

Confirmation at First Rowlett United Methodist Church for 2018/2019 year

Confirmation Invitation

FUMC Rowlett invites all students in the sixth grade to participate in confirmation when they are ready and interested in being part of this deliberate time of faith preparation.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."—John 14:6

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation refers to the decision a person makes to respond to God's grace with intentional commitment, publically reaffirming his or her baptismal vows before the congregation and becoming members of the church.

The confirmation ceremony this year occurs on May 5, 2019. It is the first public affirmation of the grace of God in one's baptism and the acknowledgement of one's acceptance of that grace by faith. In other words, confirmands are taking responsibility for living as members of the body of Christ and for fulfilling God's purposes in their lives.

Requirements

We recognize that the calendar and requirements for confirmation are rigorous. We believe this process is worth of attention, effort and commitment. Each class, Faith Family visit and all three retreats (beginning, mid-point and ending) is important and every effort possible should be made to attend every one. If students miss a class (illness, etc.) there will be a make-up lesson with a written assignment to be turned in the following class. We encourage parent participation with any make-up lessons.

First Steps

1. **Attend the Introduction and Information Meeting** on August 5th at 11:00 in the Lighthouse. If you cannot attend that session, a makeup meeting will be held on August 12th at the Lighthouse. Attending one of these meetings is mandatory.
2. **Registration & fees** The total costs will be \$25 for the fall retreat, \$100 for the Winter retreat and \$75 for the fall retreat. Full or partial scholarships are available if necessary.
3. **Identify and ask a Mentor to join you for the confirmation process** Following registration, students/parents must identify and ask a mentor to join her/him for the confirmation journey. Mentors must be identified by September 9th. Inform the Parent Involvement Coordinator with the mentor's name and contact information (email address and phone number).

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A word of encouragement about finding a mentor:

Sometimes parents are hesitant to ask someone to serve as their child's mentor once they see how much time and effort is required of the mentor. Please take a leap of faith and ask someone anyway! Let the person know upfront how much is being asked of them, and then trust that he or she will be honest about whether or not he/she can follow through. Experience has proven that the mentors often get as much out of the experience as the confirmands, and it is an honor to be asked.

It is also tempting to pick a family member to serve as your child's mentor. We discourage this because it is important that your child establish meaningful Christian relationships outside his/her family. Our desire is for you to ask someone in the church whom you admire—whether you already have a relationship with that person or not.

If you have tried, but are unsuccessful in selecting a mentor, please contact the Confirmation or Parent Involvement Coordinator.

Seven Components of the Confirmation Process

1. Confirmation Classes

Students must participate in the Sunday morning classes as scheduled from August to April. Each class covers a specific theme and lesson-specific topics. Class teacher will be the Confirmation Coordinator.

2. Confirmation Retreats

Three retreats are scheduled as part of the Confirmation process – Fall, Winter and Spring. We believe this extended time together not only allows space for relationships to develop at a deeper level, but also provide enough time and experience together to dig deep into big questions and big thoughts. Students are expected to attend all three retreats in their entirety.

3. Weekly Small Group Meetings

Students participating in confirmation are invited to participate in the small group meeting on Sunday night led by Ryan Grouthis.

United Methodism essentially began with a few young college men who started the first small group. Commonly known as the Holy Club, the concept of personal holiness and social holiness caught fire. The holiness of life was attained through these small groups that were called class meetings. Small groups of people would gather for prayer, study and accountability. Small groups are an essential vehicle for discipleship—and participation in a small group begins a pattern that can be continued for a lifetime.

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4. Worship

- a. Students participating in confirmation should be attending worship weekly, either at the 8:30 or 11:00 service and with the other youth on Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m.
- b. Students should choose one aspect of worship leadership (usher, greeter, or lay reader to participate in between August and April).

