



Confirmation Program

Buffalo United Methodist Church (Rev.8/26/21)

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 Weekly Connection* will also keep you apprised of the schedule and any other deadlines or needs.

In case of illness or other absence, students or their **parents** should call the office 763-682-3538 or email Pastor Bill (pastorbill@buffaloumc.com) or text him *before* class (763 234-7684). 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 church. 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. Please arrive promptly. Wednesday sessions are divided among a variety of formats:

Focus Nights

- There are sixteen Focus Nights each year. These are fun interactive classroom 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
- Parents sign up for a rotating schedule to provide snacks. **(Outside only per COVID precautions as weather permits through October; Remaining dates are TBD)**

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 share a meal together at church and to learn together and develop a statement of their personal faith. **(Pizza outside per COVID precautions as weather permits through October; Remaining dates are TBD)**
- ~~Parents sign up for a rotating schedule to prepare and serve the meals for Faith Nights.~~
(Temporarily suspended per COVID precautions)

Combined Nights

- Occasionally, the confirmation students will join the Senior High Youth for a Wednesday evening event, including mission projects and games. This is another opportunity for parents to sign up to bring snacks. **(Outside only per COVID precautions as weather permits through October; Remaining dates are TBD)**

Sunday Mornings

Confirmation students are required to attend both worship and Sunday School, either here at BUMC or, if necessary, at another church. As we emerge from the pandemic, we're currently worshipping in a single

service at 9am. We would prefer confirmation students to normally worship in-person so that they may form relationships and avail themselves of service opportunities. Worship time(s) may change this fall. Confirmation Sunday School follows worship and is in-person only. In addition, each confirmation student is required to complete a minimum of 20 Sunday morning worship notes each year of their confirmation program.

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. Each experience is considered complete only after the student turns in a completed Servant Ministry Form (one form per event).

- Students are required to participate in two Community Service hours for each year in the confirmation program. Examples of Community Service include volunteering at the hospital, Love, Inc., food shelf, nursing home, etc.
- Students are also required to serve in the regular ministries of the church, an expectation we have of all of our members. Student are required to serve in two hours of Church Service activities for each year in the confirmation program. Examples of church service include ushering, ~~helping Pastor Bill with the Communion elements~~ **(Temporarily suspended per COVID precautions)**, ~~helping to serve communion~~ **(Temporarily suspended per COVID precautions)**, playing worship music, sound/AV help, Property Team projects, etc.

Retreats

There are 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”). The next gathering **has not yet been scheduled**. Each student is required to attend at least once during their confirmation program. Most youth who attend want to return the following year. Cost per student this year **has not yet been announced**.
- Students and faith partners will participate in a required retreat each January for both years of the confirmation program at a new location and format not yet selected. The next retreat is January 29-30, 2022. This is a critical experience of learning and sharing and all students and faith partners are required to participate. (Faith Partners do not stay overnight, and it’s possible that we will make this a Saturday retreat for all this year.) Cost per student this year **has not yet been determined**.

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.

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!