

# Confirmation in the Spirit, Bread for the Journey

## RETREAT MODULE INTRODUCTION

Dear Retreat Leader:

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a leader for this retreat at a camp and conference center. The hope and prayer is that this retreat module will provide an enriching experience for all participants as well as you and your leadership team. This module will provide the tools for you and other congregational leaders to put this retreat into action. It is designed to equip you and your team to host and lead a retreat at any of the amazing camp and conference centers for a wonderful retreat experience.

## Purpose

The intent of this retreat module is for you as a congregational leader to have a tool that equips you and a team for retreat leadership. A variety of opportunities to explore and discover God's word in community abound at a camp and conference center. Without a lot of time and effort this module provides a model for a retreat that is flexible and can be adapted to your group.

## Why Retreat

A retreat refreshes and revitalizes, taking us out of the daily grind of our normal lives and provides an enjoyable breathtaking experience. Retreats are important for our minds, bodies and souls. They provide a restful setting, experiences in the out-of-doors, time exploring God's Word, and activity that engages us in community - rekindling and deepening relationships with one another and with God.

## Why Retreat at a Camp & Conference Center

The setting of a camp and conference center enhances the experience of God spiritually, mentally, and physically. The center lets us step away and encounter a place of wonder and discovery, rest and renewal. It opens up an opportunity for individuals and groups to be outdoors connecting with one another, creation, and the Creator.

## Shared Leadership

Team leadership is ideal, spreading out the work load and sharing in the ministry. There is joy in hearing different voices and in equipping others to serve alongside one another. The community that is built can overflow into other ministries as well as into other retreats in the future. This model envisions the inclusion of members of a team with varying gifts.

## Flexibility is the Key

Be flexible throughout your retreat, giving the Holy Spirit space to enter into the retreat experience and community being built. Activities are designed for both inside and outside (weather permitting) with opportunities to spend quality time in the environment of the camp and conference center especially outdoors.

## What You Will Find

Here is what you will find in the module to assist in planning your retreat:

- List of supplies/resources
- Sample schedules
- Song suggestions
- Additional resources
- Options like adapting for various sized groups
- Spaces of free time to just relax or participate in some of the activities provided at the camp and conference center
- Scripture readings are provided for convenience - leaders may use other biblical versions and/or invite participants to bring their own Bibles

## Planning a Retreat

1. Create a team to help plan, administer and lead the retreat:
  - Make reservations at the camp and conference center
  - Develop a registration form and process
  - Arrange travel for leadership and participants
  - Design a schedule with gatherings, activities, meals, and rest
  - Gather supplies needed
  - Consider any safety concerns especially for your group at this location
  - Invite leaders to assist before, during and after the retreat

## 2. Get the Word Out:

They say that the average person needs to hear and/or see something 7 times before it is ingrained in their memory. That means you need to share the invitation for your retreat in as many places as you can, in as many forms as you can.

- Identify your audience by determining who should be invited to participate
- Work backwards from your retreat date to calculate required deadlines for invitations, registrations, and advertisement prior to the retreat
- Use newsletters, flyers, bulletin inserts, bulletin boards to get the word out
- Include an informational flyer with the registration form
- Use email notices, social media and websites to advertise
- Follow-up as registration dates get close with reminders to register
- Confirm registrations and include a what to bring list
- Build excitement as you send a reminder closer to the retreat date

## 3. Retreat Schedule:

Begin with one of the provided sample schedules and adjust it to best meet the needs of your group. Don't forget to include meals and free time so there is rest in the midst of activities.

## 4. Evaluation:

Follow-up after the retreat, with a paper, electronic, or verbal evaluation. Ask what was most meaningful, least meaningful, what might be changed for a next retreat. This will provide you with an overall sense of how the retreat was received, as well as notes for any future events.

## Use of Space

- Inside & outside – take advantage of the outside space as well as the various activities provided at the camp and conference center
- Safe space for your retreat- both physically in your location as well as for the conversations, interactions and experiences
- Worship space – remember that worship is a central part of our community; keep familiar rhythms while at the same time introducing new ways of worshipping in a different setting
- Small groups – create a safe and welcoming space for sharing; invite all voices to be heard; instill respect for various opinions to be voiced and heard

- Special needs – consider what hearing, sight, mobility etc. needs exists in your group; be inclusive with all of your spaces and adapt activities as needed

## Gathering in Community

- Gather in circles when possible – around a table, standing or sitting, circles provide a sense of community; we can see one another's faces, listen to and hear one another better
- Music – select songs that are easy to sing, and have word sheets or music sheets available; introduce new songs by teaching them and listening to the music before singing.

