Confirmation Guidebook
for parents & confirmands
2019 – 2020

Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church
www.montview.org
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Introduction

Welcome to Confirmation! It’s time exploration, questioning, learning, and growing in faith! Confirmation is one way that we honor our baptismal promises. It’s an intentional time that we set aside to explore spirituality and the great questions and traditions of our faith. Together we will seek to discover for ourselves what it means to belong to a Christian community.

This eight-month process is designed for 8th graders and above to:
• Gain a basic knowledge and understanding of the Christian Story.
• Learn about the core beliefs, practices, and emphases of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
• Explore the vows that confirmands if they choose to be confirmed so that they understand the commitment they will be making.

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is an act of covenant renewal that includes three parties:
1. the Spirit of God confirms a confirmand’s baptismal identity as a child of God, whether baptism occurred in childhood or will happen at the Confirmation service.
2. the confirmand confirms their faith in Jesus Christ and the teachings of the church; and
3. the congregation, including parents and other family member, confirms the confirmands gifts for ministry and active church membership.

If there should be only one word to encompass the whole of confirmation, it might be “embrace.” Yes, they were embraced, welcomed into the church at baptism; but as life progresses God continues to welcome us into new stages of faith and accountability for it, and we have the opportunity over and over to embrace the covenant in which God embraces us.

- Ron Byars, embraced and Embracing: Exploring the Foundations of Confirmation
# Confirmation Calendar 2019 – 2020

Classes take place in the Gallery Room

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>What is Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Baptism &amp; Parent Information Meeting</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| September 22| #3  | Worship  
  *Confirmation class commissioned in worship together* |
| September 29| #4  | Will you devote yourself to the breaking of bread? |
| October 6   | #5  | How do we know and trust God? Confirmation Partner Check-In  
  *Confirmation class attends worship together* |
| October 13  | #6  | Bible Part 1 |
| October 20  | #7  | Bible Part 2 |
| October 27  | #8  | Confirmation Project Overview: Contemplative Practices |
| November 3  | #9  | Fall JAM Retreat (no confirmation class) |
| November 10 | #10 | Confirmation Project Overview: Compassionate Practices |
| November 17 | #11 | TBD: Science and Faith? |
| November 24 | #12 | Seasons of the Church Year: Advent |
| December 1  | #13 | What is sin? And How do we turn from it?  
  Confirmation Partner Check-In |
| December 8  | #14 | Discipleship: What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus? |
| December 15 | #15 | Discipleship: What does it mean to show Christ’s love? |
| December 22 |     | TBD: Something Fun! |
| December 29 |     | NO CONFIRMATION - Christmas |
| January 5   | #16 | Confirmation Partner Check-In |
| January 12  | #17 | Will you devote yourself to the church’s teaching? |
| January 19  | #18 | Tentative: Alternative Worshipping Community (MLK Weekend) |
| January 26  | #19 | Creeds and Traditions Continued |
| February 2  | #20 | Confirmation Partner Check-In |
| February 9  | #21 | Stewardship: Will you devote yourself to the church’s Fellowship |
| February 16 | #22 | Stewardship: Creation Care |
| February 23 | #23 | Seasons of the Church Year: Lent |
March 1  #24  Faith Statement Workshop & Confirmation Partner Check-In
March 8  #25  TBD
March 15  #26  TBD
March 22  #27  TBD
March 29  #28  TBD

April 5  #29  Project and Faith Statement Sharing
April 12   NO CONFIRMATION - EASTER
April 19  #30  TBD
April 21   Dinner & Meeting with Session, 5:30 PM – 7PM
(Parents, Partners, and Elders Invited)
April 26   Youth Sunday

May 3      TBD
May 10     TBD
May 17     Crossings Ritual & Confirmation Sunday

Confirmands are asked to attend 70% of the classes, which is 21 classes total.
Classes in bold are high priority classes. Please make every effort to attend.

Classes are held most every Sunday from 9:30AM – 10:45AM. Weekly lessons are designed
to build on one another. It is not expected that everyone will attend. However, when that is
not possible, you must notify Amanda Osenga. If it is a “confirmation partner check-in” Sunday
please also notify your confirmation partner. This is helpful for small group planning.

Confirmands will have an opportunity to share topics that they are interested in exploring.
These topics will fill in “TBD” dates on the calendar. In addition we will also visit several other
worshipping communities, both within and outside of the Christian tradition. Some of these
visits will be on Sundays designated “TBD”.

Possible class TBD class topics include:
- Science and Faith
- World Religions
- What the hell is heaven
- What does the church say about sexuality
The Class Curriculum

The curriculum we use for confirmation draws upon the recently developed PC(USA) confirmation curriculum *Big God Big Questions*.

*Big God Big Questions* encourages confirmands to ask big questions and to pay attention to how different people draw upon their faith and experiences to answer them in diverse ways.

*Big God Big Questions* introduces confirmands to what it means to be a member of a congregation. Confirmation is a time for you to share with your confirmand your choice to be part of and serve your church.

Being an Engaged Confirmation Parent/Caregiver

Make confirmation a priority for your family.
Young people attend Confirmation classes for a variety of reasons. Sometimes their parents and families expect them to attend. Be sure to explain why you want them to take Confirmation. They need to know that you and your extended family support them in whatever decision they make. Confirmation takes effort.

- Prioritize class attendance and the time it takes to have one-on-one conversations.
- Be open to volunteer opportunities as they become known.
- Support your confirmand in meeting their expectations.

