

## Confirmation Questions for Caregivers 2020

*Caregivers of Confirmands,*

*For each week of Confirmation, please use the questions below as a guide to consider your own faith journey. These questions may also provide conversation starters with your Confirmand. We invite you to walk alongside your student(s) during this year of faith formation and Confirmation.*

### **September 23**

***Informational Meeting for Confirmands + Caregivers***

### **September 30**

***Being and belonging together- Baptismal Promise***

What does it mean to belong? To what groups do you belong? Why? How do you choose where you belong? What obligations come with belonging? Where do you feel you belong at Westminster? Westminster's baptismal promise says, "With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you to Westminster and to the fellowship of Christ's Church, for we are all one in Christ. We promise to love, encourage, and support you, to share the good news of the gospel with you, to serve that gospel alongside you, and to help you know and follow Christ." How do we live out this promise? What challenges come with this promise?

### **October 7**

***Scripture, Science, Faith, and Understanding***

One of the biggest struggles students bring to confirmation is trying to figure out how to believe in science (study of the natural world through observation and experiment) and still read the Bible or be a person of faith (faith being the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" Hebrews 11:1). Have you faced a similar struggle on your faith journey? How does your understanding of the Bible allow you to live comfortably with this apparent tension between science and faith?

### **October 14 – No Confirmation (MEA Break)**

### **October 21**

***Made in the Image of God- What's in a Name?***

What does it mean to be made in God's image? What assumptions do people make about what being made in God's image means? What are the problems that can arise when we assume we are made in God's image? If we are made in God's image, how does or should this impact how we live our lives?

### **October 28**

***The Nature of God – Who is God? What Does God Look Like?***

*Guardians and parents are invited to join Marie for a time of processing and connecting via Zoom. This week, the Confirmation Class is contemplating some God Questions: Who is God? What does God look like? How do we experience God? When are some of the times you have felt closest to*

God? How do you look or listen for God's presence in your life? What role does the community or your family or other people play in how you experience God? Do you have a particular image of God in your mind's eye?

#### **November 4**

##### ***The God Questions***

If you could ask God one question, what would it be? What are some times over the past week that you have felt the closest to God? When are those moments you have felt the furthest away? In sharing as a group, do you notice a certain trend or thread between the questions?

#### **November 11**

##### ***Connecting with our Confirmation Mentors***

Did you have any formal mentors or people you admired in your life who helped you on your faith journey? Do you have any people in your life now that you would consider as a faith or spiritual mentor? Who is the biggest influence (besides God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit) on your faith journey currently? Do you feel a connection to a particular author or blogger on issues of faith? What is it that draws you to that person?

#### **November 13-15**

##### ***High School Retreat Weekend***

#### **November 18**

##### ***Building Interfaith Understanding***

Tonight, the youth will have the opportunity to discuss their faith with somebody of another faith. When was the last time you were able to have a discussion about your faith with somebody who believed different things than you? What do you think we can learn from having tough conversations about faith from having these types of discussions?

#### **November 25**

##### ***NO CLASS, Happy Thanksgiving Week!***

#### **December 2**

##### ***Why was Jesus born? Jesus' humanity and divinity; incarnation***

The next several classes will be focused on Jesus. Jesus is at once both fully human and fully divine. What might it mean for Jesus to be human? What might it mean for Jesus to be divine? Do you view Jesus as more human or more divine? What is most significant about Jesus? Birth? Ministry? Teachings? Death? Resurrection? Something else?

#### **December 9**

##### ***Jesus' Life, Teachings, and Ministry***

It's easy to focus on Jesus' birth and his resurrection in modern Christianity. What do we lose when we leave out Jesus' life, ministry, and teaching? What makes Jesus' life and ministry special when it comes to understanding what God is like? What modern day issue or problem is in need of a parable to help the world understand it?

#### **December 16**

## ***Jesus, Death, and Resurrection; Sin and Salvation***

Would Christianity exist if Jesus had not died and been resurrected? What would Christianity look like without the death and resurrection of Christ? What do the death and resurrection add? Would it be the same if Jesus died on the cross but was not resurrected? Sin and salvation can be tough to grapple with. What are ways you have heard sin described? Is it a helpful description? One way to look at sin is as the breaking of communion (or relationship) with God, one another, or with ourselves. Is that more helpful? Is it possible to find some reconciliation or salvation without first naming the brokenness? What are some ways to find salvation (stepping back into a right relationship with God, others, or ourselves)?

### **December 23**

***NO CLASS, Happy Holidays!***

### **December 30**

***NO CLASS, Happy Holidays!***

### **January 6**

#### ***Holy Spirit, Trinity, and the Mystery of Faith***

This week we will be discussing the Holy Spirit, Trinity, Mystery of Faith: Art, Metaphor, and Symbolism. We often need to rely on metaphor and symbolism to help us to understand our faith, especially when it comes to the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. If you look closely around Westminster and Central Lutheran, you will likely see such symbols in surprising places. If you were going to try to explain the Trinity to someone, what sort of metaphor or symbolism would you use? What piece of art would be helpful in this regard?

### **January 13**

#### ***Prayer and worship***

According to the PCUSA's Book of Order:

"Prayer is a conscious opening of the self to God, who initiates communion and communication with us. Prayer is receiving and responding, speaking and listening, waiting and acting in the presence of God. In prayer, we respond to God in adoration, in thanksgiving, in confession, in supplication, in intercession, and in self-dedication." (W-5.4.001)

The Book of Order also provides many examples of how we can express our prayers to God. Some of those include: conscious conversation with God, waiting upon God in silence, meditating on God's gifts and actions, shared or communal prayer, or active prayer through dance, exercise, music, or other expressive activity as a response to grace.