## Provide Hospitality

Hospitality is important for all participants to have a comfortable and grace-filled experience. Consider what simple things will make people feel welcome and comfortable.

- Hospitality area – provide water/beverages and snacks; find out whether the camp and conference center can provide this or whether you will need to bring them
- Locations – provide maps and information on where everything is located; consider a tour or scavenger hunt for your group to learn where to find locations for the retreat; good signage and clear directions can make a big difference
- Get acquainted – everyone may not know everyone else, so assume that you need name tags and activities to get to know one another
- Safety – bring first aid kits, safety equipment and instructions for any special activities
- Schedule – make copies available for those who wish to have a printed schedule of the retreat with meeting locations and times.
- Greeters – these welcoming faces are necessary for anyone who is unable to attend the entire retreat and coming for only part of it; be sure to have someone who will greet them and help them get settled in when they do arrive; also be sure to welcome them into the group and fill them in on what you are doing as they join the retreat in progress
- Participation – encourage everyone to fully participate and to share concerns with leadership if they are not comfortable with certain activities; most activities can be adapted to meet the needs of your group
- Be aware – there may need to be some adjustments made to include those with mobility, dietary, hearing, etc., for your particular group; ask the

questions during planning in order to address these to the best of your ability

## **Openings & Closings**

The strength of your retreat is often determined by how you start and finish. Open strong with an organized plan for the retreat, including opportunities for everyone to get acquainted/re-acquainted and to build community.

Closing strong can wrap up the experiences of the retreat and encourage participants to take home what they have discovered to share with others. Shape your closing with a summary of the experiences you have shared and leave space for goodbyes.

Above all, have an amazing, fun-filled and God-filled experience playing in creation, exploring God's word, enjoying activities, sharing experiences and building community in the beauty of your camp and conference center.

Blessings on your retreat experience!

# **Confirmation in the Spirit, Bread for the Journey**

“Confirmation in the Spirit, Bread for the Journey” guides confirmands:

1. To develop a deeper understanding of themselves as God’s beloved children, created in the image of God and commissioned to increase good in the world;
2. To recognize the importance of Confirmation as a “personal Pentecost,” the Spirit’s promise to strengthen them for living as God’s beloved; and
3. To live more consciously and actively in the assurance of the support and nurture of the community of faith through their mentors/sponsors.

## **Biblical and Theological Introduction**

For the purposes of this retreat module, Confirmation is not about “salvation”—the confirmands have already been saved in Jesus Christ by the grace of God. It is not “joining the church”—people are joined to the church at baptism and live into the community every time we gather at the table. This confirmation module is about “sanctification,” growing in the Spirit and living a life that increases good in the world.

Confirmation here is not an educational event, per se. It is pastoral care, an opportunity for the faith community to show nurture and support for confirmands as they learn to navigate their lives in the world. Confirmation comes from the Latin word *confirmare*, meaning “to encourage” and “to strengthen.”

At Confirmation, we experience our personal Pentecost, with the laying on of hands, anointing, and a prayer for the Spirit’s gifts that enlivens our witness to the kingdom of God:

*O Lord, uphold your servants by your Holy Spirit.  
Daily increase (strengthen) in them your gifts of grace:  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,  
the Spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.*

The retreat module employs bread baking as a metaphor for Confirmation. Bread baking requires the right ingredients—flour, water, salt, and yeast—to create dough. The Holy Spirit is like yeast, filling us with the energizing breath of God. Baking is a hands-on experience of mixing, pounding, and stretching the dough. The laying on of hands is the community’s pledge to support and stretch us in our

faith. Baking requires time, patience, high heat, and the wise experience of those who have baked before.

The Holy Spirit and the church are our constant companions, guides, and guards. This retreat affirms the role of the Spirit and the community of faith in the growth and nurture of young people as they navigate the world.

