



CONFIRMATION INFO PACKET

2018-2019

Revised Edition

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WELCOME LETTER

Dear Confirmand and family,

I am overjoyed that you are stepping into this new aspect of our church's life! The Confirmation year at BMPC provides a wonderful opportunity for our church's 8th graders to reflect on God's dreams for their lives. Confirmands are invited explore their faith anew and consider whether or not they wish to take up the promise of the baptismal covenant for themselves. This time of exploration is marked by a deepening of commitment to a life of faith. It serves as an entry-point into active membership within the body of Christ.

I cannot wait to see what God is going to do in the lives of our church's young people over the coming months and years! Our team of committed staff and volunteers is truly excited about the energy, intelligence, imagination and love that each of our young Confirmands will bring to the life of our church. Our ultimate aim in the Confirmation process is to create a place of belonging for every teenager as they journey toward a deeper understanding of God's call in Jesus Christ.

From the very beginning of our walk together, I want to emphasize that my door and phone lines are always open to you and/or your youth. Never hesitate to reach out if there is some way I can be of support. Always feel free to contact me via phone or email if you have questions or concerns about the Confirmation Process.

In Christ,

The Rev. David B. Smith

Interim Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

610-525-2821

DavidSmith@bmpc.org

WHO WE ARE

Mission:

The BMPC Youth Ministry is an inclusive faith community that connects, engages, and equips youth to discover and live out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Core Values:

The BMPC Youth Ministry embodies the gospel of Jesus Christ through the acronym: I.D.R.E.A.M.

Inclusion: Guided by God's Spirit, we welcome all youth, thankful for their unique identities and gifts, as we seek to provide an experience of belonging for each individual.

Discipleship: We cultivate an inquisitive community who journey together as youth grow, explore and are transformed by the Love of God revealed in Jesus.

Responsibility: We build meaningful relationships that promote accountability so that through us, God can create a community that is greater than any one of us by ourselves.

Engagement: We foster friendship, fellowship, and fun to create joy-filled, relevant and transformative experiences.

Affirmation: We approach everyone, including ourselves, with gentleness and grace so that all will know they are celebrated, loved and valued as children of God.

Mission: We empower youth to share their gifts as they work for justice, freedom and peace in the community around them and the world at large.

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CONFIRMATION

Confirmation provides a wonderful opportunity for our church's young people to affirm the baptismal covenant. It marks a time of deepening commitment to a life of faith, and it serves as an entry-point for active membership within the body of Christ.

Confirmation provides youth with a chance to explore questions about God and human life in a safe environment. Our greatest hope is that each Confirmand will arrive at Confirmation Sunday with a newfound passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ. The chief calling of that gospel is to love God and love neighbor.

Presbyterians have long affirmed that a person's conscience is bound, not to human institutions, rules, doctrines or practices, but to the Word of God. Confirmation is an opportunity for *youth* to discern whether *or not* they desire to claim their family's beliefs as their own. All youth will be encouraged to take up the baptismal covenant at the end of the Confirmation journey, but there is *always* an "out." From the perspective of the youth ministry, no one who does not wish to be Confirmed will be compelled to do so. Confirmation is not a sacrament for Presbyterians, no one who professes belief in Jesus Christ will *ever* be turned away from God's table in one of our churches because they have not been confirmed.

