

Confirmation at GSPC

March 16, 2010

Preamble: Confirmation marks the continued journey of faith, beginning at Baptism, in which a child of God expresses their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and seeks to become a faithful member of the church. The ritual of Confirmation marks the beginning of an active membership in the PCUSA. As stated in G-5.0102 in the Presbyterian Book of Order – “A faithful member accepts Christ’s call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his/her church. Such involvement includes:

- a. Proclaiming the good news;**
- b. Taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church;**
- c. Praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church;**
- d. Supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents;**
- e. Participating in the governing responsibilities of the church;**
- f. Demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church;**
- g. Responding to God’s activity in the world through service to others;**
- h. Living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life;**
- i. Working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment.”**

To ensure faithful membership, Confirmation will be achieved over a 3 year cycle for youth in grades 6-8th. Classes will be taught during the regular Sunday School hour each week January-May. In addition to class, youth will be matched with a mentor, participate in a day long retreat, and take part in mission/service projects.

Satisfactory completion of the Confirmation requirements means a youth has a working/reforming knowledge of their faith relationship to Christ and Christ’s body, the church. Satisfactory completion will be determined by the community of faith, including, the confirmand, the Associate Pastor, Sunday School Teachers, Youth Advisors, Youth mentors, and parents. Their report will be respectfully submitted to the Session prior to the Session examination of the confirmand. Ordinarily, youth should be present for Sunday School when they are not otherwise ill, out of town, or engaged in an extracurricular activity. Scheduling conflicts with classes, day retreats, and/or mission/service opportunities will be negotiated by the confirmand and the leaders.

6th-8th grade youth and families who do not wish to take part in the Standard Confirmation Plan, but who are seeking to have their youth confirmed in the church, will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Associate Pastor, the CE Committee, and the Session.

Rational for the change in Confirmation Pattern:

- To give Middle School Youth an in-depth and working knowledge of Reformed Theology, Presbyterianism, Creeds and confessions, Sacraments, Church, Scripture, and faith in Christ.
- To give Middle School Youth a chance to developmentally grasp the significance of becoming members of the church of God.
- To offer Middle School youth a chance to develop their faith through study and practical application of missions.
- To allow them to developmentally articulate their faith with adequate language, a working knowledge, and practical experience to draw from.
- To raise the expectation for our youth in their relationship to the community Christ Jesus and the Church.
- To establish a distinguishing marker of faith for a crucial life transition. So they are nurtured from:

Baptism – First Communion – Confirmation – Graduation

This plan is to be phased in to the Youth Ministry program of GSPC beginning in February 2010.

Standard Confirmation Plan

Confirmation will be held for youth in the 6th – 8th Grade. Middle School Youth will be encouraged by:

- Attending Sunday School for 3 Winter/Spring Terms
 - Participating in Mission/Service Experiences
 - Attending One Confirmation Day Long Retreat annually
 - Participating in a Mentor relationship with a member of GSPC
 - Participating in an examination by the Session, which shall include:
 - Communicating their faith verbally or in writing
 - Sharing their Spiritual Gifts and how they might use these gifts for ministry in the church
 - Reflecting upon their relationship with their mentor.
- ❖ *Upon a youth's satisfactory completion of the requirements, (as stated in the preamble), youth will be confirmed as members of the church on Reformation Sunday of their 9th grade year.*

Alternative Confirmation Plan

Note: This plan is for youth, entering the Youth Ministry of GSPC after their Middle School years, yet seeking to become a faithful member in the church. Satisfactory Completion of the requirements stated below will, again, be determined by the confirmand, the parents, the Associate Pastor, Sunday School teachers, Youth Advisors, and Youth's Mentors. Their Report will be respectfully submitted to the Session prior to the Session examination of the confirmand.

Youth entering GSPC Youth Ministry after Middle School will be encouraged by:

- Attending a Confirmation Session with the Associate Pastor & Youth Mentor
 - Participating in Mission/Service experiences
 - Participating in a Mentor Relationship with a member of GSPC
 - Participating in an Examination by the Session, which Shall include:
 - Communicating their faith verbally or in writing
 - Sharing their Spiritual Gifts and how they might use these gifts for ministry in the church
 - Reflecting upon their relationship with their mentor.
- ❖ *Upon a youth's satisfactory completion of the requirements, the youth will be confirmed as a member of the church on Reformation Sunday.*