

ST. DAVID'S CONFIRMATION CLASSES – 2020

Part 1 – Requirements

1. Willingness to fulfill the process. *To fulfil the class requirements this is what you will need to do (yes, sometimes there are conflicts, just let me know).*

I **hope** that you will...

- a. **Participate in Sunday Worship – try to make it to church.** *Sunday worship is where God's people gather weekly. We don't always "feel" closer to God at church, and sometimes it's "boring", but that's not the reason we come to church – we gather as Christians to give God glory and the honor due to his name, fellowship with other Christians, learn something about Jesus, and receive the grace from God (recharging) we need for the week ahead.*
- b. **Participation in the class.** *Try your best to be here, and on time (8 weeks). I will put everything you need on our website as well. Just go to stdavidspa.org, scroll over the "Ministries" tab in the menu, and click "Confirmation". You will find it all there.*
- c. **Encourage you to have a quiet time.** *We will talk about this later in our classes on prayer. My hope is that at some point during your day (morning, or before bed time) you will spend some time in quiet, read the Bible (a good place to start is John's Gospel: read a passage, or chapter, whatever works for you) and pray (talk to God). If you need help with this, we can talk a bit after the class today.*
- d. **Memorization.** *Apostles Creed, Lord's Prayer, 10 Commandments. I have emailed this, and am giving you a copy this afternoon, and you can find it on the website. I will probably be "testing you" on this later in our classes.*
- e. **Participation in other events –** *There is a service of confirmation on November 15. More information will be provided later. There might be a reception with Bishop Michael. Covid-19 might affect things. I will let you know.*

Part 2 – What are we doing? Preparation for an act of worship.

The Confirmation Service: You are preparing for a worship service at church where you will either be reaffirming (saying again) or affirming (establish, verify, pronounce) your commitment to Christ, and Bishop Michael will lay hands on you, and pray, confirming your faith in Christ. *But that's not all that happens at the Confirmation Service.* God the Holy Spirit is going to do something too. He is going to give you the increased ability to practice your faith (live the Christian life) in every area of your life, and every situation you go through. In other words, to help you to be ready, willing and able to say and live like **"I belong to Jesus"**.

Section 1 – Catechism

- a. It's really old (1650's or older – so it started like 370+ years ago) way of asking and answering questions Christians need to learn.
- b. Was made for 12-year old's – so for younger Christians. The priest or someone else would train the youth with the Catechism, over and over and over – to help them memorize the questions and answers.
- c. **Each week we will do three things: 1. We are going to go through the catechism in our Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* together in our classes, section by section. I will explain each section to you, ask some questions. 2. And then we are going to go through the New City Catechism as well (the app I sent for your phone), and then 3. watch a video.**

SECTION 1 – THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

The Catechist shall say:

What is your Name?

Answer. The person shall give his Christian Name or Names.

Catechist. Who gave you this Name?

Answer. My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Catechist. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then do for you?

Answer. They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, and all the sinful desires of the flesh. Secondly, that I should believe and confess the Christian Faith. And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy Will and Commandments and walk in the same all the days of my life.

Catechist. Do you not think you are bound to believe and do as they promised for you?

Answer. Yes, I do; and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he has called me into this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end. Amen.

The catechism begins with human experience – *who you are – your Christian Name.* This is where God begins. He meets you right where you are, where you are right now. Who are you (name). Jesus meets us now, not in past or the future, but now. **So, what is your name?**

Basic question.

Who gave it to you? The answer is saying, when you were baptized, your godparents (and parents) presented you before the church and priest, in the presence of God, and “named you”. If you were an infant, or young child when you were baptized, those people made promises, and *declared faith in Christ on your behalf (for you), because you were too young to do it for yourself.* The catechism, and these classes, are designed to get you ready to make that declaration of faith in Christ for yourself now.

Question. How can they do this for you as a baby? And how did anyone get to name you? Just like when you were born, and you didn’t choose your name, if you were a baby, or a young child, your parents had you baptized. Your birth name is chosen because you belong to your parents. Your Christian name (at baptism) declares that you “*whatever your name is*” belong to God.

In the church, the Godparents historically name kids, and take on the responsibility to supervise their growth as Christians. This is all kind of radical in our day. Why? Our secular culture says we should name ourselves and choose our own story, how we will live – we don’t want to inherit a religion or story, but we want to make it for ourselves (secularism).

But, in the church we don’t have that option. Especially if baptized as baby. Why? You and I get named, chosen and adopted. We are like babies, God comes and adopts. And when the church does it on God’s behalf, they do it to show how God works.

Even if you are an adult, we are still like children, and God comes and adopts by grace, and brought into his family and his story that we have to submit to. **The point is this: in your life, parents and others have already done a lot of things for you, and so has God, by his grace, without any choice of your own.**

What did your godparents/parents do for you? They took three vows (made promises), the same ones you will make at your confirmation. **1. They Renounced the devil and his works**

2. They confessed faith in Christ, and belief in the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. (Creed) 3. That they would keep (obey) God's commandments – live out the Christian faith.

Are you prepared to make these decisions for yourself? This is the key to our classes. Are you committed to Christ? Do you think you are? *What if we said this in a marriage vow? "Yea, I think I am ready to get married" ...no one would marry us!* But in the church, the key to the Christian life yes, but only *with God's help*. Being a Christian isn't about perfection in belief in living, but moving in the same direction, with God's help. These classes are to help us prepare to say, "Yes, I am committed, with God's help."

So at some point we have to trust God – and abandon ourselves to his will. Am I given over to the will of God.

Last part – till the end of my life. So this is the reality: we belong to God, and we should thank God for the gift of belonging to Him, and we need to be thankful, because you are in a fortunate and blessed situation, and need to pray that we continue in it, growing in our knowledge and love for God, and learning how to live it out all the days of our lives. **The rest of the catechism is about how to live this last part out.**