

CONFIRMATION '03-'04

~ connection ~

December '03

Prince of Peace Student Ministry

8304 Old Keene Mill Road
Springfield, VA 22152
(703) 451-5855

Celebrations are such a big part of our lives. As we look forward to the rapidly approaching Christmas holiday (and we see all that we feel we need to do to prepare for Christmas) we are so keenly aware of the place of celebrations in our lives. Moreover, life is filled with all kinds of celebrations—birthdays, anniversaries, other special days set aside for the worship of God, like Easter.

As we look down the road toward Confirmation Day, it, too, will be a special day of celebration for you and your child. It will be a time to celebrate what God has done in the life of your child since the day he or she was baptized. There, through water and the Word, our Lord called your child also to be *His* child. New birth in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Spirit were bestowed. Growth and nurturing in Christ still lay ahead for this “new creation” in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Confirmation plays a significant role in the spiritual formation of your child. But to put things into perspective, this “formal” spiritual training (confirmation class itself) lasts only about 60 weeks—120 total hours (give or take). It helps set the stage for a life-long connection with Christ. *Your role*, and the role of other significant adults, *has lasted for years and will continue for years to come.*

In the midst of it all, you will remain among the most important tools God uses to shape this faith in your child’s life. Those who raise children have the unique blessing and responsibility of *modeling* the Christian faith for their children by their patterns of worship, lifestyle, and their own expressions of faith which they share with their children.

In this mailing, we hope to share with you helpful information as you take part in your child’s preparation for Confirmation Day. But you know, that’s not all that we’re preparing for, a special day—we’ve been preparing these children for a *life* of faithfulness and dedication to our God. And He has reminded us of His faithfulness and dedication to us, sending His only Son, the Christ-child born in Bethlehem, who came to offer himself as a sacrifice for our sins. It is He who has laid claim upon our entire lives in Holy Baptism, making us His forever.

May God bless your celebration of His love this Christmas, now, and for all eternity. And may God bless your child as they prepare for a life of faithfulness to Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

—Pastor Ken

Confirmation day celebrates what God has done in the life of your child since the day of baptism...it looks forward to the work that God will continue to do—for all eternity.

IMPORTANT DATES AND TIMES:

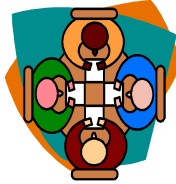
- **Tuesday, Dec. 16, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**
Confirmation Servant Event ~ Christmas shopping for economically disadvantaged families. (Students may bring a ca\$h donation to help with the purchases; adult drivers needed.)
- **NO CLASS over Christmas break:
12/23 & 12/30**
- **Classes resume on Tuesday, January 6
(4:00 - 5:45 p.m.)**
- **Saturday, April 24, 2004 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**
Confirmation Class Witness (in Sanctuary)
- **Sunday, April 25, 2003 11:00 a.m. service**
Rite of Confirmation

HOW ARE WE DOING? (CLASS UPDATE)

You might wonder how the Tuesday routine is going as we approach the halfway point in confirmation this year. After all, if you ask many teens or pre-teens to sum up any given school day, you'd be likely to hear something vague, such as, "It was fine." or, "Things went o.k."

Our goals for confirmation class can be summed up in this way:

- ✦ We desire that students to come away from confirmation with a deeper connection with Jesus. This living relationship with their living Lord is filled both with "head knowledge" and "heart knowledge."
- ✦ In the process, especially as we meet in small groups, students build a deeper connection with one another. They make connections to a caring Christian community through Confirmation.
- ✦ These relationships build bridges to the broader community—the family of God at PoP, and the community all around us that needs His love.



Each week the students spend time building that connection with one another in "small group" time, sharing such things as their "highs and lows," relating those to their walk with Christ during that week, and praying for one another.

During our large group time, this year we are looking at the stories of faith found in the Bible. Through understanding God's activity in His world, we learn of His love, His character, and His desire for our lives. We also come to see how we have been connected with His plan for us—that plan which found its fulfillment in Christ's coming, His death as our substitute, and His resurrection. And even more than that, we see the ways in which He is active in our lives here and now.

Students are encouraged to take notes based on our class discussions, and each week a student is chosen to type a summary on a laptop/projector combination for all to see. We hope to place these notes online in the new year to help parents gain a greater connection with what is being taught in class each week.



CONFIRMATION CLASS WITNESS SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 7:00 P.M.

The Confirmation Class Witness is an important part of the confirmation process for 8th grade students. It gives each student an opportunity to present a personal testimony of their faith in Christ, as well as an opportunity to articulate the teaching of Christ they have learned through confirmation class.

We will hold the class witness the evening before Confirmation Day so that parents, grandparents, baptismal sponsors, and other significant individuals in the faith life of your child will have an opportunity to be in attendance. More information about the class witness will be shared in the coming months.

CONFIRMATION ~ connection ~

WHERE ARE WE GOING? (NEW ... IN THE NEW YEAR)

You may have noticed that up until now, we have not assigned homework as a part of confirmation classes. In many ways, that is by design, because growing in faith is not something that can be measured through homework, classwork, or tests.



However, having said that, there is still much we want the students to take away from their time in confirmation, such as how to listen for the main points when God's word is presented in the form of a sermon, and gaining a desire to learn and know God's Word for themselves.

In the new year we will be introducing some tools that will help the students in a few of these areas.

Sermon Summaries (6 for all students): In our world today, it is really a challenge to listen to one person speak for 10-20 minutes straight. Period. Add to that being able to pick out the main points set forth by that speaker, and you have an even greater challenge.

Being able to take the message from a sermon and apply it to one's life is a skill that is developed with practice and intentionality (i.e. it doesn't happen by osmosis).

To help students in this learning process, we will be introducing the practice of taking "sermon summaries." The student will receive a worksheet that will help them summarize the main points of a sermon and give practical ways that they can apply God's word to their lives.

We will ask each student to complete 6 of these sermon summaries by the end of April (just over 1 each month). In the process of practicing this, the students will begin to get more out of the process of listening to the sermons, and their faith will be enriched.

Testimony of Faith (8th Graders): Eighth grade students will receive a three-part assignment around the beginning of February, called "What Is your Story." The work that he or she does on this project will serve as the class project for each 8th grader this year. The project will build the foundation for a personal testimony of faith that the Confirmands will give at the Confirmation Class Witness on Saturday, April 24.

The preparation for and delivery of this testimony of their faith will strengthen each student in their ability to speak confidently and joyfully about their faith with others in "real world" situations.

Memory work (all students): We are looking at the most practical way to introduce select Bible verses for the students to memorize during the remainder of the year. Memorizing helps students internalize their faith.