



Confirmation Program

Buffalo United Methodist Church (Rev. 8/21/20)

Thank you for being a part of this exciting and life-changing ministry! The ministry of confirmation exists to provide youth with a meaningful experience of Christian community and a transformative education in the Christian faith, so that they may become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and committed members of The United Methodist Church. Most (but not all) Confirmation activities take place on either Wednesday evenings or Sunday mornings. You will get a complete calendar at orientation in September. The *BUMC Connection* will also keep you apprised of the schedule and any other deadlines or needs, as well as the online calendar in the *Breeze* church directory.

In case of illness or other absence, students or their parents should text, email, or call Pastor Bill (pastorbill@buffaloumc.com, 763 234-7684) *before* class. If it is a Faith Night, it is the responsibility of **students** to tell their adult Faith Partner as early as possible so the adult Faith Partner knows not to come to class. If an **adult Faith Partner** will be absent, it is their responsibility to contact their student and another adult Faith Partner to arrange for the student to join an alternate group on Faith Night (students are expected to attend Faith Nights, even when their adult Faith Partner must be absent). **Adult Table Leaders** who will be absent are asked to let Pastor Bill know so he can arrange for a substitute.

Wednesday Evenings

Wednesday Confirmation meetings are from 6:00-7:30 p.m. **For the fall semester, these will be online (Zoom) only.** Please arrive for the Zoom meeting promptly and avoid distractions. Wednesday sessions are divided among a variety of formats:

Focus Nights

- There are sixteen Focus Nights each year. These are fun interactive times on a two-year alternating curriculum schedule. 7th and 8th grade students will attend Focus Nights together with regular adult table leaders.
- We have a two-year confirmation curriculum that includes: Old Testament, New Testament, and United Methodist History and Theology

Faith Nights

- Each youth has been assigned a faith partner who is a mentor and spiritual friend throughout the confirmation experience.
- Faith partners are persons committed to following Jesus who have been active members of our congregation for at least one year.
- Partners meet together on Faith Nights, about once a month, to learn together and to develop a statement of their personal faith.

Combined Nights

- Occasionally, the confirmation students will join the Senior High Youth for a Wednesday evening event, including mission projects and games (also online via Zoom this fall).

Sunday Mornings

Confirmation students are required to attend both worship and Sunday School, preferably with BUMC or, if necessary, with another church. At BUMC, worship services are currently online in several alternate formats. Students are encouraged to participate in the 9:00 am Facebook Premer videos which allow them to interact with others during worship via Facebook. They can also watch the videos at a later time or date, either on Facebook or YouTube. Sunday School is from 10:00-11:00 during the regular school year and is online via Zoom this fall. In addition, each confirmation student is required to complete a minimum of 20 Sunday morning worship notes each year of their confirmation program (the notes form is posted in the Confirmation section of our church website).

Mission/Service Experiences

Confirmands are expected to engage in community missions and church service activities during their time in Confirmation. These experiences may be shared with faith partners or parents. ***Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the usual service opportunities are not available. Therefore, the class will be brainstorming creative ways to exercise their gifts in service to the community and world.***

Retreats

There are usually two Confirmation-related retreats each year:

- Each fall, the United Methodist Youth gather for a week-end conference at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud (“The Event”). ***Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s unclear whether there will be an online alternative offered. We will keep you posted.***
- Students and faith partners usually participate in a **required retreat each January for both years of the confirmation program.** ***Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not yet determined what will be possible in January. Please note the date given on the Confirmation Calendar and we will keep you posted.***

Creed and Commitment

Throughout the two-year program, students complete a personal belief statement which may, depending on the student, include creative/artistic expressions of their faith. Portions of the faith statements will be shared during the Confirmation Sunday worship service. Faith statements will be mostly developed during meetings with Faith Partners on Faith Nights. Parents and Faith Partners help guide this process to completion.

- Students must make a personal decision whether they are ready to make a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and a commitment to the life of discipleship through the church on Confirmation Sunday. Students who choose not to make this commitment will receive a certificate of completion for confirmation classes but will not participate in confirmation Sunday, since it requires profession of faith.
- Confirmation Sunday for this year’s 8th graders will be on September 13, 2020 (online)

Age and Special Considerations

- Students typically begin confirmation in 7th grade and join the church in the fall of the freshman year. After that, they are eligible to participate in senior high youth ministries. Students who are older who would like to participate in the confirmation program are always welcome!