



The Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i

The Right Reverend Robert L. Fitzpatrick
Bishop

Confirmation: Minimum Requirements for Young Persons

Confirmation is the sacramental rite in which a Christian can express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop. Although Confirmation is means of grace, it is not necessary for all Christians in the same way that the two great sacraments given by Christ to his Church, Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist, are.

In the course of their Christian development, those baptized at an early age are expected, however, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop.

It is required of those to be confirmed that they have been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to publically affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Any young person who has been baptized as an infant or child and has never had the opportunity to publically confirm or affirm the promises made for them at baptism is invited to take this important step in their faith journey.

To be confirmed in the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i a young person must meet the following requirements:

- Be a baptized Christian
- Be at least 14 years old. The confirmand should be old enough to make a mature decision. Each candidate should be of such maturity as to be able to make meaningful vows that impact their lives. Typically the age is 14, but pastoral exceptions are possible and must be approved by the Bishop upon the written recommendation of the priest in charge of the young person’s congregation.
- Be a regular participant in the life, worship, education and outreach of the congregation presenting him or her
- Write a letter to the Bishop (see below)
- Attend the group confirmand meeting with the Bishop, held prior to the Confirmation service

These requirements apply to youth age 14 through the end of high school.

It is expected that each candidate for Confirmation will have received quality instruction in his or her congregation that includes the basics of the Christian faith and the Episcopal expression of it.

At this time, the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i recommends using “I Will, with God’s Help” (see <https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=product&productID=1423>). This Confirmation program was developed with the help of Episcopal educators, clergy and theologians across the country, and it encourages youth and adults to enter into a uniquely Episcopal—yet profoundly Christian—faith journey. The easily adapted format works for a traditional six- to twelve-week program, at a contemporary Confirmation retreat or conference, or as a sacramental supplement to other two- to three-year programs. “I Will, with God’s Help” built entirely on the Baptismal Covenant from *The Book of Common Prayer*, offers seekers a solid reflection on Episcopal heritage and belief,

together with the riches of Episcopal liturgy and prayer. This program is suitable for youth, adult or intergenerational programs and includes creative suggestions for parish involvement.

Other curriculums are, of course, acceptable. “I Will, with God’s Help” can be viewed as the minimum standard of preparation of young persons for presentation for Confirmation.

If any other curriculum is being used, it should be reviewed with the Bishop. It is helpful for the Bishop to understand the method of preparation and how the confirmands have engaged with the foundations of the faith. Components for preparation should always include:

- Scripture
- The Book of Common Prayer
- Service and the Life of the Baptized
- Mission and Community
- Prayer
- Episcopal identity

Every congregation has different circumstances, but the Bishop hopes requirements for each congregation will ensure that all those presented for Confirmation have:

- Adult sponsors/mentors who are active in the ministry of the Church
- Volunteer opportunities in some type of community service
- The opportunity to take part in leadership in some aspect of worship
- Occasions to learn about the ministries and mission opportunities of the local congregation, the Diocese and The Episcopal Church

Each confirmand will need to write a letter to the Bishop that includes his or her name, age, and congregation. The purpose of the letter is to help the Bishop get to know the confirmands before his arrival at the worship service. The letter also can provide a way for the confirmands to show they have thought through their faith, and are able in their own words to explain their faith and why they want to be confirmed.

The letters do not need to be long and they do not need to be typed (they may also be e-mailed), but confirmands need to write about these things:

1. Write a little about their faith journey and about their faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Write about a ministry in the Church in which they have been involved or a mission trip they have taken and why it has been meaningful to their life of faith.
3. Write about their ongoing call to be a member of the Body of Christ—what new ministry will they do in their church, or what ongoing ministry will they continue?

Preferably, the Bishop should receive the letters two weeks prior to the Confirmation service. They can be sent to the Bishop at the diocesan office:

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