

## **Membership and Confirmation**

We are looking forward to both Membership and Confirmation classes in Lent. If St. Matthew UMC feels like your church home but you aren't a member yet, talk with Pastor Ann about how you can join the church.

### **Membership FAQ**

1. Why would someone join the church? What is the benefit?

People join a church as a way of saying, "this is my church home, and I commit to being in ministry with this faith community." It is a commitment to support the church with your prayers, presences, gifts, service and witness. Members can serve on certain committees or in certain church positions. Members also vote on matters, as set out in the Book of Discipline, including matters at the annual Church Conference (usually held in the fall). Membership says you are part of the UM connection!

But you can be part of our ministry, serve in missions, help lead worship, be part of Sunday School, UWF or choir without being a member. Significantly, our communion table is always open, so you do NOT have to be a member to receive the sacraments.

2. What's the difference between membership and confirmation?

Confirmation is generally for teenagers who want to become members. Confirmation covers topics like the Bible, church history, and theological concepts like the Trinity, who is God, and what is salvation, so that young people have all the information they need to make the decision for themselves about whether to become members. Confirmation classes will be over a period of weeks, including a confirmation retreat, and we anticipate celebrating Confirmation Sunday in May.

Membership classes will cover some of the same topics, but often in a more abbreviated form, as is appropriate for adults, who, hopefully, know much of what the confirmation curriculum will cover. If there are areas that a new member would like more information about, Pastor Ann will answer any questions. We are planning on bringing in new members before Easter.

3. Will I need to be baptized (or baptized again)?

A person must be baptized before becoming a member of the congregation because baptism brings us into union with Christ and with the church universal. Accordingly, if someone has never been baptized, we will celebrate the baptism first, before the membership vows are taken. But if you have been baptized, as an infant, for example, you do not need to be baptized again.

4. I'm interested. What do I do now?

Reach out to Pastor Ann and let her know! Send an email to [pastorann@stmatthewmesa.org](mailto:pastorann@stmatthewmesa.org). Once we have an idea of all adults who would like to join the church, she will schedule membership classes accordingly. Confirmation is already in the planning stage (so don't wait!).

5. I'm already a member, but that sounds pretty interesting. What about me?

If you would like a refresher course, you can join a membership class, although scheduling priority will be the availability of new members. Additionally, existing members might want to serve as a mentor to a young person going through confirmation. Reach out to the office or to Pastor Ann.