



# Confirmation

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# INTRODUCTION

Confirmation is a chance to think critically about the faith, to sort through some questions regarding what you believe, and to decide whether you want to join as a full (and voting) adult member.

## **Why the essays?**

Writing forces you to think and once written, you have a permanent record of what you were thinking and why. Take some time. These will be keepers.

## **Why the memory work?**

Each retreat has two passages you are expected to memorize to the best of your ability. Surprise yourself. You can memorize these down to the commas and periods and it is fun when you do so. The first of these passages is a prayer or confession basic to church life and the Christian faith. We say these on a weekly basis, as do Christians all over the world. You need to know them.

The second goes further. As you think about getting confirmed you may ask yourself, what does the Bible really say? Who is God anyway? Each of these second passages offers a deep glimpse into the heart of the Bible and, ultimately, into God's intention for this world. We'll give you two options. Read both. Memorize one. These offer clarity, hope, mystery, and beauty. They describe the foundations of the Christian faith. Knowing them thoroughly will help you decide whether you want to believe in what they say.

## **Why the 10 hours?**

The Christian life is a life of faith with others before God. In being confirmed you are joining the church, which is a community of believers. What does the church do? Show up and find out. Before you join, we ask that you are present for least ten hours of activities over the year, outside of the Confirmation class. These can be Sunday morning Worship (1hr), the Sunday morning Senior High class (1hr), Sunday evening Choir and Fellowship (3hrs). Please keep track in the grid in this booklet.

Have some doubts about it? Not sure it is for you? Can't quite figure out what you think about this church and Christianity stuff? That's the point of Confirmation. You can go through the whole year and decide not to be Confirmed. It's ok. It happens frequently and those are still welcome; in fact, you still regularly see them at church.

# SYLLABUS

## SATURDAY RETREAT SCHEDULE

- 5:00pm – meet at dinner location  
(some favorites: Tacoria, Nomad Pizza, Conte's)
- 6:00pm – walk to Nassau Church
- Memory Work
- Break (Candy at the Kisok)
- Essay Work
- 10:00pm – pick up at Nassau Church

## RETREAT #1 (FALL)

### 1. Memory Work:

- Psalm 23 (King James recommended), and
- Romans 5:1-11 **-or-** Romans 8:28-39 (NRSV recommended)

### 2. Essay #1: My History with the Church and/or the Christian faith

## WINTER WEEKEND RETREAT

- Lake Champion Young Life Camp, Glen Spey, NY
- Late November/Early December
- Optional (Details to come; 2018 fee was \$150)

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

- Optional (Save the date, details to come)
- Mission Focus. Some of our earlier projects: Prepare meals for ArmInArm; Work at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore

## **RETREAT #2 (EARLY SPRING)**

1. Memory Work:
  - The Apostles' Creed, and
  - Psalm 139:1-16 **-or-** Mathew 6:25-34 (NRSV recommended)
2. Essay #2: Presbyterian Brief Statement of Faith

## **RETREAT #3 (LATE SPRING)**

1. Memory Work:
  - The Lord's Prayer, and
  - Philippians 2:3-11 **-or-** Colossians 1:13-20 (NRSV recommended)
2. Essay #3: Statement of Faith

## **OTHER IMPORTANT DATES**

### ***Late May:***

Meet with Session, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7:00-8:30pm

Confirmation Sunday

- 10:00am Worship (plan to arrive by 9:00am, details to come)
- 11:30am Confirmation Brunch

# HOURS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES

## Sunday Morning Worship


## Sunday Morning Senior High Class


## Sunday Evening Choir & Fellowship


# PASSAGES FOR RETREAT #1

## PSALM 23 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

<sup>3</sup>He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.



## ROMANS 5:1-11 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup>through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup>and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup>and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

<sup>6</sup>For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup>But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup>For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup>But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

## ROMANS 8:28-39 (NRSV)

<sup>28</sup>We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup>For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. <sup>30</sup>And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup>What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## MY HISTORY WITH THE CHURCH

- As you work on your essay, you may wish to consider the following questions:
  - Why have you gone to church?
  - What are some things you've liked about church?
  - What are some things you wish were different?
  - What role has the church played in your family and in your life?
  - What are some of your best memories of church?
  - Are there songs, services, trips, or sermons that have made an impact on your life?
  - Who in the church has been a good friend to you?

Email your essay to Mark ([mark@nassauchurch.org](mailto:mark@nassauchurch.org)) before the retreat.

## PASSAGES FOR RETREAT #2

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
the Maker of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;  
the holy catholic church;  
the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body;  
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

## PSALM 139 (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.

<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O LORD, you know it completely.

<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

<sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night,"

<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you,  
when I was being made in secret,  
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written  
all the days that were formed for me,  
when none of them as yet existed.

## MATTHEW 6:25-34 (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?

<sup>28</sup> And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

<sup>31</sup> Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

<sup>34</sup> So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

## BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH (PCUSA)

- (1) In life and in death we belong to God.
- (2) Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- (3) the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
- (4) we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
- (5) whom alone we worship and serve.
  
- (6) We trust in Jesus Christ,
- (7) Fully human, fully God.
- (8) Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
- (9) preaching good news to the poor
- (10) and release to the captives,
- (11) teaching by word and deed
- (12) and blessing the children,
- (13) healing the sick
- (14) and binding up the brokenhearted,
- (15) eating with outcasts,
- (16) forgiving sinners,
- (17) and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
- (18) Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
- (19) Jesus was crucified,
- (20) suffering the depths of human pain
- (21) and giving his life for the sins of the world.
- (22) God raised this Jesus from the dead,
- (23) vindicating his sinless life,
- (24) breaking the power of sin and evil,
- (25) delivering us from death to life eternal.

