

First Presbyterian Church of Orlando

CONFIRMATION FAQs

1. What is Confirmation and why do we do it?

Confirmation is for 4th-12th grade students who have expressed spiritual interest and curiosity or who have already accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and are ready to make a public profession of faith and follow Him in their lives as disciples. When considering Confirmation, one important thing to think about is timing. We tell parents that Confirmation is really the intellectual underpinnings of the faith and because of this, to try to enroll a child in Confirmation around the same time that he or she has expressed faith in Jesus and/or has shown spiritual awareness, the evidence that God is at work in that child's life to draw him or her to faith. We want to help children acquire the knowledge and vocabulary to go along with their current understanding in order to be able to articulate more clearly what they believe and why.

Confirmation is a serious undertaking and each family must consider whether they have time in their schedule to attend the classes, complete the homework and participate fully in the experience.

2. How can I know if my child understands salvation and is ready for this next step?

Because parents are the primary disciplers of children, we allow you to make the final determination on whether your child is ready. If your child has a natural interest in God (and most children do), that is a great starting point for discussion. Here are some questions for you to discuss with your child to help you make that decision:

- 1. When did you first learn about Jesus? Or who has helped you learn about Jesus?*
- 2. What are some things you have learned? What are some questions you still have?*
- 3. What would you say to someone who asked you about who Jesus is?*
- 4. Describe your relationship with Jesus.*

As part of the first assignment, we ask students to complete these four questions as part of their "Faith Story" to give them an opportunity to succinctly express their understanding of what salvation is and to profess their own faith.

It may be in this process that a family discovers that this is not the right time for their child to participate in Confirmation and they may choose to wait. We recognize that God calls His children at all ages--childhood, adolescence and adulthood--and spiritual awareness is a work of the Holy Spirit in us, not something we manufacture. However, students also do not need to 'know all the answers', as Confirmation builds their understanding of what it means to live the life of faith in Jesus Christ. Confirmation classes at FPCO begin as early as fourth grade and go all the way through high school. Some children are ready by fourth or fifth grade while others choose to wait until their teen years. (Other children may have expressed faith as early as first grade, but because of the class content and homework, the earliest we enroll children is fourth grade.)

3. What do we study?

Beginning in January each year, students work through a curriculum written especially for FPCO that traces the meta-narrative of Scripture --Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration--and what it means to be part of a church family. Each lesson has an assignment that includes a homework page and memory work for that week. While the elementary children meet separately from middle and high school students, the curriculum and format are very similar. Separating the children by age group allows for a more catered learning experience.

4. What is the schedule?

The Confirmation process begins with required parent meetings in early January to inform families of the requirements and process. Classes begin mid-late January and run for six -eight weeks, culminating in Confirmation Sunday when confirmands are presented to the congregation. The Confirmation Schedule for 2024 can be found [here](#).

5. What are One-on-Ones?

One-on-Ones are an opportunity for each confirmand to have a conversation with a pastor or elder and to express what they believe and what they have learned and experienced during Confirmation. (This is parallel to the process we use for adults who desire to join our covenant family through church membership.) It is a required step for each student. During the Confirmation season, families will receive notification via email of available time slots to sign up during the time period between our retreat and Confirmation Sunday.

6. What happens on Confirmation Sunday?

During the service, the confirmands will all sit together up front in reserved seating and the families will sit behind them in first-come, first-served seating. During the service, your child takes membership vows and officially becomes a covenant partner of the church. Also, if your child has not been baptized, he/she will be baptized on Confirmation Sunday.

7. What is the attendance policy?

We provide the schedule in advance and ask parents to make the effort for their children to attend *every* class and to miss only for illness or family emergencies, with one absence allowed over the course of Confirmation (with exceptions for emergencies of course!)

8. Are children required to be baptized for church membership?

Yes. If your child has not yet been baptized, he/she will be baptized on Confirmation Sunday. Since baptism is a public declaration of faith in Christ, FPCO does not conduct private baptisms.

9. How do I begin?

Go to www.fpc.org/shine to look for the parent meeting times or request info through an email to Taylor Boutelle (children's ministry), at tboutelle@fpc.org or Andy Ward (student ministry) at award@fpc.org. **The parent information meeting is a required step for all Confirmation students.**