## Potential Uses

- As a stand-alone confirmation weekend
- As an extension of their congregation's confirmation program
- For a single congregation
- For several congregations to do together
- For parents who have a youth being confirmed

## Mentor/Sponsors

Mentor/Sponsors are faithful Christian adults that commit to walking alongside a youth through the confirmation process and beyond. For the retreat experience to have a long-term effect, mentors/sponsors are encouraged to maintain a connection with their confirmands. Just as the Holy Spirit promises to guide us, the mentors/sponsors would do well to covenant with the confirmands to meet regularly for six months following the confirmation retreat. Consider these to be check-in meetings—how are they living into the gifts of grace, where are they finding joy and struggle in their lives? Make these occasions a prayerful time of listening and empathizing with the confirmand. At the end of six months, review the quality of your connection and determine the future of your relationship.

## Recommended Personnel/Supplies Inventory

### Staff:

- Retreat team composed of adults committed to serving the confirmands throughout the retreat with support and prayer, including a person to lead the group's bread baking
- A pastor who will prepare the Laying on of Hands, Communion, and Sending for the closing worship on Sunday
- Musicians

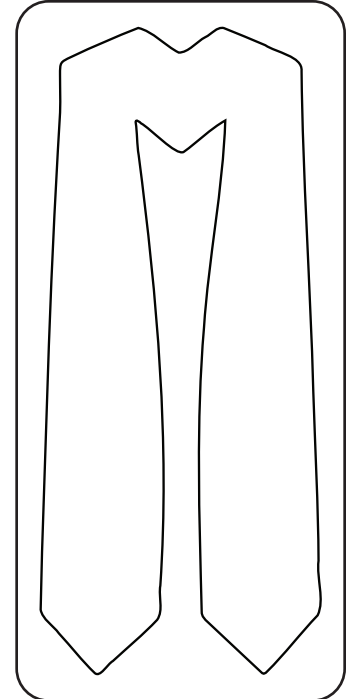
### Retreat Supplies:

- Bibles
- Art supplies to make name tags

- Red, orange, yellow, white paper &/or fabric for decorating
- Scissors
- Painter’s tape
- Prepared meal time table talk sheets or printed Table Talk table tents (see below)
- Quarter
- Small object (ball, stuffed animal, water bottle, etc.)
- Prepared Proverbs cards (see below)
- Candle, lighter
- Access to videos (permissions to use in this retreat setting granted)
  - “Image of God” video at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/image-of-god/>
  - “The Holy Spirit” video at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/holy-spirit/>
  - “Our Loss of Wisdom—Barry Schwartz” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYu0kMCxFEE&t=247s>).
  - “Justice” at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/justice/>
- Audio/visual equipment, including projector, screen, and speakers
- Newsprint, markers
- Spirit stoles (see Confirmation Gifts)

### Confirmation Gifts

Before the retreat, ask the confirmands’ home church(es) to make spirit stoles for their youth. On strips of white (this color coincides with another activity) cloth, trace the hands of congregation members who pledge to support the Confirmands in their faith journey and sign their names. The stoles symbolize the congregation laying hands on the Confirmands. Use them in the sending/commissioning during Sunday worship, at the retreat.





## Bread Making Supplies

Participants will make bread starting Friday evening and ending Saturday afternoon.

Before the retreat, the leader (or an appointed adult) should practice and then be prepared to demonstrate baking “Chef John’s No-Knead Ciabatta.” They should watch “How to Make Ciabatta Bread” by Chef John (<https://www.allrecipes.com/video/3836/how-to-make-ciabatta-bread/>).

The recipe below adjusts Chef John’s recipe by half.

Ingredients for groups of 4 (Yields 4 servings, adjust the recipe as needed)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoons salt
- 1/8 teaspoon active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm (not too hot) water
- Olive oil
- Cornmeal (for dusting work surface)

Work station per each foursome plus one for the demonstration

- Large mixing bowl
- 1 Cup measure
- Measuring spoons
- Spatula
- Aluminum foil
- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Plastic wrap
- 450 degree oven
- Optional: Campfire (if cooking Doughboys)

If you need a gluten-free alternative, try the Easy Gluten-Free Bread Recipe Using 1:1 Gluten-Free Flour at <https://www.goodforyouglutenfree.com/gluten-free-sandwich-bread/>.