Highlight or Underline: in **green** the parts you think you believe; in **yellow** the parts you aren't sure you understand or things you have questions about; in **red** the things with which you disagree.

- (26) We trust in God,  
(27) whom Jesus called Abba, Father.  
(28) In sovereign love God created the world good  
(29) and makes everyone equally in God's image  
(30) male and female, of every race and people,  
(31) to live as one community.  
(32) But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.  
(33) Ignoring God's commandments,  
(34) we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,  
(35) accept lies as truth,  
(36) exploit neighbor and nature,  
(37) and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.  
(38) We deserve God's condemnation.  
(39) Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.  
(40) In everlasting love,  
(41) the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people  
(42) to bless all families of the earth.  
(43) Hearing their cry,  
(44) God delivered the children of Israel  
(45) from the house of bondage.  
(46) Loving us still,  
(47) God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.  
(48) Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,  
(49) like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,  
(50) God is faithful still.

Highlight or Underline: in **green** the parts you think you believe; in **yellow** the parts you aren't sure you understand or things you have questions about; in **red** the things with which you disagree.



- (51) We trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
(52) everywhere the giver and renewer of life.  
(53) The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,  
(54) sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor,  
(55) and binds us together with all believers  
(56) in the one body of Christ, the Church.  
(57) The same Spirit  
(58) who inspired the prophets and apostles  
(59) rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,  
(60) engages us through the Word proclaimed,  
(61) claims us in the waters of baptism,  
(62) feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,  
(63) and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.  
(64) In a broken and fearful world  
(65) the Spirit gives us courage  
(66) to pray without ceasing,  
(67) to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
(68) to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,  
(69) to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
(70) and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.  
(71) In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,  
(72) we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
(73) and to live holy and joyful lives,  
(74) even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,  
(75) praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"  
(76) With believers in every time and place,  
(77) we rejoice that nothing in life or in death  
(78) can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
(79) Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Highlight or Underline: in **green** the parts you think you believe; in **yellow** the parts you aren't sure you understand or things you have questions about; in **red** the things with which you disagree.

## PASSAGES FOR RETREAT #3

### THE LORD'S PRAYER (MATTHEW 6:9-13, KJV)

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
    on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power  
and the glory, forever.

Amen.

## PHILIPPIANS 2:3-11 (NRSV)

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,

<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death—  
even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name  
that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

## COLOSSIANS 1:13-20 (NRSV)

<sup>13</sup> He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup> for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

<sup>17</sup> He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

<sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

## MY STATEMENT OF FAITH

As you work on the Statement of Faith, you may wish to consider the following questions:

- What words and terms (ie: love, faith, sin, God) are key to my faith, and how do I understand them?
- What statements from the memory passages or prayers do I want to include?
- What questions have been answered? What am I still unsure of?

All statements should, in some way, include responses to the following:

- Who is Jesus?
- Why do I want to join the church?

As you prepare your statement, it would be a good idea to know what the church asks during the service of Confirmation. Read through the Act of Confirmation on the following pages.

Bring your final draft to Retreat #3; email your final version to Mark Edwards ([mark@nassauchurch.org](mailto:mark@nassauchurch.org)) by Thursday before the Session Meeting.

## ACT OF CONFIRMATION

**Pastor:** *Call the confirmands forward. They face the congregation.*

*(To the congregation)* The Confirmation Class is presented by the session, for the reaffirming of the baptismal covenant into which they were baptized. They now desire to publically profess their faith and to assume greater responsibility in the life of the church, and God's mission in the world.

*(To the Confirmands)* We rejoice with you that you now desire to declare your faith and to share with us in our common ministry.

- In baptism you were joined to Christ and made *members* of his church.
- In the community of the people of God, you have learned of God's purpose for you and for all creation.
- You have been nurtured at the table of our Lord and called to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hear these words from Scripture: *(Matt. 5:14–16)*

You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your God in heaven.

Now, as you publicly declare your faith, profess your faith in Christ Jesus, and confess the faith of the church, the faith in which you were baptized; I ask you to answer these questions:

- Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world? If so say, “**I do.**”
- Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love? If so say, “**I do.**”
- Will you be Christ’s faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love? If so say, “**I will, with God’s help.**”
- You have publicly professed your faith. Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? If so say, “**I will, with God’s help.**”

**Pastor:** *Ask Teaching Elders, and Ruling Elders, and mentors to come forward for the laying on of hands.*

*(Confirmands kneel)*

Defend, O Lord,

your servant

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

With your heavenly grace,

That he/she may continue yours forever,

And daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more;

until he/she comes to your everlasting kingdom.

*(Confirmands stand)*

**Pastor:** *Closing Prayer*

## **2019-20 CONFIRMATION DATES**

### ***Confirmation Information Session, Room 304***

Sunday, September 15, 10:30-10:50 a.m.

### ***Retreat #1***

Saturday, October 12, 5:00-10:00 p.m.

Email "My History with the Church" to Mark Edwards before this Retreat

### ***Winter Weekend at Lake Champion (optional)***

Friday-Sunday, December 6-8

### ***Morning of Mission (optional)***

Sunday or Monday, January 19 or 20

### ***Retreat #2***

Saturday, March 7, 5:00-10:00 p.m.

### ***Retreat #3***

Saturday, April 18, 5:00-10:00 p.m.

Bring the draft of your Statement of Faith to this Retreat.

Email the final copy to Mark Edwards by Thursday, May 14

### ***Meet with Session, Assembly Room***

Thursday, May 21, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

### ***Confirmation Service***

Sunday, May 31, 10:00 a.m.