



## Confirmation 2018-2019 Frequently Asked Questions

Confirmation might be an unfamiliar idea to you, or perhaps since going through it in high school you need a few refreshers. Here are some of the more commonly asked questions we hear from parents and students.

**I've never heard of this church tradition?** Confirmation is our public declaration of being claimed by God. It is a learning process for students to become members of the church, by understanding what they are becoming members of. Baptism and Confirmation are done separately, but in different times in church history, they were also done simultaneously.

**What if I am not baptized? / Should I get re-baptized if I was baptized as a baby?** If you were not previously baptized, you have the opportunity to be baptized on Confirmation Sunday. Those who were baptized as children won't be re-baptized. The congregation and the confirmation student are reminded of the vows taking on their behalf at baptism. Baptism is recognition of God's action of claiming us. It is a one-time action.

**When is a good time to do Confirmation?** We invite all 9<sup>th</sup> graders to be a part of Confirmation, but the class is open to all High School Students. We also make exceptions for some 8<sup>th</sup> graders to participate in the class. We believe high school is a good stage in life to go through Confirmation because students begin reflecting on why they are a part of something, and it is often a beginning of exploration. This time of changing from a child into a teen is the best time for a student to ask "What of my childhood (including my participation in church) do I want to carry with me into my teen years?"

**Is Confirmation the same as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the Jewish tradition?** No, but there are some similarities. Both occur after study of the faith, at approximately the same age, and both signify that a student in the faith community is moving into a different life stage.

**Is confirmation something I can do even if I have not grown up in the church? Or if I haven't regularly attended San Marino Community Church?** Yes. Perhaps your family was not part of a church during the student's childhood, or your family is currently inactive. SMCC invites all students to participate in confirmation, and we hope that they do so with parental help & support, but it is not required for family to be members themselves. Parents have a separate membership process, and they are more than welcome to join through a New Member Class offered multiple times throughout the year.

**Why so much time spent to be confirmed?** Building a foundation for spiritual growth takes time and a team effort. Students, parents, mentors, and clergy work hard during this concentrated time to ensure there are strong foundations and relationships to continue a student's spiritual growth. Students spend time taking other classes throughout High School, and we would like to include religion/faith into that routine. Confirmation is also much more than a class—we build a community together.

**What if my teen says, "no?"** First of all don't panic. It is important for you to talk with your child to discover the reason they are saying, "No, I don't want to be confirmed." Not all are at the same stage or some may be worried about something that to us seems trivial. If the answer is truly no at this time, don't forget that God's grace is still at work and so should you be "still at work." Continue conversations about faith without putting pressure on your child. They are still loved and can still fully participate at church. They can always join the class again in 2019-2020.