

CONFIRMATION SPONSORSHIP

In the Episcopal tradition, the decision to “make one’s Confirmation” is an adult decision to affirm the promises made on our behalf at baptism. Baptism is a sacrament invoked in the body of Christ; we promise, or others promise on our behalf, to follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. This is not only a promise made by the individual, but made and supported by the faith community we call the body of Christ.

At the time of Confirmation, it is appropriate that those persons who have played a significant or formative role in the person’s faith development be part of their formation as they make their own commitment to Christ and to the baptismal promises of our faith.

What Qualifies a Person to Serve as a Sponsor?

- The sponsor should be a confirmed or received adult member of The Episcopal Church and a member of St. Elizabeth’s.
- Sponsors should actively participate in the life of the church for their own spiritual growth and strengthening.
- Sponsors are persons who commit themselves to a mentoring relationship with the candidate.

What Is Expected of the Sponsor?

It is expected that the sponsor will

- Read the Confirmation service (p. 413) and the Catechism (p. 845) in the Book of Common Prayer (available online at www.bcponline.org)
- Attend Confirmation preparation sessions when possible
- Be willing to explore questions, issues, and expectations around Confirmation and faith with the candidate
- Share one’s own spiritual journey and experiences with the candidate
- Pray for the candidates for Confirmation, that they might approach the sacrament with reverence and thanksgiving. *O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*
- Be with the candidate when he or she makes a mature affirmation of faith in the presence of the Bishop at Confirmation (May or June, TBD).

Confirmation FAQs for Parents and Youth

What is Confirmation?

After a person in grade 8 or above is “ready and duly prepared,” he or she has the chance to be confirmed, which is “to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop.” It’s not joining the church. (That happened at baptism.) It’s not about pleasing parents or grandparents. Parents made the decision for their child at baptism, now it’s time to allow young people to explore their own relationship with God, as well as what they think and believe about God and the church.

What can parents do to support their youth preparing for Confirmation?

Parents can help their youth decide if they are ready to make the commitment of time and energy to prepare. Parents can listen when the youth is ready to talk, encourage them, and support their efforts. At the end, who decides if a youth is “ready” to make a “mature” spiritual commitment? The priest and the youth make this decision. Not everyone’s internal spiritual journey goes along in the same way; it could be that a young person decides not to be confirmed at this time, or that the priest determines that more preparation is appropriate.

What is “duly prepared?”

At St. Elizabeth’s, preparation for Confirmation is a three part commitment to education, liturgy, and service. Please see the Confirmation Schedule for details of classes and activities.

Preparing for Confirmation...for youth

Be around! Regularly attend church and Young People’s Fellowship (YPF). It’s not that you never miss; it is more that people recognize you when you show up and you’re often there. Attend confirmation classes and events.

Be willing to grow! In any church, being a Christian is about your relationship with God. What’s yours like? How will you help it grow this year? Find a spiritual practice to nurture your growth: a discipline of prayer or Bible study (there are opportunities for this during Lent).

Be connected! You will be asked to find a sponsor who is a confirmed member of St. Elizabeth’s. They will be willing to share their own spiritual journey, so you can ask them about their own time with God. They will listen to you and help you to think out loud, so you can explore your own spiritual perspective.

Be available! Reflect on what you have to offer outside of our church. How can you personally love your neighbor as yourself? Find ways to serve others, including participation in the Confirmation service project.