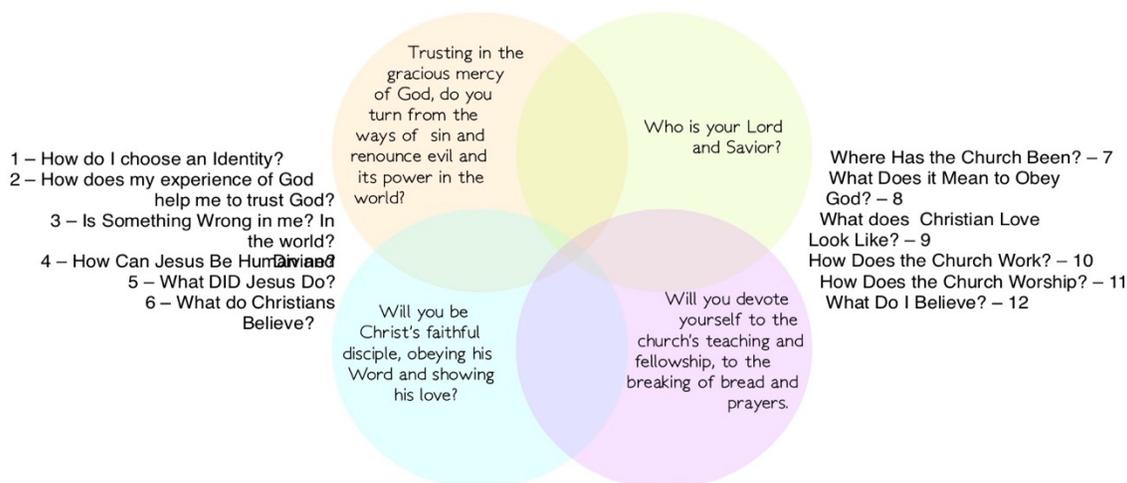
Though it is important to meet the requirements contained in this document, no young person who earnestly desires to be Confirmed will ever be turned away because of incomplete paperwork. Mentors, volunteers and pastors will walk with young people throughout the process to ensure that they feel supported along the way. If the program's expectations and requirements become a hindrance to a Confirmand's faith development, or familial situations prevent them from completing an assignment, do not be worried. Contact Pastor David and he will find a way to support you and your family as you move through the process. Remember: The sooner you contact Pastor David with a concern, the better.

Presbyterians also believe, "in life and in death, we belong to God. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." During the Confirmation year, young people will come to a new awareness of who they are as God's children. The youth ministry at BMPC is an unapologetically safe space for all young people. All of God's children, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, race, national background, ability or theological perspective will be affirmed in this space. If there is ever a need to make this welcome more explicit, parents and youth are invited to contact Pastor David.

CONFIRMATION CURRICULUM SCOPE & SEQUENCE

Big God Big Questions: Confirmation for a Growing Faith

BGBQ helps to inform the student's ability to answer the BIG questions asked at Confirmation. Each lesson includes the exploration of scripture, the most basic marks of Christian faith, and the larger church and the local community. Students dig into questions that the church has been asking for generations and the questions that have shaped their local community.



Supplemental Lessons: For use at the teacher's discretion based on the foundational work that students may or may not bring to Confirmation class.

Bible 101 – Origins; How we read the Bible today; Bible mechanics

Theology 101 – How/Why do we use the Creed; The Language of the Creed

Worship 101 - Worship vocabulary, Order of Worship, Purpose of Worship

The Apostle's Creed:

The Apostle's Creed is one of the oldest, most comprehensive and ecumenical Confessions of Christian faith in existence. Confirmands will be expected to learn this ancient confession during the Confirmation year. The class will have many opportunities to practice throughout the year, but the earlier you start practicing, the better.

I believe in God, the Father
 almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's
 only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy
 Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was
 buried;
 he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of
 the Father,
 and he will come to judge the
 living and the dead.
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.

YOUTH MINISTRY VOCABULARY

Camp Kirkwood: Every August, BMPC youth enjoy a week of camp together at a Presbyterian retreat center in the Poconos (Camp Kirkwood). Registration begins in January.

Connection Groups: following Youth Gathering students meet in Connection groups divided by age. Middle School (6th and 7th graders) meet In the Loft in a class led by Kathy Stevens and Ashlyn Kosma.

Gloucester Room: Confirmants meet in this room on Sunday Mornings between 10:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Gloucester room is located directly under the gymnasium and behind the large conference room with glass doors in the Ministries Center.

Loft: located just above the Gym, the Loft is our dedicated youth space. You can find it by going to the top of Ministry Center Staircase located by the Gym.

Student Serve: This group made up of dedicated leaders from our High School program meets weekly to help direct and guide Youth Ministry at BMPC.

Worship Together Sunday: All youth meet in the Sanctuary for worship at 10:00 a.m. Youth are welcome to sit with their parents or with one another in the left transept balcony. Each Worship Together Sunday, at least two young people will participate in the worship service. After worship, all youth and their families head over to the gym for a brief service project!

Youth Band: Made up of middle and high schoolers, the youth band provides young people with wonderful opportunities to gain worship leadership experience! Band practice starts at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays prior to Youth Gathering. All youth who play an instrument or enjoy singing are welcome to join! Just contact Pastor David!