Author Annie Lamott has boiled prayer down to three essential prayers: help, thanks, wow.

What kind of prayer resonates with you? Do you prefer different kinds of prayers for different seasons? When and how do you find time to commune with God? Does your preference for prayer match how you like to worship? If you like silent prayer, do you gravitate towards more contemplative worship services? If you like communal prayer and singing hymns, does your worship style swing more towards Westminster's Sunday services?

## **January 20**

### ***Multiple Intelligence Theory and Our Spiritual Selves***

***Guardians and parents are invited to join Marie for a time of processing and connecting via Zoom.***

This week we will be discussing our own spirituality, exploring the idea that we each have a personal spirituality even though we may not have thought about spirituality in that context before. Identifying our interests, skills, abilities and passions is one way to think about our spiritual gifts and how these gifts might inform how we engage in the broader church community. What gifts do you have? How are those gifts expressed as a part of your spirituality, both individually and as a part of the broader church?

## **January 27**

### ***Why Presbyterian? Overview of the PC(USA), Christ as Head of the Church***

The Presbyterian church is one particular expression of Christianity and it is distinct from other Christian denominations partly based on belief but also based on how the church is organized and governs itself. Did the fact that Westminster is Presbyterian shape your decision to join the church? Is there any aspect of the Presbyterian way of “doing church” that you are drawn to or identify with? Is there any aspect of the Presbyterian way of “doing church” that you question or struggle with? What does it mean to you to be Presbyterian?

The symbol of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is below. How many different symbols you can find in it? What are they intended to represent? Check out the following link to see what the various elements mean from our denomination’s website: <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/stated-clerk/stated-clerk/seal/>



## **February 3**

### ***Special Guest – Building Interfaith Understanding***

## **February 10**

### ***Christianity in a Multi-Faith World***

We live in an increasingly interconnected world – a world where we must learn to become global citizens. Along with this comes its opportunities for growth, connection, and deeper understanding of our fellow human beings. This doesn’t mean that there won’t be conflict that we must navigate. This week, our confirmands are exploring what it means to be a Christian in a multi-faith world. Take some time to think about situations where you may have come in contact with somebody of a different religion. Did it make you uneasy? Can you think of a time where you noticed tension or conflict about religious differences? How does this play out on a global scale (political, social, economic, etc.)? What could we do to bring about a better understanding of other religions?

**Wed, Feb 17**      **Ash Wednesday, Confirmation Class Attends Service**

**Wed, Feb 24**      **NO CLASS, but continue Lenten Devotional**

**Wed, Mar 3**      **Confirmation Class Attends Lenten Taizé Worship**

**Wed, Mar 10**      **NO CLASS, but continue Lenten Devotional**

**Wed, Mar 17**      **Confirmation Class Attends Lenten Taizé Worship**

**Wed, Mar 24**      **NO CLASS, but continue Lenten Devotional**

**Wed, Mar 31**      **NO CLASS, Holy Week**

**Thu, Apr 1**      **Maundy Thursday – No Confirmation Class**

**Wednesday, April 7**

**Special Guest – Building Interfaith Understanding**

***Guardians and parents are invited to join Marie for a time of processing and connecting via Zoom.***

**Wednesday, April 14**

**Church as a Community of Care**

Why have you chosen to be a part of the Westminster community? Where have you seen the love of Christ shown in our church? In what areas of the church do you lend your time and talents? Westminster is often described as a community of care. What does it mean to be a community of care? Where are we good at being a community of care? Where could we do better as a community of care?

**Wednesday, April 21**

***The Church as a community of justice***

How, if at all, would your view of Westminster change if we started to refer to ourselves more as a Community of Justice than as a worshipping community? Would the way you live your day-to-day life (or the way you parent) change if you thought of Westminster first and foremost as a Community of Justice? What does it mean to you that Westminster is a Community of Justice? On the side of our building is a banner that reads “Justice is love in public.” What do you think this means for us as members of Westminster?

**Wednesday, April 28**

***Vocation, Spiritual Timeline, & A “Definite Place of Usefulness”***

How do you respond to God’s call to you? Is it through your profession or job? Volunteer work? Church? Other ways? One definition of the term “vocation” is an occupation to which a person is specially drawn or for which they are suited, trained, or qualified. Often times (and historically) vocation is discussed as a call from God. Do you think of the work you do, whether at home or outside the home, as something God has called you to do? Does that change the way you do your

work or view your work? What “definite place of usefulness” have you found for yourself at Westminster or in the work of the church? What “definite place of usefulness” do you feel called to?

**Wednesday, May 5**

***Looking back on our journey, beginning to compile faith statements, membership***

As our Confirmation students wrap up their regular meeting times as a class and spend time compiling their faith statements and considering membership to the church, take time to reflect on what this journey has meant for them – and for you. This has been a time for you to consider your own faith journey. What have you observed or learned along the way? How might these observations or learnings influence your own expression of membership in the church?

**Wednesday, May 12** Special Class Time: 6:00 – 7:45pm

***Faith Statement Writing (students/mentors); Parent/Guardian Meeting with Matt L-O and Marie***