## Suggested Songs

- “Breathe on Me, Breath of God,” Edwin Hatch (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #286)
- “Change My Heart, O God,” Eddie Espinosa (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #695)
- “Come Holy Spirit,” John Bell (source: “Lift Up Your Hearts: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs,” #230 Faith Alive Christian Resources, Grand Rapids, Mich., 2013)
- “Sanctuary,” Randy Scruggs (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #701)
- “Shine, Jesus, Shine,” Graham Kendrick (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #192)
- “Spirit of the Living God,” Daniel Iverson (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #288)
- “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness,” James K. Manley (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #291)
- “We are One in the Spirit,” Peter Scholtes (source: numerous hymnals, including Glory to God-PCUSA #300)

## Optional Special Music

“Standing Outside the Fire,” Garth Brooks. Purchase and download at <https://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/mtd.asp?ppn=MN0019034>. Either have your musicians learn and perform the song or play a recording. It would be helpful to have copies of the lyrics available for the group.

## Optional Free Time Movie for Evening of Day 2

“Pay It Forward” (DVD, PG-13) available at Amazon. Synopsis: Trevor McKinney takes to heart an intriguing assignment from his new social studies teacher: think of something to change the world and put it into action. Trevor develops the idea of repaying good deeds forward, with new good deeds done for three people. Trevor’s efforts to make good on his idea bring a revolution not only in his life, his mother’s, and his teacher’s but in those of an ever-widening circle of people completely unknown to him.

## Retreat Schedule Alternatives

This retreat module includes five one-and-a-half hour sessions to be held over three days. The sessions have been designed sequentially, the baking of bread serving as the connection between all sessions. You are encouraged to use all five sessions in the order they appear.

- For a three-day retreat the group would gather Friday night, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning). This is the recommended format.
- For a two-day retreat (Friday-Saturday), schedule session 1 for Friday evening, sessions 2 and 3 on Saturday morning, session 4 on Saturday afternoon, and session 5 on Saturday evening. You will need to shorten the sessions to one hour each. One way to do this is to forego the group bread prep and baking, with one person demonstrating the process. Bake the loaf in the oven instead of around the campfire. For session 4, invite all participants to make biscuits on a stick around the campfire. (See recipe below.)
- For a one-day retreat, combine key parts of sessions 1 and 2 on Saturday morning, sessions 3 and 4 on Saturday afternoon, and session 5 on Saturday evening. You will need to shorten the combined sessions to 45 minutes to one hour each. Here again, forego all group bread prep and baking, with one person demonstrating the process. Bake that loaf in the oven. For combined session 3 and 4, invite all participants to make biscuits on a stick around the campfire. (See recipe below.)

### Biscuits on a Stick Recipe

Using refrigerated biscuit dough, cut each biscuit in half. Stretch each half into a 1/8 inch thick rectangle. Wrap the dough around a stick in a spiral, stretching as you go. Do not overlap the dough. Place the stick near the flame. Turn the stick until nicely browned (9 to 10 minutes).

## DAY ONE

### Welcome Activities

Choose one or more:

*Resources needed: Variety of nametag supplies, including a way to hang or adhere them to the participants; Red, yellow, orange, white paper &/or fabric; Scissors; Painters tape for decorating room; Map of area and possible hiking trails.*

1. Name tags. Have supplies to make descriptive name tags. Encourage participants to create a descriptive name tag, with their names, favorites, such as musician, food, friends, etc.
2. Set up the space. Have retreaters decorate the space with red fabric and cutouts of white doves. Add red, yellow, and orange flames.
3. Name Game: Stand in a circle. Say your name and something (food, musical instrument, etc.) that begins with the same letter. The following person says their name and favorite thing, plus yours. Proceed around the circle. The last person repeats everyone's name and fave thing.
4. Nature: Invite mentors/sponsors and confirmands (groups of no less than four people) to take a hike.

### Meal Time Table Talk 1

*Resources needed: Copies of the questions below (available on printable table tents in the appendix).*

Ask confirmands to sit with and interview their mentors/sponsors. Encourage each person to participate, but do not force people to answer if they are reluctant. State that everything shared is confidential.