Youth Elder/Deacon: Every program year, two high school students are selected to serve as Elders and two as Deacons. You are most likely to see them serving communion or reading scripture in one of our worship services.

Youth Gathering—Our amazing worship service that begins our time on Sunday morning together. Students meet in the gym at 10:00 for this service.

Youth Ministry Council (YMC): The church body that governs the Youth Ministry on behalf of the Session (Elders of our congregation). Members of the Youth Ministry Council include Pastor David, Youth Elders, Kathy Stevens (Chair), Kiki McKendrick, Vicky Peetros, Meggin Cappers, Anne Schmid, Darryl Brown, Kara Udicious, Ashlyn Kosma, Stacey Herman, Susan Chang and Steve McConnell.

GETTING CONNECTED

Youth Ministry E-News: The best way to stay connected with key Confirmation news is to subscribe to our Youth Ministry E-News. Please indicate your interest in signing up to receive regular updates on the Youth Ministry Registration form.

BMPC Instagram: Follow us on Instagram @bmpc_youth for regular updates and fun pictures!

The BMPC Website: All forms, calendars and special event information can be found under the “Programs” tab and the “For Youth and Their Families” link at **bmpc.org**.

Confirmation Google Drive: All Confirmation videos, forms and schedules can be found in the “For Mentors & Families” Google Drive. The link will be sent to all of you at the beginning of the Confirmation year. You can access the drive at the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ghWFCUOl9kevD6Z6ySp9alMJoAoC7F-S?usp=sharing>.

Helpful Contacts:

Rev. David B. Smith

Interim Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

DavidSmith@bmpc.org

(610) 525-2821

Amy Bauer

Assistant for Youth Ministry

AmyBauer@bmpc.org

(610) 525-2821

Courtenay Willcox

Confirmation Coordinator

mcwillcox@gmail.com

(610) 506-1708

EXPECTATIONS, REQUIREMENTS & KEY DATES

Expectations of Confirmands

- Attend Confirmation Meet & Greet on September 5th, 2018
- Attend Confirmation Brunch on October 21st at 11: 15 a.m. at Pastor David's Manse
- Either select or request to be connected with a Confirmation Mentor by September 30th, 2018. Mentors must be an adult member of our congregation to whom the Confirmand is not related.
- Attend Confirmation Retreat on February 10th, 2018.
- Attend Youth Gathering in the gym (10-10:30 a.m.) and Confirmation Class in Gloucester Room (10:30 – 11:15) on every Sunday specified as "Youth Gathering/Connection Groups" on the Youth Ministry Schedule
- Attend Worship Together Sundays and Services projects on the First Sunday of every month.
- Attend monthly one-on-one sessions with assigned Confirmation Mentor and review Mentor Questions for October, November, December, January, February, March and April.
- Learn the Apostles Creed by Confirmation Sunday
- Complete a Discipleship Project by the week before the Final Project Expo and meet with Session (BMPC's local governing body) to be welcomed into the active membership of BMPC.

Expectations of Parents & Families

- Attend Confirmation Meet & Greet with your Confirmand
- Attend Confirmation Brunch on October 21st at 11: 15 a.m. at Pastor David's Manse
- Watch monthly Confirmation Videos and review monthly Family Discussion questions with your Confirmand.
- Attend Confirmation Expo, service and celebratory brunch
- Bring Conferees to Youth Gatherings, Worship Together Sundays and one-on-one meetings with Mentors.
- Encourage your young person to ask bold questions and remain committed throughout the process.
- Support your youth in their efforts to connect with other young people through special events and service opportunities.
- Reach out to Pastor David or Courtenay if you have any questions or concerns at any point throughout the process.

Expectations of Mentors

- Attend Confirmation Meet & Greet on September 5th, 2018
- Attend Confirmation Brunch on October 21st at 11: 15 a.m. at Pastor David's Manse
- meet with your Confirmand for one-on-one sessions at least once per month during the following months October, November, December, January, February, March and April.
- Complete Mentor Discussion Questions in each monthly meeting with your Confirmand (These will be made available via the Google Drive by October).
- Sit with your Confirmand in the Main Sanctuary on Worship Together Sundays.
- Help your Confirmand develop their Disciple Project ideas throughout the year, support them in the final phases of project completion, and attend the Final Project Expo & Meeting with Session members.
- Hold your Confirmand and their families in prayer throughout the year.
- Attend Confirmation Expo in May.
- Attend Confirmation Service and Brunch in May.

