

While I obviously feel it of worth to acknowledge that at the end of the month we are celebrating Palm Sunday and Easter, part of that feels so far away with weeks of Lent still ahead of us. Further study and focus on the alien will of God still lies ahead; especially as we focus on that odd interplay during the events and attitudes of Holy Week. Plus, there's also the immediacy of two particular events coming up in May that I very much want to talk about earlier rather than later.

May 12th is Confirmation Sunday this year. We have three young women who will be confirming the faith that they were baptized into. In the rite of Confirmation, they will have the opportunity to give answer the questions that were answered in their stead by parents and sponsors years ago. This will constitute in itself the end of one chapter in their life of faith, but Lord willing, not the end of the book. The end of one chapter merely leads to the beginning of another. Faith and life therein are not completed at confirmation, but as stated, is merely confirmed! And in doing so give rise to a greater perspective and expected knowledge and use of that faith. Following confirmation they – like all members of the church – will be expected to continue diligently in their study of God's Word. Whether it is at home during daily devotions, at church in an organized Bible Study, or most basically in attending worship and hearing God's Word read and expounded upon.

This final note is as I said the basest expectation of God of His people. It is the bare minimum of what living in confirmed faith looks like. Or more clearly put it is the foundation upon which God seeks to build in our daily lives in faith, through His Word, and the ways we see His will and Word play out in everyday life. It is also why I have an expectation of confirmands and their parents of a basic regular attendance at least during the years of confirmation. The hope is that by coming with their parents their faith will be supported by the people who have the greatest influence on their formation as children. And ultimately that, they will come to appreciate and enjoy the richness of God's Word, just as their parents who were confirmed in the faith do as well.

One other thing though that I want to mention because it is new, at least during my time here as pastor is an event that many of you likely remember from your days of Confirmation, and that is Public Questioning. On May 1st at 7pm there will be a service to 'confirm' the knowledge and understanding of the confirmands prior to their confirmation. I have assured them that I will be nice! And truthfully, my view of public questioning is an opportunity for our young people to exhibit the faith they have been growing in not only during their time in confirmation, but throughout their life up to that point. It also provides a clear witness to any family or friends who may be weak in faith or without faith. Being ready to give and answer for the hope we believe is actually easiest in the setting where you basically know the answers already and have been directly prepared to answer.

The side benefit of questioning is that it also gives family, friends, and members of the congregation the opportunity to be steepred in the knowledge and faith they were once confirmed in. I encourage you to come to Public Questioning on May 1st at 7pm, both to support and encourage our confirmands, but also to challenge yourself? Maybe I'll even give a way to keep score? I haven't decided yet, so maybe you should go find your catechism now.

God's Blessings on your month,
Pastor Nick