

A sermon delivered by Aryn Mason, a member of the 2009 Confirmation class, at the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, May 17, 2009, Easter 6, dedicated to the glory of God!

“My Confirmation Experience”

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Let us pray: May the words of my mouth and the meditations of each one of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our salvation. Amen.

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First, I want to start off by saying that I didn't want to be in Confirmation. I only did it because my Mother said, "It's either this year or next year." So I did it now, just to get it over with. Come to find out, it wasn't anything I expected it to be. I didn't think I'd make new friends. I didn't think I'd learn anything new.

But now, I'm glad I went through with it. When it came time to pick our parts for this service, I chose to write about my experience. I wanted to share my journey through Confirmation with you.

One of my favorite things about Confirmation was the field trips. We went to Templed Hills to clean the camp after a huge storm. One of the jobs we had to do was to pick up sticks from the whole camp. I got to see different parts of the camp and I got to spend the day with other people from the class. It was hard work but we had so much fun.

We also learned about different religions and got to visit different places of worship. I really liked going to the Hindu temple. It was cool to see the different gods and goddesses that they worship. The temple was very bright and colorful. It

was really interesting to go to the Islamic mosque because it wasn't anything like I expected it to be. I found out that they have different areas in the mosque to worship and there are many different programs designed for different age groups just like we have at our church.

At the spring retreat I enjoyed spending time with the other confirmands and writing in our journals. We talked about where we see God. I said that I see him at Temple Hills because when you're at Temple Hills, you don't worry about anything. You just live in the moment.

But the best part about Confirmation was meeting and getting to know my mentor, Sondra. Every time we got together, we found out new things about each other. She has helped me understand things about myself and to look at things in different ways.

I remember when she asked me if I thought that I was more religious or spiritual. At first, I said that I was religious because I thought that was the right thing to say, but I couldn't really say why. Sondra explained to me that there isn't a right or wrong answer or a right way to feel.

We went to see *The Secret Life of Bees*. After watching the movie, I understood the difference between being spiritual and being religious. I think being religious is more about following specific rules, but that being spiritual is how you feel about God and other people and about how you want to live your life. This was the most important thing that I learned during Confirmation. It doesn't matter if I can quote all the Bible verses or what church I go to. It only matters how I live my life. I don't worry so much anymore about fitting in, or how people might think I should act at church. I just try to be true to myself.

I had a really great time sharing this experience with Sondra. She's an intelligent and loving person. I know we will stay close, even after Confirmation.

When I started coming to First Church, I was very quiet and I felt like I was different and didn't really belong. This experience gave me a chance to start over with the church. Now that I've been through Confirmation, I feel like I've grown into a stronger, more mature, and spiritual person. Thank you.

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