



CONFIRMATION / AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

SAYING "YES!" IN FAITH

Confirmation in many Christian denominations is a time when folks, generally teenagers, in faith say "Yes!" to what God has already done for them in baptism.

Baptism, whenever it happens during a person's life, is God's action. God receives the one baptized into God's grace, mercy, and love - into the life of Jesus - and gives her/him the Holy Spirit. God welcomes the person into salvation by the washing of water and the promise of Jesus Christ to save.

Saved from what? The answer according to [Martin Luther](#) (1483-1546) in his [Small Catechism](#) is salvation from sin, death, and the devil - from those things that threaten our life - our relationship with God and our living as the creatures God intended us to be.

Saved for what? The one who is baptized is saved for faith, for life in Christ, for participation in the community of faith - the Church, for a life of faith in and for the world. Faith is trust that Jesus' death and resurrection changes everything. It turns the world upside-down. How? In faith we don't see ourselves or one another for our sins, our failings. In faith we see ourselves and one another in light of Jesus Christ. We see all people as those for whom Jesus died and rose again. Seeing the world upside-down is faith in God's faithfulness.

Baptism is a matter of death and life. Consider what the Apostle Paul says in his letter to the community of believers in Rome:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.
Romans 6.4-5 (NRSV)

Paul doesn't mess about here. He gets right to the point. In baptism we die and rise with Jesus. He takes on our sin and death and gives us his life and with his life forgiveness. In a real sense, when someone is baptized they die when going down into the water and gain new life when coming up out of the water.

In Confirmation, then, we learn more about the Christian faith and how it turns the world upside-down. This learning is a lead-up to saying "Yes!" in faith to what God has already done in Baptism - saying "Yes!" to trusting in God's life-giving mercy and love above anything else - saying "Yes!" to this truth for you and for others and for the world.



LISTENING IN FAITH



As a part of this formative time in the life of a Christian, there is often a focus on listening for God. In part, this is participating in the worship life of your local congregation/parish and actively listening to God's living Word.

During Confirmation often times pastors provide a form (usually called something creative like "sermon notes!") to focus our listening for during worship: in the worship service / liturgy, in the Bible readings, and in the sermon. Sermon Notes shape and guide our listening.

What follows are a few questions to guide listening. These may or may not line-up with those asked by your pastor. If not, consider these as suggestions for your listening, as you move toward saying "Yes!" to your faith in the Living God.

Questions about the Day:

What makes this day different?

What season of the church year is it (Advent, Lent, Epiphany)?

What color decorates the sanctuary?

If it's not a regular weekly service, what kind of service is it (wedding, funeral)?

What was your favorite hymn/song in the service today?

Questions about the Bible:

Which reading for the day caught your attention the most? Why?

Which Bible reading(s) did you hear about in the sermon?

What was one thing that surprised you in this morning's Bible readings? Why?

Questions about the Sermon:

What was the main point of the sermon?

What did you hear about God's promise of forgiveness and life in Jesus Christ for you?

For others? For the whole world?

What did God do in/with today's sermon?

What did you find interesting in today's sermon? What did you find boring?

Conversation in Faith

A word of encouragement - be in conversation with family, friends, and pastor(s) about what you hear, what questions you have, what concerns and hopes you have. When we are baptized into Christ's death and life, we become part of [Christ's body in the world](#). There is comfort and care in being together and in conversation with others.