

Confirmation Reflection
Preacher: Rev. Lauren Lorincz
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As I reflect on Confirmation this year, it's with the understanding that Dana and I covered a whole lot of ground. At our opening retreat we talked about the Christian story and our individual stories. We then learned more about worship as the way we offer praise to God and discussed our two sacraments in the UCC--Baptism and Communion. As a Confirmation class, we learned that the Bible tells the story of humanity's experience of God. We made a timeline of Christian history from the birth of Jesus through the Schism of Eastern and Western Christianity to the Protestant Reformation to today. And we learned some history and polity of our United Church of Christ.

We spoke of God creating, seeking, saving, loving, and judging. Of Jesus as human and divine, crucified and resurrected. We learned about the Holy Spirit and the Church as the Body of Christ. We even learned about World Religions, worshipped at Temple Emunah, and had a one-on-one discussion with Rabbi Lerner.

Our whole year was grounded in our UCC Statement of Faith (which was our Call to Worship today)--a testimony of our faith, not a creed. We learned about witness and service and did just that at Bristol Lodge and Pilgrim Church in Dorchester. And we wrestled with theological concepts like forgiveness and grace, justice and peace, and even eternal life. Lord, we need a vacation.

But my question today is for the whole congregation, this Body of Christ. You heard some of what these seven students--Allie, Jeffrey, Paige, Grace, Isabel, Lydia, and Mark--learned and experienced this year in Confirmation. So here's my question for the congregation--how many of you are experts in scripture, worship, Christian history, theology, United Church of Christ polity, world religions, and service work? Please raise your hands if you are experts in all of these areas.

You see, we don't have all the answers, even those of us who have been thinking about these religious ideas longer than you have. The beauty of our religion is that we are part of a community of Christians that have been here long before we were born and will be here long after we're gone. We are on this journey of faith together, and it's a long and winding road.

In some ways, Confirmation is putting your toe in the water of this great and vast tradition we call Christianity. Do you understand some of these concepts better after our time together? Sure. Did some of you think, when I just listed our lessons--did we learn that, because I must have missed that class! Sure. Do some of you still have questions and doubts and Christian concepts that you just don't get. I sure hope so because I know that our congregation doesn't have all the answers and neither do you and neither do I.

But what we do have here at Pilgrim Congregational Church United Church of Christ is a community of faith you will officially become part of today that will be here to support you as we all wrestle with our Christian faiths together, as we worship God together, and as we do our best to be a welcoming home to all spiritual seekers, making a difference in our world, by fusing our Christian faith with everyday life and serving God by serving others. We will be here with you and for you and could not be more thrilled that you will be with us as adult members of our church. Welcome home. Amen.