Key Confirmation Dates:

- **September 5th, 2018:** *Confirmation Meet & Greet*, 6 p.m. in Congregational Hall (Confirmands, Families, Mentors)
- **September 23rd, 2018:** *First day of Confirmation Class*, 10 a.m. in the Gym and 10:30 a.m. in Gloucester Room (Confirmands only)
- **October 21st, 2018:** *Confirmation Brunch*, 11:30 a.m. at Pastor David's Manse (Confirmands, Families, Mentors)
- **February 10th, 2019:** *Confirmation Retreat*, 11:30 - 6 p.m. at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church & Broad Street Ministry (Confirmands Only)
- **May 12th, 2019:** *Confirmation Expo & Session Examination*. Examination at 9:00 a.m. in Gym (Confirmands Only), Expo at 11:15 a.m. in the Gym (Confirmands, Families, Mentors)
- **May 19th, 2018:** *Confirmation Sunday & Certificate Presentation Breakfast*, Main Sanctuary & Congregational Hall

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church & Broad Street Ministry

February 10th, 2018 – 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Confirmands will have an exciting opportunity to explore the practices that shape Christian faith. We will eat lunch together after Youth Gathering and Confirmation Class. Then, we will be joined by a special guest who will lead us through a fun and interactive exploration of the Christian practices that shape BMPC's worship life. At 3 p.m. we will board vans and head to the afternoon worship Service at Broad Street Ministry. Youth will have an opportunity to experience a unique expression of Reformed worship that will help them to form a better understanding of the goals of the Disciple Project.

INTERGENERATIONAL MISSION TRIP

Durham, NC – Dates and Costs TBA

Looking for a way to get more involved with the Youth Ministry at BMPC after Confirmation? This year, youth are invited to join an intergenerational mission team to Durham, NC. We will be working with our ministry partner, Farm Church. Activities will include exploring issues of urban poverty, community gardening and other community development projects. More information will be made available at the Parent & Youth Kickoff on September 16th in the Gym at 10 a.m.

CAMP KIRKWOOD

August 4-10th

Kirkwood is not just a week away in the Poconos... It's a week full of fun, friends and faith! The BMPC camp experience provides a wonderful entry point for any confirmand who wants to dig a little deeper in their faith after the Confirmation year is complete. There are opportunities for archery, arts and crafts, high ropes, worship, small groups and free time to hang out with new friends.

Camp Cost: \$499 (full and partial scholarships are available)

DISCIPLE PROJECT

What is the Disciple Project?

Rather than asking Confirmands to write a formal statement of faith at the end of the year, we invite them to live out their faith in tangible ways by *intentionally* engaging in a specific Christian practice over a 30-day period. This goal is achieved through the Disciple Project, which must be presented to Session in order to complete the confirmation process.

To Complete the Disciple Project, Confirmands will:

1. **Practice:** The Disciple Project provides a wonderful opportunity for Confirmands to “live with” a Christian practice for a *30-day period*. In consultation with their families and mentors, Confirmands must either select a Christian practice from the list provided on page 14 of this packet, *or* come up with their own Christian practice/project to explore. Disciple Projects are NOT community service projects. Community service is a wonderful thing and can be included as part of the project, but the project will be considered incomplete if the confirmand does not reflect on their selected practice through the lens of Christian faith. All projects must be approved by Courtenay Willcox (mcwillcox@gmail.com, 610.506.1708). Confirmands are not to proceed with their projects until they have been reviewed and approved.

2. **Record:** Once the Disciple Project has been approved, Confirmands are to record their process, thoughts and questions about the project in the Confirmation Journal that will be provided on the first day of confirmation class. Journaling will help Confirmands process the ideas, experiences and revelations they have during the process of preparing their project.