- Who named you? Share a story about the meaning of your name.
- What do you hope to get out of this retreat?
- Think about who you are. Name five relationships that describe who you are, such as sister, brother, student, etc.
- What do the ways you describe yourself tell you about your purpose in life?

## Session 1: Who Am I? Why Am I Here?

### Theme:

Everyone wants to know: what can Confirmation do for me? Confirmation answers two of life's most important questions: Who am I? And Why am I here? I am a beloved child of God, created in the image of a good God to increase good in the world.

### Environment:

Enough tables for groups of 4 facing a central area for presentations. Each table should seat two confirmands and their mentors/sponsors. Use this setup throughout the retreat.

### Presentation Outline:

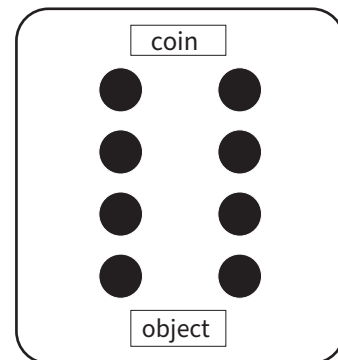
The following outline offers guidelines that include some optional activities. Adapt and personalize for your group.

1. Get Acquainted Games. Choose one or both.

#### Electricity Game

*Resources needed: a quarter and a small object (ball, stuffed animal, water bottle, etc.)*

- Form two equally numbered teams. Line up teams in parallel lines. Place the object at the end of the line within an arm's reach of the last person in each team.
- Everyone in the line holds hands with the person on their left and right and closes their eyes, except for the first person in each line.
- Flip the coin in the air, catch it, and reveal the quarter to the first person in each line.
- If the quarter comes up "heads," the first person squeezes the next person's hand. The second person squeezes the next person's hand, and so forth. At the end of the line, the last person grabs the object. The team that captures the object first wins a point.
- If the quarter comes up "tails," then no one squeezes anyone's hand. If there's an "accidental" hand squeeze when the quarter comes up "tails," the team that grabs the object loses a point for the round.
- The first person goes to the end of the line for the second round, and the game continues. The first team that reaches 10 points wins the game.



### Get to Know Your Proverbs

*Resources needed: Copies of the Proverbs Cards (Appendix). Cut them out.*

- Place the stack of cards in the center of the group. Introduce proverbs as “short sayings that are long on wisdom.”
- Each confirmand picks up one proverb. Then, with their mentor-sponsor discusses what the proverb says to them, what is wise about the proverb, if it is meaningful to them, and why.
- After a minute, the facilitator gives a signal, and participants place the proverbs at the bottom of the pile.
- The game repeats with the mentors/sponsors selecting a card.
- At the end of the game, ask participants to name the proverb that means the most to them. Ask: How can your favorite proverb guide you in your daily life?

### 2. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites.

### 3. Prayer

*Resources needed: print the prayer on newsprint or project on a screen.*

Pray together:

*O Lord, uphold us by your Holy Spirit.  
Daily increase in us your gifts of grace:  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,  
the Spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. Amen.*

### 4. Who am I and why am I here?

*Resources needed: Bible; AV Equipment and video titled “Image of God”.*

- Read Matthew 13:33 (NRSV).
- **Say:** God’s kingdom is like a community in which a Galilean woman prepares a massive amount of bread—144 cups of flour enough for 52 loaves of bread—enough to feed more than her household, perhaps her whole community. The kingdom of God is found—seen—in the generous feeding of other people’s hunger.
- Read Psalm 139:13-16 in the Message.
- **Say:** You and I are like a beautiful loaf of bread that God shapes and forms and gives life to. You and I are meant to be bread for the world.
- Watch the “Image of God” video at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/image-of-god/>.

- Read Genesis 1:27 in the Common English Bible.
- **Say:** Genesis 1 confirms your purpose, the kind of human being you are called to be. Made in the image of a good God who creates everything good, you also are called to increase good in the world. We are to be bread for others.
- Ask: Who do you know that adds good to the world?

