

Parents of upcoming 7th and 8th Graders,

Confirmation has always been a lasting tradition to explore God's word and the importance of living a Christian life. A major focus for a young teenager is learning to think for oneself and develop their own identity. Confirmation sits at the cusp of this stage of life. The end goal of confirmation is for students to dig deeper in God's word and learn the biblical truths that impact the way we live. This then leads us to affirm our faith before the Body of Christ, then go and live by that faith. Yet we know that following Jesus is a lifelong journey filled with these things. Confirmation Sunday is not the end, but really it is only the beginning of a deeper relationship with Jesus.

At First Covenant, we value confirmation as an opportunity for students to go through an intentional two years of discipleship consisting of three key components: (1) to read through and discuss the big picture of God's story; (2) to learn about core building blocks of our faith; and (3) to reflect on their own faith journey through personal experiences. These things make up Confirmation at First Covenant, and are detailed further in this packet.

As we look to a different life under the pandemic, we wanted to use this opportunity to make some significant changes that can make a lasting impact on our students' confirmation journey in unique ways. This program is intended for students in grades 7 and 8, but with these changes we welcome students in older grades who have not yet been confirmed to participate as well. Here are a couple of changes to our confirmation program starting this year to be aware of:

1. We have created a complete overhaul of our program that continues to live into the purpose of Confirmation, all while keeping our church's mission and vision in front of us. We also are continuing to do our best to help create "sticky faith" environments for our youth.
2. Instead of meeting weekly for class, students will be expected to **meet weekly with a mentor** that your family will choose. Research shows that regular time spent with a trusted adult and faith conversations significantly impacts the spiritual growth of youth. Together, your student will meet with their mentor weekly to read and discuss the biblical story (resources will be provided to mentor for these connections). In addition, because this mentor relationship is important, long-lasting, and one-on-one; we are equipping families to pick their mentor. This packet will help provide you with the resources and process to find a confirmation mentor.
3. In addition to meeting weekly with their mentor, we will be hosting **monthly classes** where we will take what students are reading with their mentors and have deeper discussions on the building blocks of our faith. This is where students will get more theological education as we talk about who God is, who we are, and what Christ calls us to do. Classes will meet once a month on Wednesday from 6:30-7:30pm at First Covenant. We will attempt to meet in person, but can move to zoom meetings if our situation calls for it. See schedule for dates.

4. Students will be assigned to complete **one major project each year** to reflect more deeply about personal testimony and shared experiences. More details about this year's project will be provided early on during the school year.
5. Lastly, instead of tracking discipleship points, we will instead track experiences. **Students will be expected to** (1) complete all the bible study sessions with their mentor, (2) miss no more than one of the monthly classes, and (3) complete the major project that will be assigned to them each year. Lastly, at the end of the confirmation journey students will (4) meet with a pastor to bring their confirmation journey to a close and (5) participate in Confirmation Sunday. There are the experiences we expect of our confirmation students to complete.

We know that these are some big changes, but we also know that this will not only help provide a consistent discipleship connection, but encourage a lasting faith for our kids. In order to help you prepare and register for confirmation this year, we have included the following in this packet:

1. Registration form - this is due on or before Thursday, October 1, 2020. You can fill out the attached card and mail/bring it to the church. Or you can register online by going to our church website at [redwingfirstcov.org/youth#confirmation](http://redwingfirstcov.org/youth#confirmation).
2. Confirmation Mentor Description - feel free to read through this so you know what is expected of the mentor. But then after you have confirmed who your mentor is, pass this on to them!
3. Picking a Good Mentor - we are empowering each family to decide on who the confirmation student's mentor will be. Use this as a guide to discuss with your confirmation student who would be the right mentor for them!
4. Confirmation Schedule - all the dates and deadlines for your course work are noted here.

If you have any questions about Confirmation at First Covenant, don't hesitate to contact me by email at [mike@redwingfirstcov.org](mailto:mike@redwingfirstcov.org) or by calling the church office at 651-388-2385. I look forward to all that God will do in our confirmation students this year!

