**RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

First Congregational Church, UCC, Darien, Connecticut

*We invite our confirmands to rise and face the congregation*

*as they affirm the faith of their baptism according to this order*

*from the Book of Worship of the United Church of Christ.*

# **ADDRESS**

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: “I am the vine, you are the branches. Anyone who abides in me, and I in that person, is the one who bears much fruit…If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

Friends in Christ, we are all received into the church through the gift of baptism. These young people have found nurture and support in the life and ministries of our spiritual home, the First Congregational Church of Darien. Through prayer and study, through pairing with mentors to reveal the life of faith, through feeding the hungry and being present to the homeless, through visits bringing them in contact with other faiths, they are led today by the Holy Spirit to affirm their bap-tism, to own their relationship with Christ, and to claim their place in his church. They come here today vowing to serve God with the gifts the Holy Spirit bestows.

**QUESTIONS OF THE CONFIRMANDS**

I invite the confirmands to respond in unison as these questions are before you:

Do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ. If so, please answer, **“I do.”**

Do you renounce the powers of evil and do you desire the freedom of new life in Christ? If so, please respond, **“I do.”**

Do you all profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of your lives and the world? If so, please answer: **“I do.”**

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ’s disciple, to follow in the way of our Lord, to resist evil and oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able? If so, **“I promise, with the help of God.”**

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith as a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating his presence and furthering his mission in the world? If so, **“I promise, with the help of God.”**

# *The confirmands are seated. They each come forward singly, with their mentor.*

# **ACT OF CONFIRMATION**

As we confirm the vows of baptism, notice the resemblance to the ordaining or installing of clergy. Indeed, in baptism and its confirmation we find our first and most essential ordination to ministry to become God’s people. The similarity is not coincidence. As we affirm our faith and kneel for blessing we find our ordina-tion as God’s people into the priesthood of all God’s believers, world without end.

Let us pray. O Holy God, we praise you that you have called each one of these young people to this moment. We believe you know and love each one of them uniquely, as though he or she were the only one. May your Holy Spirit be pre-sent in a strong and lasting way as we now confirm them in their faith in you. Amen.

At this time, I invite forward one at a time for the Act of Confirmation both our confirmands and their personal mentors, who have been their guides in revealing to our young the walk of faith. As they come forward, I also acknowledge the parents and Church School teachers and Youth Leaders who have faithfully fed them along their journey of faith. The church community confirms, not a pastor.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, may the God of peace make you holy and blameless unto the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, may the God of mercy multiply his grace and his peace in you and truly enable you to faithfully keep your vows to God for all of the days of your life. Amen.

Strengthen, O God, this your servant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with your heavenly grace, that he/she may continue as yours forever, and daily increase in him/her your Holy Spirit. Amen.

O God, in the grace of Jesus Christ you have accepted this your servant \_\_\_\_\_\_ through the water of baptism. Nourish in him/her the power of your Holy Spirit that he/she may serve you in the world. Amen

**PRAYER OF CONFIRMATION**

We rejoice, O God, that these young persons today are called to affirm the covenant of baptism. Help them know that their lives are no longer their own, but they belong to you first and last, our Source and Destiny. Help them to live not for themselves, but for Jesus Christ and for all whom he loves. Keep them steady, abounding in hope, never giving up, pressing forward toward the goal set before the faithful in the Gospel. Keep them close to us, O God, that they would parti-cipate in the life and mission of the family of your people, sharing regularly in the self-offering of worship, enlisted in the outreach of your church worldwide. Amen.

*The confirmands will stand once again and face the congregation as a group.*

# **RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

Beloved, in baptism God has claimed you, and Jesus Christ has chosen you as his own. Do you profess your faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior, make him your example, and take for your rule of life his words: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength...and your neighbor as yourself? If so, please say, “I do, with the help of God.”

RESPONSE: **I DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.**

In the presence of God and these witnesses, do you give yourself unreservedly in Christ’s service, and take this as your church home? Ever mindful of fellow disciples, do you promise to walk alongside them in faithfulness and love? And do you promise that, so far as you are able, you will attend the services of this church, observe its sacraments, share its local mission and worldwide outreach, support its endeavor with your giving, and grow this church as a fruitful body of Christians, promoting its effectiveness, purity and peace? If so, please say, “I do, with the help of God.”

RESPONSE: **I DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.**

**COVENANT OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, DARIEN**

**We covenant with God and with one another, as fellow Members of this Church, and bind ourselves in God’s presence to serve His kingdom in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. We pledge our loyalty to this Church and to the whole body of Christ’s Church, declaring our intention to walk together in God’s holy ways, made known and to be made known to us. Amen.**

# **INVITATION TO THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we present to you the Confirmation Class of 2017. The confirmands will form a receiving line at Coffee Hour. Please be sure to welcome, congratulate, and extend to them the right hand of Christian fellowship.

*The confirmands depart during the last verse of closing hymn, form a reception line at the back of Parish Hall, and prepare to receive the greetings of the people.*