! Well done! How many hours of classes and homework did you put in to earn this certificate? Well, that is just a part of your preparation for the life God has planned for you. You've been walking with the Lord through this time, sometimes cooperating with the Holy Spirit and sometimes rebelling against it. But through it all you have been learning, learning about walking with the Lord, learning the consequences of ignoring the Holy Spirit, and learning the blessings of cooperating with the Spirit. **Cooperation**, more than anything else you have learned this lesson will help to guide you through the years that are in front of you.

This is a milestone month for seven of our Fifth Avenue Youth. In addition to all sorts of exciting activities that will be happening this month, the biggest event happens on Sunday, May 21, 2017 at our morning worship service:

**William Bast, Kevin Fitzgerald, Michael Klein,
Peyton Louk, Rosa Molina, Lexi Weatherby, Peyton Weatherby
will be CONFIRMED.**

On that marvelous and blessed day we will celebrate the faith journey that these young people have made over the last year. During our worship service, our Confirmands will commit to us and to God that they will continue to journey with God and the church in the coming years. We, their church family, will commit to continue to walk with them on their journey of faith and we will pray that each of them will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation is a big deal! It is a big step in the lives of these youth and a big moment in the life of our church. But what exactly is it? Too often, we think of it as the beginning of faith. This is probably (at least partly) because confirmation is associated with receiving full membership rights in the United Methodist Church.

After Sunday, our Confirmands will be eligible to serve on committees and the like. But, when we take time to think about it, we know that confirmation is not the beginning of faith. God created each of our Confirmands and has been journeying with them since before they were born. For those who have been previously baptized, they have been members of the church (though not "voting" members) since baptism. They have all been recipients of God's grace and members of our faith community long before this Confirmation Sunday.

Too often, we think of confirmation as “graduation” from church or as something that has little connection to what comes after it. True, confirmation does celebrate the completion of a difficult year of study and represents a major transition in life. But more importantly, confirmation is a continued commitment to the life of faith – to the arduous task of attempting to follow Jesus Christ for the rest of your life. Confirmation is intended to lead our youth to a renewed and deeper commitment to the ways of Jesus. Perhaps it would be better understood as a refueling station. Providing each of them with the energy (Holy Spirit) and perseverance to run this race called life.

In baptism, God promises to always be with us and makes us a part of the church. Through our baptism, we are called to be a part of God’s work in the world. In that act, we are given more love and grace than we can possibly imagine; baptism is a sort of love letter from God. Confirmation is a way of responding to God’s love letter with a love letter of our own, promising to seek God and follow Jesus in all that we do. And, even more importantly, confirmation is a time when the whole church prays for the Holy Spirit to give each and every one of us (especially those who are being confirmed) the strength to live lives that are faithful to the God who we have come to know in Jesus Christ.

I pray for the Lord’s blessings upon our Confirmands –

William, Kevin, Michael, Peyton, Rosa, Lexi, and Peyton.

I pray they will always make a confession of their faith publicly. I pray they continue to have a “lifelong pledge of fidelity to Christ.” May we as a church family continue to support this lifelong confirmation ministry. As we acknowledge our blessed Savior to others, so Jesus Christ will acknowledge us before God.

*Now faith is the assurance of
things hoped for,
the conviction of things not
seen.*

Hebrew 11:1

**GOD BLESS,
PASTOR CLARISSA
&
Mr. MARTIN**

Reaffirmation of **Baptism**