Blessings,

Mike Bechtold  
Associate Pastor

# CONFIRMATION MENTORS

(Give this page to your mentor)

## WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A mentor, specifically in the world of faith formation, is an important and vital element for our spiritual growth (think of the Apostle Paul and his mentorship of Timothy). A mentor is someone, usually older and wiser, who speaks into their mentee's life and faith in Christ. Research shows that regular time spent with a trusted adult and faith conversations significantly impacts the spiritual growth of youth. This is why at First Covenant we want our confirmation students to connect with a mentor over the course of their confirmation journey and talk about God's word together. We want our students to develop a faith that will stick with them as they go off to college, and we know this "sticky faith" grows through relationships with trusted adults who talk about Jesus with them now!

## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF CONFIRMATION MENTORS?

### 1. Meet weekly with your student.

- Sit down once a week with the student to read through and discuss the bible passage together. An outline of the passages with discussion questions will be provided to you. Commitments are for at least 1 school year, with the option to opt in for the student's 2nd year of confirmation.
- Plan a time that works for the both of you! If you know something is coming up, you can plan to meet a different day that week. If you fall behind, then meet for a longer period of time or a second day to catch up. You have the freedom to do what you need to in order to stay on track.
- Avoid a "running through it quick" mentality. Meet somewhere that gives you space to focus on the conversation well. Perhaps plan on meeting at McDonalds for ice cream or coffee at Caribou where you can have dedicated time together. Plus, it's always fun to meet up for a treat!
- Being a mentor doesn't mean you have all the answers about the bible and faith. It's okay to say "I don't know" to a question. Be open to learning together with the student! If a question comes up, do some research on it together. If you're still looking for help, send Pastor Mike an email with your questions (see below for email)!

### 2. Help your student complete their projects.

- Each year, students will be required to complete one main project which will help them think about personal testimony and shared experiences.
- During the first year, students will be required to engage and think about how other people's faith stories impact their own story. In particular, the student will interview various people about their faith story and then write a short paper on what they learned. Mentors become a great resource to help process how other people plan an influence in their life and faith.
- During their second year, students are to pursue completing a justice experience where they get to put their faith into action in the world around them. As a mentor, help them plan their project and participate in it with them for these experiences! This builds great memories and shared experiences together.

### 3. Join us for Confirmation Sunday

- Plan on joining us on May 23, 2021 to celebrate with your student as they are confirmed before the congregation! More details will be made available as we get closer.

All mentors will be required to go through a church background check (provided by First Covenant Church). You will receive an email to begin this process at the beginning of the year. If you have any questions at any time, don't hesitate to contact Pastor Mike Bechtold by email at [mike@redwingfirstcov.org](mailto:mike@redwingfirstcov.org) or by calling the church office at 651-388-2385.

# Confirmation Schedule 2020-2021

Week of	Bible Study Schedule with Mentor	Notes & Other Dates
Sept 27		Registration Due (Oct 1)
Oct 4	God the Creator (Genesis 1:1-2:3)	CLASS 1 (Oct 7) - Conf Intro / The Bible
Oct 11	Fall of Humanity (Genesis 3:1-24)	
Oct 18	Cain & Abel (Genesis 4:1-16)	
Oct 25	Noah & the Flood (Genesis 6:5-22)	
Nov 1	Abram Chosen (Genesis 12:1-5, 15:1-18)	CLASS 2 (Nov 4) - Who is God
Nov 8	Abraham Tested (Genesis 22:1-18)	
Nov 15	Jacob & Esau (Genesis 27:1-29)	
Nov 22	Thanksgiving Week (No Assignments)	
Nov 29	Joseph Sold into Slavery (Genesis 37:2-28)	CLASS 3 (Dec 2) - Humanity & Sin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin the Story Project</li> </ul>
Dec 6	Joseph's Rise to Power (Genesis 41:1-16, 25-40)	
Dec 13	Moses' Birth (Exodus 2:1-24)	
Dec 20	Christmas Break (No Assignments)	
Dec 27	Christmas Break (No Assignments)	
Jan 3	The Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-15, 7:1-7)	CLASS 4 (Jan 6) - Covenant/Faithfulness
Jan 10	The Exodus (Exodus 14:5-31)	
Jan 17	God Provides (Exodus 16:1-5, 13-18; 17:1-7)	
Jan 24	The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:1-21)	
Jan 31	Joshua & Jericho (Joshua 6:1-25)	CLASS 5 (Feb 3) - The Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story Project due at class</li> </ul>
Feb 7	Samuel the Prophet (1 Samuel 1:1-28)	
Feb 14	Israel gets a King (1 Samuel 8:1-22)	
Feb 21	David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:12-58)	
Feb 28	Spring Break (No Assignments)	
Mar 7	David & Bathsheba (1 Samuel 11:1-17, 26-27)	CLASS 6 (Mar 10) - Promise & Prophets
Mar 14	Solomon's Wisdom (1 Kings 3:3-28)	
Mar 21	Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-40)	
Mar 28	Holy Week (No Assignments)	
Apr 4	Jonah Prophecies at Nineveh (Jonah 3:1-10; 4:1-11)	CLASS 7 (Apr 7) - History of Israel
Apr 11	Habakkuk's Complaints (Habakkuk 1:1-17, 2:1-4)	
Apr 18	Daniel in the Lion's Den (Daniel 6:1-28)	
Apr 25	The Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:1-30)	
May 2		CLASS 8 (May 5) - Q&A Session
May 9	Catch Up Weeks / Meet with Pastor	
May 16		
May 23	Confirmation Sunday (May 23)	

