



7th grade

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is one of the most celebrated steps in the life of the church, and we think it's really great to have it in the 7th grade. Why is that?

The preteen brain is constantly building and losing neurons - causing your preteen to be literally "brain-dead" (and you thought you were crazy!). More importantly, the brain goes through the "use it or lose it" principle, meaning that the parts of their brains they use in their preteen years are the parts that will stick with them for their entire lifetime.

Because of these facts, it makes perfect sense for a student to hear about where their faith comes from and what it means to own that for, perhaps, the first time. For many of our teens, their faith began with the commitment their parents made at the time of their baptism to raise them in the life of the church. Teenagers have the opportunity to claim that faith as their own and continue to be part of the church.

The units of the year include:

Know Your Story: We begin the Confirmation year by reviewing the story of God that we began studying as a child and that we reexamined in 5th and 6th grade. We'll talk about how this story is threaded through life, even in some of our favorite movies and books! We'll also talk about where the Bible came from and give each Confirmand a Bible to use throughout the year.

Confirm Your Faith: The next stage of Confirmation talks about what it means to be a Methodist but more importantly, a follower of Jesus. We'll talk about salvation, discipleship, and the different things that unite a church like the sacraments and Lord's Prayer.

Live Your Commitment: The story that God has crafted since the beginning of time continues with our own stories, and we'll begin connecting the two together. We'll answer the teens' toughest questions about faith and offer an opportunity for them to share their personal stories in small groups. We commence Confirmation with a weekend that includes their spring retreat and the Confirmation service.

Other important components of Confirmation:

- Small Groups bond Confirmands together through this shared experience over the course of the year
- Mentors that Confirmands meet with six times a year disciple them throughout the process
- Service so that Confirmands can begin practicing their faith
- Connection into the life of the church during seasons of Advent and Lent
- Retreats that provide experiences to go deeper in their faith

what's in the bible

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

– 2 Timothy 3:16

This year your student is going through Confirmation, a celebrated tradition in the United Methodist Church. Up until now, your tween has probably had a bunch of Sunday School lessons about the Bible, and it's probably a little jumbled together. We begin the Confirmation year by giving students a new Bible and by teaching them what the Bible is and why it's important.

Our hope is for students to see the Bible as a continuous story of God's love for humanity. We want them to begin making their own discoveries about how the Bible addresses our needs and concerns and helps make our faith "firm"!

So here's the challenge for your family: Have your tween interview everyone in their family and ask them what their favorite Bible verse or story is, and then have them highlight it in their Bible. Extend the project by involving grandparents, aunts and uncles, or anyone else that your teen might ask (include their mentor and Small Group Leader, too)!

After they've highlighted *at least* ten verses or stories, guide them to reflect on what they've learned:

- Were any of the verses or stories you heard new or surprising to you?
- What did you learn about your family members in relation to what their favorite verse was? What was your favorite verse that you gathered? Why?
- Do you have a favorite verse of the Bible yet? If so, be sure to highlight it as well!