

Confirmation

2018-2019



Woodfords
Congregational
Church



HopeGateWay



TRINITY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome to our Confirmation “Journey”

In both the sacred and secular communities, there are few meaningful “rites of passage” in today’s world, and American culture in particular.

One of the few opportunities we still honor that celebrates the “evolving” self is the Confirmation journey.

This year, young people in 7th grade and above from Woodfords Congregational Church, U.C.C., HopeGateWay United Methodist community, and Trinity Episcopal Church will be invited to participate in a Confirmation Journey that will take place September – June.

The overarching theme will be “Life as a Journey of Faith.” We recognize that life is, indeed, a journey: it’s a journey that rarely proceeds in a linear fashion, instead taking unique twists and turns, encountering both highs and lows, meeting many, many people on the way. There are times when we move ahead easily, times when we actually go backwards, times when we’re helplessly lost, times when we’re simply “stuck” in one place, times when we go sideways, times when we gently bump into others or crash headlong into others, and times when we’re “in over our heads.” The same can be said to describe our faith journey.

We recognize that as Christians, we stand with many on a journey that has existed for at least 2,000 years; we also recognize that each generation must give new meaning to the traditions and language that accompany the journey — as John Robinson said when the Pilgrims were leaving Leyden on their way to a new world, “There is yet more truth and light to be revealed.”

During this Confirmation journey, it is our desire that the young people will embrace the Truth that:

- Each one is a precious and beloved child of God.
- Each one is on a personal faith journey, part of a very long tradition.
- Our tradition provides the foundation — the tools, resources, guides — that allows each as persons of faith, to be able to chart the course ahead.
- Each one is now in the “driver’s seat,” no longer a passenger. While parents made promises for them at their baptism, or by bringing them to church, the responsibility — and the ability — now falls on their shoulders to chart the course ahead/create their future.
- On life’s journey, and on our faith journey, we’re “in it together!” We are partners in life and in a shared and mutual ministry.

Needless to say, there is a lot of important and pertinent information that needs to be part of the Christian journey — the Bible, the history of Christianity, a Trinitarian Faith, worship... but there can be creative, interesting and unique ways to share what’s important that doesn’t seem like just another school requirement! In a spirit of creativity, some of the teaching themes will include:

- The Story of the Prodigal: I am a beloved child
- Do science and religion have anything to say to each other? Genesis and the Big Bang!
- Church or football??? What’s the point, anyhow? How do we make church fun?
- The best of times, the worst of times... If God’s really in control, why is all this happening?

One of the best ways to encourage participation is to include other teenagers — those who may not be in the same cohort group but who are experiencing life in a similar way — perhaps having similar taste in music and

clothes, as well as struggling with a lot of the same issues: Who am I? Who am I becoming? How do I separate from the people I trust as I become a responsible individual without hurting them? Bringing the three groups of young people together — Trinity, HopeGateWay, and Woodfords — will offer lots of possibilities for deeper discussions, greater commitment, and more fun!

Over the course of the year, there will be:

- Two weekend retreats
- Sunday meetings roughly once (sometimes twice) a month – sometimes Sunday morning with worship, lunch, and a meeting to follow; sometimes Sunday afternoons
- A trip to Boston to see a performance of The Black Nativity
- Several opportunities to attend other worship services and/or meet with people from different faith traditions to discover the similarities and differences of our faith journeys
- Opportunities (individually scheduled) to meet with mentors including the completion of a service or mission project
- Attendance at Sunday morning worship and the opportunity to participate as worship leaders
- The opportunity to be Confirmed (all together) during a joint worship celebration on June 2

During the Journey, Confirmands will keep a Faith Journal, develop and complete a service project with their mentors, create squares for a Confirmation stole, and write a Statement of Faith.

While not everything is 100% finalized yet, the following is our proposed schedule:

- Sunday, Sept. 23 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Sunday, Oct. 14 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Fri-Sun, Nov. 9-11 Overnight Retreat in Bridgton, return to Portland for worship at HopeGateWay at 11 am
- Saturday, Dec. 8 Trip to Boston for Black Nativity (tentative) with families
- TBA Additional December gathering, possibly
- Sunday, Jan. 6 Epiphany worship (afternoon) at St. Luke's with dinner & meeting
- Sunday, Jan. 27 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Sunday, Feb. 10 Morning worship / Heifer Fair at Woodfords Congregational Church
- Sunday, Feb. 24 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Fri-Sun, March 8-10 Overnight Retreat in Bridgton, return to Portland for worship at Sacred Heart / St. Dominic (Roman Catholic) Parish at 10:30 am
- a Friday in March Shabbat service at Congregation Bet Ha'am (date and time TBA)
- Sunday, April 7 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Thursday, April 18 Holy Thursday dinner & worship 5:30 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church
- Sunday, May 5 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Sunday, May 19 Meeting 4-6 pm
- Saturday, June 1 Dinner Celebration with youth, families, and mentors at HGW 5:30 pm
- Sunday, June 2 Confirmation Celebration – combined worship at 10 am at Woodfords Congregational Church

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with one of us if you have questions:

- Rev. Carolyn Lambert, Woodfords Church, UCC clambert@woodfordschurch.org
- Rev. Allen Ewing-Merrill, HopeGateWay allen@hopegateway.com
- Rev. Larry Weeks, Trinity Episcopal Church rector@trinitychurchportland.org

We hope you'll join us on this journey!

Black Nativity

at the Paramount Theatre - Boston



Black Nativity

Tentatively scheduled for Saturday, December 8 – an afternoon performance – we'll travel to Boston for a performance of Black Nativity, which is sure to be a highlight of our Advent Season.

Produced by the National Center of Afro-American Artists, Black Nativity is the joyous account of an historic event that occurred 2,000 years ago. It's a celebration that tells the original story of the Nativity in Scripture, verse, music and dance. Based on the Gospel of St. Luke, combined with the poetry of Langston Hughes, this song-play touches a special chord in the hearts of all.



This legendary Christmas event, the Black community's Christmas gift to the world, is without a doubt a theatrical wonderment. A joyous company of singers, actors, dancers and musicians delivers its powerful message of joy, hope, victory and liberation. Boston's captivating production is the longest running performance of Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes' song-play in the world.

Parents and siblings are invited to join us for this experience. As the date gets closer, we'll confirm the details, purchase the tickets, and coordinate a carpool for those who would find this helpful.