John Wesley taught and practiced accountable discipleship. He knew what we deep down know today—we can't keep on the path with Christ without the help and support of other Christians. Without hearing the Word read and preached, without gathering with other Christians around the table to share and feast upon Christ who is host and sacrifice for us, and without becoming part of the fire of the Spirit, we are like embers of a fire separated from the community of grace. We grow cold and the fire and flame of love grow cold and we die spiritually. We may still believe, but we stand outside the covenant in our practice

—Rev. Dan Benedict, General Board of Discipleship

5. Faith Community Visits

We believe there is one universal church—and many ways God is worshiped across faith practices. The United Methodist church has always had a “catholic” (universal) spirit when it comes to the larger ecumenical church community. Exposing students to different faith practices helps us to witness together the varied and beautiful ways God is present throughout God’s church. It also helps us to define distinctions in United Methodist doctrine and practices. Students participating in confirmation will visit five other faith communities. We ask that students dress appropriately as we respectfully engage our friends and neighbors in other places of worship.

Temple Shalom
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic
Faith Family Baptist, Rowlett
East Plano Islamic Center
Greek Orthodox Church

6. Service

Service to others is an important part of faithful life. Confirmands are encouraged to participate in other service opportunities throughout the year. There are plenty of opportunities—check the weekly bulletin for service opportunities. We ask that parents and mentors participate with their confirmand.

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United Methodists have believed, from the beginning, that each of us is called to participate in the outreaching ministry of Jesus Christ. John Wesley described this work in simple, practical terms: “Do all the good you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can”. Putting our faith into action is at the very heart of our Christian calling.

7. Meeting with Mentors

Participate in four guided conversations with an adult mentor (detailed description below).

At the conclusion of these seven steps, confirmands will “interview” with Pastor Pam before Confirmation Sunday. A schedule of interview timeslots will be made available. The interview is an opportunity for the confirmand to discuss their thoughts about faith and church membership—and to communicate their desire to be (or not be) confirmed.

Who’s Who

Parent Responsibilities

- a. Assist confirmand in inviting a mentor to join them for this process. Please identify your mentor as soon as possible so they can plan to attend the September 9th mentor’s meeting;
- b. Attend August 5th or August 12th meeting with confirmand and mentor (if you have identified a mentor);
- c. Commit to pray for confirmand and mentor throughout process;
- d. Read all information in this packet—and stay informed as to what discussions your confirmand is having with their mentor and in the confirmation classes. (While their conversation with their mentor deserves appreciate response and privacy, you can follow-up with conversation starters that support the work that is happening in class and in conversation with mentors.);
- e. Communications regarding Confirmation are done via email. Respond promptly to email queries and requests from the Parent Involvement and Confirmation Coordinators;
- f. Assist your confirmand in ensuring all the program component requirements are being accomplished;
- g. Participate in family devotion. Invite all members of your family to a season of deliberate devotion using the prompts we have provide—or by discovering your own;

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- h. Faith Community Visits are open to mentors and parents; please join us;
- i. Volunteer and support class, retreat and Faith Community visits as needed;
- j. First Rowlett UMC and the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Conference require that all persons who work with youth become certified in MinistrySafe policies and have a background check conducted every two years.

Parent/Family Participation

We know that you are the primary spiritual leaders in your child's life. Our goal is to come alongside you and equip both you and your child in the process of spiritual growth.

We encourage you during this confirmation time to sit down as a family and engage scripture together. The SOAP method of Bible study is a version of Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) where you move through a piece of scripture considering it different ways. We hope you will close to sit down with your confirmand, or with your entire family, and engage this process several times in the course of the confirmation journey.

S: Scripture—write out the scripture verse. Read it aloud two times (perhaps have different people read), and read it to yourself.

O: Observation—what was interesting to you about this passage? Are there any words or phrases that stood out? Why?

A: Application—how can you apply this scripture to your life? How will you let it change you?

P: Prayer—respond to God in prayer using the scripture and your discussion as a guide. Ask God to help you meditate and apply the scripture to your life.