## 5. Preparing the Dough

*Resources needed: Yeast, water, flour, salt, and baking utensils for every four people (two confirmands and their mentors/sponsors).*

- **Say:** Before anything was, there was God's Spirit or breath. The Spirit is like our yeast which adds air, nutrients, and energy to the dough.
- *Step 1 Place yeast in a large bowl. (encourage the foursomes to follow your lead)*
- **Say:** The Bible says that the Spirit hovered over the waters, the freshwater, and the salt-sea water. Water and salt add pliability and flavor to the dough.
- *Step 2 Add salt and water.*
- **Say:** The Bible says that amid the waters, God fashioned the dry ground with all types of vegetation. Grains of wheat provide the substance of the dough. When all ingredients work together in the hands of the baker, something extraordinary happens.
- *Step 3 Add flour. Mix until a wet sticky dough comes together, about 5 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Cover with foil. Allow dough to rise for 18 hours at room temperature. It should not be too warm. (Dough prep continues during session 2 with step 4.)*

## 6. Break-Out Discussion for Confirmand and Mentor/Sponsor Pairs

Baking bread is a metaphor for what happens in Confirmation:

- a) Confirmation—the church confirms you in your identity as God's good creation.
- b) Confirmation—you say "yes" to a way of life that adds good to the world.

Have pairs discuss the following questions:

- How do you feel about comparing baking bread with who God wants you to be?
- How do you imagine being bread for the world?

## Worship 1

### 1. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites.

### 2. Meditative Reading

*Resources needed: Candle, lighter, Bible*

- Light a candle to help collect thoughts and calm your mind. Pray, “Holy Spirit, let us hear from you,” and sit quietly for a moment.
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:10-11 (NRSV) for the group. Ask the group to listen carefully for any words or phrases that seem to jump out. Wait patiently for God’s Spirit to give gentle guidance. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 2 Corinthians 9:10-11. Ask the group to reflect on what the Spirit is saying to you. Open yourself to God’s message. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 2 Corinthians 9:10-11. Ask the group to tell the Spirit what is on their heart. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 2 Corinthians 9:10-11. Ask the group to sit quietly and allow God to speak. Conclude with a gentle “Thank you, God. Amen.”

### 3. Prayer

Invite personal prayers for the day’s blessings. Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

### 4. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites.



## DAY TWO

### Session 2: Yeast and the Gifts of the Spirit

#### Theme:

The Holy Spirit, as spiritual yeast, works in us to grow our Christian character based on the gifts of grace—wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and fear of the Lord.

#### Presentation Outline:

The following outline offers guidelines that include some optional activities. Adapt and personalize for your group.

##### 1. Listening for the Spirit Activity

*Resources needed: Blindfold, obstacles*

- Set up chairs, tables, and other items as obstacles in a maze pattern around the room.
- Blindfold a volunteer and have them attempt the maze by listening to another person's voice guiding them.
- Explain that the Holy Spirit guides our everyday lives if we learn to listen to her.

##### 2. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites.

##### 3. Video

*Resources needed: AV Equipment and video link for “The Holy Spirit”*

Watch the video “The Holy Spirit” at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/holy-spirit/>

##### 4. How is the Holy Spirit like yeast?

- **Say:** Examine the dough. It should have doubled in size, now full of air bubbles. Thanks to yeast, the dough has been energized. It's alive.
- **Say:** Yeast adds air to the dough; air is full of life—microbes teeming with enzymes and nutrition; develops the dough's character.
- **Say:** At Confirmation, we affirm that the Holy Spirit acts in us like yeast, growing the gifts of the Spirit. Like yeast in dough, the work of the Spirit in us takes time, attention and, patience. It's called “proofing.” “Proofing” our character is never a quick process.

## 5. Explore the Spirit's Gifts

*Resources needed: Markers, four separate newsprint sheets each with one of the following phrases: 1) The Spirit of wisdom and understanding; 2) The Spirit of counsel and might; 3) The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 4) The Spirit of joy in God's presence. If you have more than four work stations, make seven sheets with one of the gifts on each.*

- Place one of the four sheets and markers on each table. Have foursomes read each phrase and briefly discuss its meaning. Challenge the groups to write on each sheet words and phrases or draw images and symbols that represent the phrase's meaning. After sufficient time, pass all sheets in one direction so that when the activity is complete, each group has worked on each sheet.
- Post the four sheets and call the plenary to gather. Review the comments and ideas written on each sheet.
- (Optional) **Say:** Wisdom and understanding help us to know what is good. Counsel and might help us decide to do right by others, even when it requires courage. Knowledge and fear of God remind us who defines what good is and who we serve when we act.
- Ask and have tables discuss: Which gift of the Spirit do you think is most important for living the life that God intends for you?

