

friendswoodunited methodist church Student Confirmation



CONFIRMATION: According to official United Methodist documents, confirmation is the process that uses “the services of the Baptismal Covenant, youth will profess their faith, commit themselves to a life of discipleship, and be confirmed. Confirmation is both a human act of commitment and the gracious action of the Holy Spirit strengthening and empowering discipleship.” (216.1.a) ***In other words, confirmation is the year-long program for students (who have completed the 5th grade) that prepares them to publically confess their faith in Christ, and become professing members of the United Methodist church and of our congregation.*** Confirmation is not simply a “rite of passage” or another class to complete. It is one step in the life-long journey that is being a follower of Christ. This step includes building relationships, deepening our understanding of God and the church, pursuing our general and individual call to ministry, and experiencing to a greater degree the love that God has poured out on us.

PARTICIPANTS: Friendswood United Methodist Church generally confirms youth at the end of their 6th grade year, following a year of participation in our Student Confirmation program. We do know that not all students who come to Friendswood United Methodist Church have gone through confirmation at other churches, and sometimes the 6th grade year just isn’t right for every family. If you have a question or concern regarding a child who isn’t in 6th grade, please contact the Director of Student Ministries. We would love to talk with you about options that are available to your family.

TIME COMMITMENT: Confirmation runs from September thru May. Our “classes” run from 4:30 – 6:00 pm, Sundays. We also schedule retreats in the fall and spring, as well as a few church visits and mission days. In addition, families are asked to regularly attend Sunday school and worship. Because of the seriousness of the important decision they will be making on Confirmation Sunday, ***students are expected to make a commitment to attend lessons, retreats, field trips, worship services, Sunday School class and service projects.***

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: First and foremost, we need help from parents in making this a priority for your family. Each of the events we ask students to participate in is designed to help students 1) RE-late to each another and God, RE-pond to God’s call on their life, and 3) RE-main connected to God through involvement in His Holy church. If you make this a priority, and model it for your child, the impact on his or her life will be much greater. In addition, parents are asked to consider volunteering. Please see the Confirmation Volunteer Form.

COST: We have combined the entire year of programming into one flat-fee of \$180.00 per child. With this money, we purchase all of the program materials, an NIV teen study Bible for each child, the class T-Shirt, retreats, and are able to cover other expenses during the year. You may pay this amount in full at registration or in installments. This is a flat fee, and there are no refunds for missed events, as we expect everyone to attend all events. At Friendswood UMC, we never want money to be a reason for youth not participating. Therefore, scholarships are available upon request.

FRIENDS: Students are always welcome, and encouraged, to bring friends to any and all RE Student Ministry programs. This particular program, however, is focused on students making a confession of faith and joining the church at its completion. We ask that only students whose families are members, or potential members, of Friendswood UMC take part in a “full-time” basis and attend the retreats.

THE PROGRAM: Our program consists of weekly gatherings, regular attendance at Sunday school and worship, mission trips, weekend retreats, and new worship experiences. Time is spent in both large and small group settings. Teaching on Sunday evening takes place in a large group, before we transition to small groups. There are two adult leaders with each group. These small groups become close, as they share experiences together throughout the year. Like all things, we are more likely to participate when we have a friend with us. One of our main objectives is to foster relationships that will last throughout their school years.

There are two retreats during the year; in October and April. The first retreat helps to solidify relationships within the small group. Attendance at this retreat is crucial to your child's confirmation experience. This is an opportunity to really get to know one another, and their small group leaders in a relaxing setting outside of church. Our spring retreat is a bit more serious, as we focus on what we have learned, experienced, and talk about how we will each choose to individually respond.

CURRICULUM: Throughout the year, we look at the basics of Christian faith. We will discuss the importance of scripture, major creeds and Christian beliefs, the history of the church (universal) and the United Methodist church, in particular. We also will have several opportunities to experience worship in different settings. Generally, we visit a Jewish synagogue and a gospel style church, to help the students to appreciate other forms of worship and better understand their own. The retreats include our most intense curriculum of the whole year. It is a time for in-depth discussions and bonding, which cannot occur in 1-1/2 hours on Sunday afternoons. This time is mostly designed to deepen their personal relationship with Christ.