While you can use any scripture references, here is a list of recommended ideas:

- Joshua 1:9
- Psalm 103:2
- Jeremiah 29:11
- 1 Timothy 2:22
- 1 Corinthians 1:25

Parents are expected to act as sponsors for confirmation classes, Faith Family visits and retreats. ***Before serving in these roles, all parents will be MinistrySafe certified??***

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Mentor Responsibilities

A mentor is an adult who is a guide to a Confirmand:

- a. someone of mature faith who can serve as a guide and companion on this important part of their journey of faith;
- b. not “perfect”—but has a desire and a witness of living a life of faithful discipleship of Jesus Christ;
- c. interested in encouraging a young person to express his or her faith and questions openly;
- d. someone who can listen and recognize that he or she is still growing in faith, rather than an “I have all the answers” kind of adult;
- e. the same sex as the confirmand;
- f. preferably a member of First Rowlett UMC who is a dynamic Christian (mentors should be members because they will share in vows of commitment to watch over the student in the life of the church);
- g. an unrelated adult—we discourage family members as mentors because it is important that your child establish meaningful Christian relationships outside his/her family;
- h. Someone who can lead conversations with the confirmand, stand with the confirmand on Confirmation Sunday, and do their best to engage at other times in the course of the Confirmation process;
- i. Mentors are to attend the mentors group meeting on Sunday, September 9th at 11:00 a.m. in the Lighthouse;
- j. Mentors are encouraged to attend the Faith Community Visits;
- k. Volunteer and support classes, retreats and Faith Community visits as needed (approximately once per month).

As safety precautions, we ask mentors to agree to the following:

Never meet with confirmand alone behind closed doors;

Never drive the confirmand anywhere unless another adult is in the car.

Parent Involvement Coordinator (Kristina Duke)

Responsible for overseeing the administrative functions of the confirmation process. Schedules parents and volunteers to ensure that there are always two MinistrySafe certified adults in any class or function; Communicates upcoming events via email. Parents should respond via email within 24 hours to ensure that the communication flow is good.

Confirmation Coordinator (Kenna Davidson)

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Primary teacher of the CONFIRM curriculum on Sunday mornings. Is a resource for confirmands and their parents. The Interim Director of Youth Ministries also works with the Confirmation Coordinator to oversee the confirmation process.

Small Group Leader (Rylan Groothis)

Leads the Confirmation small group on Sunday Evenings. Primary planner of retreats and fun activities.

Interim Director of Youth Ministries (Alexis Blue)

Coordinates schedule of events and communicates with parents via email, constant contact, Remind (text communications) and in person.

Associate Pastor (Rev. Dretha Burris)

Responsible for the spiritual growth of the Confirmands and serves as the liaison to the rest of the pastoral staff. Participates in the baptisms of confirmands who have not already been baptized before joining the church.

Senior Pastor (Rev. Pam White)

Overall leadership of the entire congregation. Interviews confirmands prior to being confirmed.

Mentor Discussions

The goal of Mentor discussions is to get to know one another and share thoughts, experiences and stories—especially the story of how God has been at work in your life. We want you to meet 4 independent times over the course of the Confirmation season so you can hear what the Confirmand is learning, how they are growing and so your relationship has time to develop. The model for the time with the Confirmand (1 hour each session) is:

- Welcome/How was your week?
- Share with the confirmand as described in the grid below. Each session, this is your opportunity to share honestly about your faith story. Remember that this is not about you having all the answers or doing everything “right”—but instead sharing from a place that allows confirmands to learn how to tell their own stories, share their own doubts, ask questions, and grow in their journey of discipleship!

Please share in an age appropriate way. The “Share with confirmand” piece should take no longer than 10-minutes, be honest—but also take into account that this is not a peer listing to you story, but a child who is considering their own relationship with God, the church and the larger community of believers.