Model a life of discipleship.
Your children pay attention to what’s important to you. Your participation in worship and active service in the church, communicates what you believe is important. Be open to sharing your own faith with your youth. Don’t worry if you are unsure of your faith yourself, don’t know answers, or haven’t been to worship in a while. This is a good opportunity to walk the Confirmation journey with your child. Volunteer to serve as greeters together or get involved in one of the many missions of Montview. Pray for and encourage your youth during this time of faith exploration.

Commit to worshiping together.
Confirmation will experience the breadth of the full church year, including Advent, Holy Week, and Easter. Our worshiping life tells the story of who we are and whose we are. Make an extra effort to attend Advent, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, and Easter services as a family. Youth can often be found sitting together in the balcony on the pulpit side.

Advocate for our child.
The confirmation leaders need to hear from you the ways that they can best support your child. Adaptations can be made to the activities. The church’s life and membership are deep and wide, and there are ways for all confirmands to affirm their faith and become active members in our congregation.
Expectations of Confirmands

- Open your heart and mind to the work of the Holy Spirit and God’s voice in your life.

- Attend 70% (or 21) confirmation classes
  - Make every effort to attend the “high priority” confirmation classes listed in bold on the schedule
  - Communicate to Amanda Osenga and your confirmation partners if you are unable to attend
  - Abide by our class covenant

- Engage regularly with your confirmation partner

- Complete four worship reflections
  - One of these may be from a worshiping community that we visit together

- Create and complete a confirmation project

- Write a personal statement of faith

- Attend a minimum of four fellowship events (JAM/MOB) during confirmation

- Meet with the session

Confirmation Classes

Classes will take place on Sunday mornings during the education hour from 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM. Participation in confirmation is a commitment to the community and to the process. Confirmands are asked to attend approximately 70% of the classes (21 total). Confirmands are also encouraged to be on time to classes so that we can make the most of our time together. Classes will be centered on the questions that we ask of anyone who joins the church:

- Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?
- Who is your Lord and Savior?
- Will you be Christ’s faithful disciple obeying his word and showing his love?
- Will you devote yourself to the church’s teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Confirmation Partners

The confirmation program takes place in community, as we explore what it means to be in relationship with God, with one another, and with the world. Each youth is paired with a Confirmation Partner, a spiritual mentor, who accompanies the youth on their journey. Confirmation partners will join us in class on the first Sunday of every month, beginning in October.
Worship Reflections
Worship is an important part of our life together in a community of faith. Worship is the most comprehensive way a congregation rehearses its faith and is recharged by God. Worship has roots in the word “worthy”. In worship we are invited to ask the question, “what is worthy for us to pay attention to and orient our lives towards?”

Confirmands will be asked to provide four reflections on worship at Montview. A worksheet will be provided and can be turned into Amanda Osenga once they’re completed.

As a confirmation class we will attend worship together on World communion Sunday (Oct 6).

Confirmands will also have the opportunity to provide leadership in worship (reader, communion server, greeter, usher, acolyte, etc.)

Confirmands will also have the opportunity visit other worshiping communities both within and outside of the Christian tradition. Confirmands may choose for one of their reflections to be on a worship community that we visit.

Fellowship
Our relationship with God calls for us to live in relationship with our fellow human beings. Confirmands are asked to attend four youth fellowship events throughout the year.

JAM (6th – 8th grades) Fellowship typically meets from 4:00 – 5:30 on Sunday evenings in the Cellar. Dinner is served from 5:30 – 6:00 PM.

MOB (9th – 12th grades) Fellowship typically meets from 6:00 – 7:30 PM on Sunday evenings. Dinner is served from 5:30 – 6:00 PM.

It is our hope that 8th graders take an active role in this part of the life of our church. There will also be opportunities for the confirmation class to gather throughout the year (bowling, ice skating, etc.). These gatherings also count towards the requirement to attend a minimum of four fellowship events over the year.

Confirmation Project
The confirmation project is an opportunity to put faith in action. We have two “muscles” that we use to express our faith. These muscles are there, we all have them, but they need to be exercised in order for them to be strong.

1. Contemplative: Listening for God’s Heartbeat (Inward Focused)
2. Compassion: Putting God’s heart into action (Outward Focused)

Resources and further information will be provided. Two confirmation class sessions will be devoted to the confirmation project.
Faith Statement
Confirmands will be asked to develop a faith statement that expresses their faith and what they believe. This statement gives confirmands an opportunity to express their beliefs about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the sacraments of baptism and communion and their own faith journeys.

These can be written or they can be expressed through a creative means.

Resources and further information will be provided. One confirmation class will be devoted to preparing the confirmands to write their personal faith statement. We will also write a faith statement together as a class. These will be shared with session.

Examination with Session
As the culmination of confirmation youth will have an opportunity to meet with session and share their projects and faith statements. Youth who wish to join the church as full voting members will be voted on by session at this meeting. The date for this meeting is April 21st.

Confirmation Sunday and Active Church Membership
The church nurtures those baptized as children and calls them to make public their personal profession of faith and their acceptance of responsibility in the life of the church. When these persons are ready, they shall be examined by the session. After the session has received them as active members they shall be presented to the congregation during a service of public worship. In that service the church shall confirm them in the baptismal identity. They shall reaffirm the vows taken at Baptism by

a. professing their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,
b. renouncing evil and affirming their reliance on God’s grace,
c. declaring their intention to participate actively and responsibility in the worship and mission of the church.

They are commissioned for full participation in the mission and governance of the church, and are welcomed by the congregation. Book of Order W-4.2033

Youth who have not been previously baptized in a Christian church, may be baptized on Confirmation Sunday. Youth who do not choose to make their public profession of faith at this time may be recognized and affirmed for their months of hard work.