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# Picking a Good Mentor

Mentors are an important part of our student's faith journey. So picking the right mentor will help make students' Confirmation experience a great one! Here is a guide to help families find a mentor:

## A mentor should be someone who...

- 1. Loves Jesus** > This may sound obvious, but as a family it is important to discuss the question, "How do we know if someone loves Jesus?" Create a short list of characteristics and use them to assess if someone you are considering would be a good fit as a confirmation mentor (this is a great way to involve the student in this process)!
- 2. Cares about the student** > Not only does the mentor need to love Jesus, but they also need to care about the student. We recommend that the mentor already knows the student; and views the role of mentor not as an obligation, but as an opportunity to invest in them! This will help make their weekly meeting be a great time together right from the start!
- 3. Is responsible adult** > From October through April, the mentor will be investing in your student through weekly connections. Pastor Mike will help the mentor with everything they need, but following through with the weekly connections is the mentor's responsibility. As parents, you have a significant role in helping the mentor succeed. Be an encouragement and help make weekly connections happen between the mentor and student. Likewise they should be an adult (older than 18 years old).
- 4. Is the same sex as the student** > Mentors should be the same sex (male or female) as the student, even if the mentor is in your family.
- 5. Is not a parent / primary guardian** > This is an important part of creating a web of adults who invest in your student. Especially at this age, it is a value that you find another trusted adult who can be a second voice sharing the importance of having Jesus in their life. So the student's mentor cannot be their parent for this confirmation journey.
- 6. Is chosen by the family** > Because this mentor relationship is important, long-lasting, and one-on-one; we want families to decide who this mentor will be. Work together as a family in deciding the right mentor. After you've used this guide to narrow down a list of a few adults that you as parent's think would be a good fit as their mentor, let your student have the final say on which person they choose. All mentors, no matter who they are, will be required to go through our church background check as per our church policy.

## Where do I begin to find a mentor?

Perhaps you are wondering this exact question?! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Ask the student to name five adults they trust and would go to if they had questions about life or faith. This is a potential starting list of names to consider.
- Is there someone at First Covenant your student knows well, perhaps a former teacher, person from a small group, or who sits by your family during the service every week?
- Is there a family member or a godparent that your student is close with and would be a good mentor?
- Technology has made a significant impact in long-distance relationships. If you know of the right mentor, but lives hours away, you can also meet weekly on Zoom or facetime (phone calls, emails, texts, social media, etc. are not allowed). You will still want to set parameters for the student to meet without distractions in the room and a dedicated time together to avoid "rushing through it".
- If you still need help finding a mentor, don't hesitate to contact Pastor Mike!

# Confirmation Registration

This is the registration form for participating confirmation students during the 2020-2021 school year.

**Registration is due on Thursday, October 1.**

Confirmation begins the week of Sunday, October 4, 2020. You must have a mentor and their contact information in order to register. You can also register online at [redwingfirstcov.org/youth#confirmation](http://redwingfirstcov.org/youth#confirmation) for more information about our confirmation program.

## >>> Student Contact Information <<<

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## >>> Mentor Contact Information <<<

All mentors will be required to go through a church background check (provided by First Covenant Church). Our church office will contact them with more information about how to complete this process.

Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_