

TRINITY TRIUMPH

TRINITY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN

September 2013

Christ the Power of God, Christ the Wisdom of God Confirmation

Thank you to all who give time and energy to the continuing and empowering renewal that can occur through Christian education. When I arrived in June I met a fully functioning church school program and an education director and teachers insisting that "of course 'Sunday School' continues throughout summer." "And how else should it be." "And even when attendance is low, due to vacationing and other summer events, in the sight of God in Christ one or two children are just as important as ten or twenty."

In some churches it seems like a hardship to suggest that summer Sunday school occur at all, even when summer teachers are available. Trinity United Presbyterian displays an enthusiasm, drive and determination in many areas, and not in the least within Christian education.

With the same determination some have expressed a concern that it's been too long since we last provided what has been known in our tradition as a Confirmation course for young people. So we're going to do that.

As per custom, the Pastor will lead it; as well, Dr. Schumacher has graciously agreed to take part. The class will take place during the 9:00 Sunday School hour in the youth room. It starts the new church year beginning Sunday, September 1st, but because this is Labor Day weekend and attendance will possibly be low, September the 8th will be the unofficial official grand opening.

Anyone having been through a Confirmation previously, or not having the desire to participate, will of course not have to. The center for all participants, whether or not working through Confirmation, will be Jesus as the Christ of the Christian Scripture, the curriculum foundation, the foundation for everything, we'll center our efforts on the book of John.

For Confirmation we'll also use some of the excellent material created several years ago by Dr. Schumacher. It is one of the most thorough, comprehensive, in-depth and readable church and faith overviews I've seen. It could have been, should have been published. This and other material will be individually tailored. It will be as rigorous as someone is ready and willing to make it. For those participating in Confirmation I would anticipate a little extra "homework" here and there, and a Statement Of Faith to be presented to the session (church leaders). And with the pastor as an advocate and the Spirit as The Advocate expect nothing less for confirmands than lots of affirmation and lots of strength.

In final analysis, confirming belief is the continuing renewal that occurs through the fight of the good fight, the keeping of the faith, *"Not that I've already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own. I don't think that I have made it my own yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ."*

Confirmation has two parts. In the first place it's *What* do we believe, as much as we can define it, at whatever age and wherever we're placed. But that's not all, and the rest is much like the first and just as critical: *Why* do we believe what we believe.

"I appeal to you, therefore ... Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God"

A radically different conformation --

"The message of the cross is foolishness to some, but to us who are being saved it is the power"

Grace and peace.

DRA