3. **Present:** The final phase of the Disciple Project requires the creation of a visual presentation through which the Confirmand will demonstrate her/his/their fulfillment of the practice requirements on May 12th, 2019. The presentation *must* demonstrate; (1) an introduction to the chosen practice and the *Confirmand's* reasons for selecting it, (2) method of exploration [AKA: what the Confirmand actually did], (3) at least *five* potential results from the Confirmand's engagement with the process. At the Disciple Project Expo, Confirmands should be prepared to talk with “Session” (leaders of our congregation) and other church members about their experience. Poster-boards, try-fold presentation boards, PowerPoints, Keynotes, Prezzis, pictures, and even sound effects are all acceptable modes of presentation. Multiple mediums may also be employed. These projects are meant to be fun and engaging, while also illustrating the Confirmand's desire to “dig deep” into their Christian faith. Confirmands should ask themselves the following questions as they prepare for the presentation; (1) How did engaging in this practice influence my faith development? (2) What did I learn from the experience? (3) What is one way in which this practice challenged or pushed me beyond my comfort zone? (4) In what way did this practice bring me closer to God, others and/or myself? Remember: there are no wrong answers or incorrect results. Asking bold questions is more important than coming up with the “best” answers!

KEY DISCIPLE PROJECT DATES

- **Disciple Project proposal is due on March 31, 2019.** After discussing the project with parents and Mentors, Confirmands should review their decision with Courtenay Willcox. In consultation with Pastor David, Courtenay will offer suggestions for how the project might be enriched before approving it. This is an important step; don't miss it!
- **Disciple Projects MUST BE COMPLETED by Sunday, May 5th, 2019.** All Confirmands will present their Disciple Projects for peer review in Confirmation Class on the 5th to ensure that they are ready for the examination/expo on the 12th!
- **Session Examination & Confirmation Expo on May 12th, 2019.** All Confirmands are expected to arrive at the Gym by 8:30 a.m. to set up their projects for the "Session Examination," which will begin at 9 a.m. The word "examination" can be intimidating, but there is no cause for concern; everyone wants our Confirmands to feel affirmed and supported. At 11 a.m. (after Youth Gathering & 10 a.m. Service in the Sanctuary) Confirmands and Mentors are invited to stand with and answer questions about their projects as members of the congregation drop by to check out their work.
- **Confirmation Sunday on May 19th, 2018.** All Confirmands, families and Mentors are invited to gather in Congregational Hall at 8:30 a.m. for a celebratory breakfast! Confirmation certificates and gifts will be handed out. Youth will gather in the Sanctuary for a group picture at 9:45 a.m. The Liturgy of Confirmation will take place during the 10 a.m. service.

DISCIPLE PROJECT PRACTICE OPTIONS

- **Prayer and contemplation:**
Matthew 6: 9-13, Matthew 7:7-11, Luke 11:2-13.
- **Extending forgiveness:**
Matthew 18:21-25, Luke 17:13, Matthew 5: 23-24, Mark 11:25
- **Alms Giving/Tithing:**
Matthew 6: 1-4, Matthew 25:31-46
- **Hospitality and caregiving:**
Luke 7: 36-50, Matthew 25: 31-45, Luke 10:30-35
- **Reading Scripture:**
Confirmants can choose a book of the Old or New Testaments, daily Lectionary readings, or choose a random daily selection. You could go to a Christian bookstore and ask for a guide. You might also look into the practice of Lectio Divina.
- **Self-control, self-denial, abstinence from something to make room for God:**
Galatians 5:16-26, Matthew 6:16-18
- **Working for social justice/Defending the poor or oppressed:**
Matthew 5: 3-12 (The Beatitudes), Matthew 7:12, Amos 5:21-24, Micah 6: 6-8, Isaiah 1:10-17
- **Repentance:**
Ezekiel 33: 10-20, Matthew 3:1-10, Luke 15 the whole chapter, Luke 18: 9-1
- **Evangelism/Sharing the story of your faith journey:**
Matthew 28: 16-20, Luke 24:44-53, John 21:4-25, Acts 2 (the story of Pentecost), Mark 4:30-32
- **Encouraging Someone in Need:**
The Beatitudes, Matthew 5: 3-11, Matthew 6:28-30, Luke 12:27-28
- **Encouraging Vocation:**
The Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25: 14-30, Matthew 4:14-16, Luke 19:11-27
- **More Practices:**
Communion, Confession, Discernment, Examen, Fasting, Music & Hymns, Praise, Prayer of Imagination or Self-Guided Visualization, Photography of sacred places, feeding the homeless, visit a church other than BMPC, interviewing older members of the church about their faith journeys.