WHY CONFIRMATION ISN'T JUST AN 8 WEEK CLASS: We believe that following Jesus Christ takes more than one hour on Sunday morning. We have seen over and over that ***students, and families, who participate in worship, study, fellowship, and mission on a weekly basis, experience more of what God has to offer.*** The reason we offer so much is that we believe God has called us to participate in each of these aspects of the Christian life regularly. Involvement in Student Confirmation is voluntary. No child has to go through Student Confirmation. Your family could skip Student Confirmation, and then your child could join the church later. What we offer, however, is done so with the conviction that your child is the ultimate beneficiary. ***Students at the completion of this process will be ready to respond to God's call, because they will know what it means to live a Christian life and place their trust in Jesus.***

BAPTISIM: Your child may or may not be baptized, and that is OK. The Service of Confirmation will include Baptism for those who have not yet been baptized. If your child has been baptized (in any Christian church or Christian tradition) we affirm and accept this baptism.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY: Student Confirmation wraps up each year in the spring, on Confirmation Sunday, generally held several Sundays following Easter. Each Confirmand will kneel, and with the hands of the pastor placed on them they will be confirmed and welcomed into the active community of the church. They will answer in unison, questions which all Confirmands in the Methodist church are asked. This is a wonderful day in the life of our church that is shared with friends and relatives.

CELEBRATION DINNER and REHERSAL: There will be a dinner to celebrate with our Confirmands and their families on the Friday before Confirmation Sunday. Immediately following the dinner we will adjourn to the Worship Center to rehearse for the Confirmation Service.

COMMUNICATION: In addition to mass-communication outlets like the weekly church Bulletin and the weekly E-Messenger, we also communicate with students and families by e-mail, phone, facebook, and snail mail to remind you of important events. We will do our best to insure that you know what is going on at all times.

QUESTIONS: Contact our Director of Student Ministries, Drew Swanson, at 281.482.7535, x108 or drew@friendswoodumc.com

Confirmation Covenant



Student Agreement

Student Confirmation is an opportunity to publically profess your faith in Jesus Christ, and become professing members of the church. This is done through a variety of events that help students 1) RE-late to each another and God, RE-spond to God's call on their life, and 3) RE-main connected to God through involvement in His Holy church. Therefore:

- I commit myself to growing and maturing as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- I am willing to learn new ways to give and receive Christ's love as we travel together as a confirmation community.
- I will attend all sessions. If I am unable to attend a session, I will let a leader know as soon as possible and I will make every effort to be familiar with the material I missed.
- I will regularly attend Sunday school and a Worship Service.
- I understand that as I honor my Confirmation Covenant, I will grow and develop as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Agreement

I will support, encourage, and guide my child during the confirmation process. As a visible sign of my support, we will regularly attend Sunday school and worship. In addition, we will make every effort to structure family schedules so that Student Confirmation is a priority. Understanding that, in general, children find important the things that their parents find important, we will make every effort to model Christ's importance in our life as well.

Signature

Signature

Date

***Please return the white copy, signed, to the Student Ministry Office.
Keep the pink copy for your records.***

Student Confirmation 2010 - 2011 Schedule



Important Dates To Write Down:

September 12, 2010	* Confirmation Orientation for Parents/Students
September 19, 2010	First Confirmation Class
October 15-17, 2010	Fall retreat
April 8-10, 2011	Spring retreat
April 17, 2011	Last Confirmation Class
April 29, 2011	Celebration Dinner and Rehearsal
May 1, 2011	Confirmation Sunday

We will not meet for class on the following dates:

November 28, 2010
December 19 & 26, 2010
March 13, 2011
April 10 & 24, 2011

Alternative Worship Experiences:

We will schedule two alternative worship experiences, one in the fall and one in the spring, as part of our Student Confirmation program. Students will be asked to attend two worship services outside of Friendswood UMC, and journal their experiences.

Christian Mission Experiences:

We will schedule at least two mission experiences, one in the fall and one in the spring, as part of our Student Confirmation program. Students will be asked to attend and journal about two mission experiences that they join in. A list of ongoing mission opportunities will also be available. In the event that they are unable to attend the scheduled mission experiences, it is up to the families to make arrangements to fulfill this commitment.

A Word about Orientation:

You and your child will need to attend an Orientation meeting Sunday, September 12th, at 5:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Siblings are invited to attend with your family or childcare is available by reservation only. Make a reservation by e-mailing childcare@friendswoodumc.com. If you are unable to attend the Orientation please contact Drew Swanson, Director of Student Ministries.

***Other dates will be added as we go, and should be available by the
September 12th Orientation Meeting.***