## 6. (Optional) Break-Out Discussion for Confirmand and Mentor/Sponsor Pairs

*Resources needed: AV Equipment and video link to "Our Loss of Wisdom"*

- As an example of the gifts at work, watch 1:10-5:21 of the YouTube video "Our Loss of Wisdom—Barry Schwartz" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYu0kMCxFEE&t=247s>).
- Then, have confirmand and mentor/sponsor pairs discuss the following questions:
  - a) Going the second mile means doing more than is expected or required. How did the janitors go the second mile? How does that inspire you to go the second mile? What is wise about going the second mile?
  - b) The janitors increased good in the world by doing the tasks on their job descriptions. Why is that not enough to serve God?
  - c) What do we add to the world when we pay attention to other people's needs?

## Worship 2

### 1. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites

### 2. Meditative reading

*Resources needed: Candle, lighter, Bible*

- Light a candle to help collect thoughts and calm your mind. Pray, “Holy Spirit, let us hear from you,” and sit quietly for a moment.
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (Common English Bible) for the group. Listen carefully for any words or phrases that seem to jump out. Wait patiently for God’s Spirit to give gentle guidance. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 and reflect on what the Spirit is saying to you. Open yourself to God’s message. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 and tell the Spirit what is on your heart. Pause for silent reflection.
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 a final time. Sit quietly and allow God to speak. Conclude with a gentle “Thank you, God. Amen.”

### 3. Prayer

Invite personal prayers for the day’s blessings. Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

### 4. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the “Suggested Songs” or use one of your favorites.

## Meal Time Table Talk 2

*Resources needed: Copies of the questions below (available on printable table tents in the appendix).*

Ask confirmands to sit with and interview their mentors/sponsors. Encourage each person to participate, but do not pressure anyone to answer if they are reluctant. State that everything shared is confidential.

- Complete the sentence: “When I imagine the Holy Spirit, I feel,....”
- Think about the person you are closest to. What qualities do you like most in this person? How do these qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Think about yourself. What qualities do you like most in yourself? How do your qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Which of the gifts of the Spirit do you want to develop? Why?

## Session 3: Laying on of Hands

### Theme:

Laying on of hands is a way that church says we are with and for the confirmands. The church pledges to support the confirmands as they learn to increase good in the world.

### Presentation Outline:

The following outline offers guidelines that include some optional activities. Adapt and personalize for your group.

#### 1. Opening Prayer

*Resources needed: print the prayer on newsprint or project on a screen.*

Invite the confirmands and mentors/sponsors to pray for each other. Ask them to stand, face each other, and extend their hands toward each other and pray:

*O Lord, uphold your servant,[NAME], by your Holy Spirit.  
Daily increase in [NAME] your gifts of grace:  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,  
the Spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.*

#### 2. Retrieve the Dough and Continue the Recipe

*Resources needed: Prepared dough; A way to clean hands; Water; Olive oil; Baking sheet; Cornmeal; Plastic wrap; Flour (for dusting the top of the loaf); Story from the leader about a time when you were stretched and another helped support you.*

- **Say:** Pay attention to the dough. What does it look, smell, feel like? During the resting period, yeast cells divide over and over again. The cells at the center of these clumps of yeast stop growing.
- **Say:** The clusters of yeast must be broken up and redistributed to allow the dough to rise evenly. We punch the dough or stretch it with our hands to accomplish the reactivation of the yeast.
- *Step 4 of Recipe - Make sure your hands are wet. Stretch the dough with your hands and fold it over a few times.*
- *Step 5 - Lightly grease a heavyrimmed baking sheet with olive oil, sprinkling generously with cornmeal.*
- *Step 6 - Lightly spray a work surface with water. Place a long sheet of*

*plastic wrap on the damp surface to hold it in place. Sprinkle plastic wrap with flour. Scrape the dough onto the floured surface. Sprinkle flour on top of the dough.*