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- Ask questions and listen for answers. Don't be afraid of silence. This is a chance for the confirmand to share bits of their story—or their questions. Allow this time to unfold—as guided by the questions and the Holy Spirit!
- Learn together by opening the Bible and considering what scripture has to say about this particular aspect of discipleship.
- Pray. Always close in prayer—sharing any joys & concerns and inviting the confirmand to share what they have coming up in their lives. As it becomes more comfortable, invite the confirmand to lead the prayer—or for you each to pray for the other.
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DATE COMPLETED	Share with Confirmand <i>Answer the question below by sharing part of your faith story.</i> Ask & Listen <i>Now ask the same question you just answered to your confirmand</i>	Learn Together <i>Read the scripture together and discuss what, if anything, this has to do with our stories we have shared and the way God wants to grow us as disciples. A supplemental package for mentors will be provided</i>
OCT 2018	Who has influenced you the most in your faith? What about them or their life inspired you?	Ready Philippians 3:17 & 4:9 Proverbs 9:9 2 Timothy 2:2
DEC 2018	Describe turning points in your life and relationship with God or seasons when you have especially grown in your faith. How did you know what to do?	Proverbs 2:6 & 3:5-6 James 1:5, 4:7 Isaiah 30:21
FEB 2019	What does it look like to be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ? How is your faith part of your daily activities, relationship & choices?	Matthew 5:13-16
APR 2019	Describe a moment or experience when you've felt God was present with you. How do you tend to encounter God?	Isaiah 41:10 Romans 8:38-39

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CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE			
	Event	Time/Location	Morning Curriculum
	Order supplies Order Bibles & Student Guides	July 2018	
AUG 2018	Parent's Meeting	8/5 12:15 pm Lighthouse	
	Makeup Parent's Meeting	8/12 12:15 pm Lighthouse	
	First Confirmation Class	8/19	OUR JOURNEY Traveling Together Living Together
SEP 2018	Faith Community Visit to Temple Shalom	TBD in September	OUR HISTORY & HERITAGE The Faith of Jesus The Early Church The Reformation Wesley & The Methodists The Growth of Methodism (KD out 9/30)
	Fall Overnight Retreat at FRUMC Mentor Meeting	9/8-9/9 9/9 12:15 pm Lighthouse	
	Loving Together Belonging Together		
OCT 2018	Mentor visit #1	By appointment	OUR LIFE TOGETHER The Connection Simple Worship Music & Lyrics
	Relay for Life	10/13	
	Faith Community Visit to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church	TBD	
NOV 2018	Faith Community Visit to Greek Orthodox?	TBD	Remembrance Accepting Grace A Loving Church 11.25 TGiving OFF
DEC 2018	Mentor visit #2	By appointment	So Now What? OUR BELIEFS Faith & Trust Experiencing God 12/23 off? 12/30 off?

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JAN 2019	Faith Community Visit to Faith Family Baptist in Rowlett	TBD	The Bible – not just a History Book: A UM View The Holy Trinity Who is God? Prayer: Talking to God
	Winter Retreat Confirmation	1/11-13	
FEB 2019	Bridgeport Mid-Winter (Optional)	2/8-10	Prayer: Listening to God OUR THEOLOGY The Imago Dei Sin and Grace
	Mentor visit #3	By appointment	
	Bishop's Rally: Christ UMC Plano	2/17	
MAR 2019	Faith Community Visit to East Plano Islamic Center	TBD	Two Natures, One Man: Who is Jesus What is Salvation? The Holy Spirit as a guide What's next? Life After Death From Whence we came: The creeds
APR 2019	Spring Retreat: Mt. Lebanon Develop Creed A Faith to Decide; A Faith to Confirm; A Faith to Live	4/27-28 Mt. Lebanon	OUR FAITH AND CALLING: A Call to Follow A Spirit to Find A Story to Tell A journey to Continue
	Mentor Visit #4	By appointment	
	Home visits or meetings with Pastor Pam		
MAY 2019	Immersion Baptisms, if any Rehearsal for Confirmation Sunday	5/4	
	Confirmation Sunday with reception following	5/5	
	Kidnapping into youth	5/19	