FAMILY VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

BMPC's Confirmation curriculum includes videos that accompany each lesson. These videos provide a helpful entry point into theological discussion and formation for youth and families who are committed to exploring the ins-and-outs of the Christian Faith. Confirmands are expected to watch the following videos and discuss the accompanying questions with their families by the assigned dates.

All Confirmation videos, forms and schedules can be found in the "For Mentors & Families" Google Drive. The link will be sent to all of you at the beginning of the Confirmation year. You can access the drive at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ghWFCUOl9kevD6Z6ysp9alMJoAoC7F-S?usp=sharing>.

1. How Do We Know and Trust God?

— **by October 1st, 2018**

- a. What words does Aisha use to describe her experience of God?
- b. What has led Aisha to trust in God's grace and mercy?
- c. Which Bible person does Aisha say reminds her to trust God's faithfulness? Which Bible person, story, or stories reminds you to trust in God?

2. What is Sin and How Do We Turn from It?

— **by November 1st, 2018** (First of two in November)

- a. How do you react to hearing that the health of Peruvians in La Oroya is directly related to things you buy and use?
- b. In what ways are you aware of the brokenness in the world, whether in your community or in other parts of our country and our world?
- c. Based on this video, who do we turn from sin and the power of evil?

3. Who Is Your Lord?

— **By November 17th, 2018** (second of two in November)

- a. According to Linda, how does Jesus as Lord show us who God is?
- b. How does claiming Jesus as Lord and Savior reorient our lives to God?
- c. Based on this video, why should you follow Jesus as Lord?

4. Who Is Your Savior?

—**by December 1st, 2018**

- a. According to Kate, how did Jesus minister to people? How can we think of his entire ministry as saving people?
- b. Kate contrasts pilgrims—people who follow Jesus by visiting holy sites and people who do what Jesus did in serving the poor and the oppressed. Which of these is true discipleship in Jesus' name and why?
- c. Based on this video, why should you follow Jesus as Savior?

5. What Does It Mean to Be a Disciple of Jesus?

— **By January 1st, 2019**

- a. In what way is listening for God's voice being obedient to God?
- b. How do you listen for God's voice?

- c. Do you think questioning the way things are in the church and in the world is being obedient to God? Explain.
- 6. What Does It Mean to Show Christ's Love?**
 - **By February 1st, 2019** (first of two in February)
 - a. How does Corey's church in Ely, Minnesota, show the love of Christ?
 - b. How does Chris's church in New York City show the love of Christ?
 - c. How does Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church show the love of Christ?
- 7. Will You Devote Yourself to the Church's Teaching?**
 - **By February 17th, 2019** (second of two in February)
 - a. How would you describe the changes in Corey as he began to study the Bible and the church's teachings?
 - b. What Bible stories and other teachings of the church have influenced you?
- 8. Will You Devote Yourself to the Church's Fellowship?**
 - **By March 1st, 2019**
 - a. J. Herbert says that Christians never walk alone, especially during times of suffering. What, in your experience, might support J. Herbert's claim
 - b. Who are the people in your church who have fed you and walked with you through your life of faith?
 - c. How does your church function as part of the body of Christ?
- 9. Will You Devote Yourself to the Breaking of Bread?**
 - **by April 1st** (First of two in April)
 - a. What does the breaking of bread mean for the work of the church? Can it be more than feeding and eating together? Explain.
 - b. How is the sharing of meals a ministry at Okra Abbey?
 - c. How is Okra Abbey 'breaking the rules' of traditional table fellowship?
- 10. Will You Devote Yourself to Prayer?**
 - **by April 28, 2019** (Second of two in April)
 - a. What role does prayer play in the life of Marissa's congregation?
 - b. How does prayer build up the church?
 - c. In what way do you think all aspects of worship are prayer? Explain.
- 11. Are you ready to be Confirmed?**
 - **by May 5, 2019**
 - a. Whose faith statement is the closest to what you believe? Explain.
 - b. Whose faith statement is furthest from what you believe? Explain.
 - c. If these people gave their faith statements to your church's session, do you think they would be welcome to join your church? Why or why not