

CONFIRMATION 2009-10

West Parish Church, Andover

Confirmation **begins the exciting spiritual journey** of discovering who a person is in relation to his/her personal faith, to the parish family, and to the greater Christian community. All students in 9th grade or above are warmly invited to embark on this journey with us! Since everyone's faith process is a personal one, students complete the requirements at their own pace and may be confirmed in 10th, 11th or 12th grade.

Confirmation candidates are expected to participate in:

1) **12 Senior SPY Monthly Gatherings**

Held on the first Sunday of the month during the school year (usually 8 or 9 are offered per academic year), 5:30 - 8:00 pm. These are youth get-togethers that are intended for **ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS** (not just those who are interested in confirmation). Marie will keep an ongoing record of attendance.

Each SPY meeting will include dinner and a discussion topic for the evening (using current events, movie clips, guest speakers, fieldtrips etc.). We also have crazy games, ridiculous skits, stupid giveaway prizes and more. **Friends are always welcomed!!**

2) **One retreat or day of reflection (at least 4 hours)**

Several opportunities will be offered per year at WPC, at other UCC churches, and through the UCC Massachusetts Conference. If a student would like to count a retreat at a parochial school or non-UCC church, please discuss this with Marie *in advance* of the retreat.

3) **A visit to a house of worship of a different religion or denomination including either a worship service or a discussion with clergy or member(s) of the parish about their tradition**

WPC will make arrangements for candidates to visit a local house of worship or the candidate may choose one of his/her own.

4) **Attend an alternative worship service at WPC or elsewhere**

Examples of alternative services include Taize services, reconciliation services, funerals, Blue Christmas, ecumenical Thanksgiving or Memorial Day prayer services, etc.

5) Volunteer service to the community and to the parish

- At least 10 hours of community service (WPC will provide many opportunities for group outreach projects or the student may choose his/her own).
- At least 10 hours of WPC service (e.g. ushering, lay reading, babysitting for events, helping at the yard sale).

Forms to keep track of service hours may be found on the WPC website or in the Youth Room. They should be signed by the adult overseeing the project and handed in to Marie for record-keeping.

Youth may not be paid for their work and may not work for their families (e.g. babysitting at home, cutting your own lawn). For more details, see the Service Hour form.

6) A "Faith Interview" with a senior church member

WPC will make arrangements so that each candidate will have the opportunity to engage in conversation with someone who has been a member of the parish for over 25 years about their personal faith journey.

7) Confirmation Project

Complete a project focusing on why you want to be confirmed and what it means to you to be a Christian or a member of the United Church of Christ or of West Parish Church using a media of your choice (e.g. written essay, art, video, drama, photography, power point). Do not wait until the last minute — it is best to start planning your project early, possibly over the summer!

8) Interview with Pastor Tom expressing a desire and exhibiting readiness to be confirmed.

Supporters of confirmation students (families, relatives, friends etc.) are encouraged to:

- Attend worship services regularly with the confirmation candidate.
- Attend worship services with the candidate on Christmas, Maundy Thursday and Easter (at WPC or another church if out of town).
- Participate in fellowship.
- Discuss the monthly SPY meeting topics with the candidate.
- Assist the program in some way (e.g., prepare a meal or set up/clean up for a SPY meeting; drive students to/from SPY meetings or chaperone a fieldtrip; participate in planning a youth retreat etc.
- Attend confirmation service held during the worship service usually in the month of May.
- Pray for all of our confirmation candidates!