- *Step 7 - Gently stretch and pull the dough into a long, flat rectangular shape. Tell a personal story about how you were stretched in your faith by someone else's support and encouragement. Invite others to name ways they have been stretched in their relationship with God.*
- *Step 8 - Bring the plastic sheet to the edge of the prepared pan and flip the dough into the prepared pan. Dust with flour.*
- *Step 9 - Cover with a light dry towel. Let rise until #5 below.*

### 3. Walk Through the Confirmation Service

- **Say:** At Confirmation, the minister and mentors/sponsors lay hands on the confirmands' heads, symbolically the place of wisdom. The hand on the head gives us a sense of being strengthened by another.
- **Say:** The church prays for the Spirit's help and guidance by giving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In some churches, the confirmands are then anointed with oil.
- **Say:** Laying on of hands and anointing with oil is how the church says we are with you and for you. We believe what God says about you and trust that you have been given the gifts of grace.
- **Say:** Remember that as we conclude our confirmation retreat, this is really just the beginning of a new phase in your faith journey. It is a time for you to be the good in the world that God has called you to be. You are not alone in this walk. You will continue to have current mentors, others you will meet along the way, and the Holy Spirit to help support and guide you.

### 4. (Optional) Bible Study

*Resource needed: Bibles*

- In small groups, study a Bible story about hands, touch, and anointing.
- Suggested passages include Deuteronomy 34:9, 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 4:16-21, Luke 4:39-40, John 13:4-11, Acts 6:1-7, Acts 13:1-3, and Revelation 13:10-13.
- Challenge the group to create a brief presentation summarizing the passage, focusing on the meaning of touch and anointing in their story, and presenting to the whole group.

### 5. Baking

*Resources needed: Oven; prepared loaves*

Bake bread in a preheated 450 degree oven for 30-40 minutes. Remember the demonstration loaf will be used during Sunday worship.

## 6. Meditation

*Resources needed: Candle, lighter, Bible*

As you wait for the bread to bake, lead a meditative reading in the kitchen in the warmth and aroma from the ovens.

- Light a candle to help collect thoughts and calm your mind. Pray, “Holy Spirit, let us hear from you,” and sit quietly for a moment.
- Read 1 Timothy 4:12-14 (NRSV) for the group. Listen carefully for any words or phrases that seem to jump out. Wait patiently for God’s Spirit to give gentle guidance. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 1 Timothy 4:12-14 and reflect on what the Spirit is saying to you. Open yourself to God’s message. Pause for silent reflection.
- Reread 1 Timothy 4:12-14 and tell the Spirit what is on your heart. Pause for silent reflection.
- Read 1 Timothy 4:12-14 a final time. Spend around 10 minutes sitting quietly and allowing God to speak. Conclude with a gentle “Thank you, God. Amen.”

### **Meal Time Table Talk 3**

*Resources needed: Copies of the questions below (available on printable table tents in the appendix). Serve the group’s bread at dinner.*

Ask confirmands to sit with and interview their mentors/sponsors. Encourage each person to participate, but do not force people to answer if they are reluctant. State that everything shared is confidential.

- Enjoy the bread you baked. Talk about how it smells and feels to the touch, take it in with all of your senses.
- Why is touch important in your life? What does it mean to you?
- How can we encourage each other take risks for God?
- If you have baked more bread than needed, discuss what to do with the extra, perhaps donating it to the camp for a gathering or a food bank. Offer your ideas to the group.

## Session 4: Standing in the Fire

### **Theme:**

When we bake bread using high heat, we risk burning it. The teenage years can be a time of risky business, taking unwise risks that can leave us burned out, wrecked, and hopeless. That's why we pray for the confirmand's strengthening in the Spirit and the gifts of grace, to learn the difference between risks that come with living a faithful life and foolish, life-threatening risks.

### **Environment:**

This is an opportunity to have the group make "Biscuits on a Stick" (recipe on page 5 above).

### **Presentation Outline:**

The following outline offers guidelines that include some optional activities. Adapt and personalize for your group.

#### 1. Song

*Resources needed: Music and copies of the lyrics.*

Sing one of the "Suggested Songs" or use one of your favorites.

#### 2. Standing in the Fire

- **Say:** Fire is the final element to transform the character of our dough. This is the riskiest part of the process because fire can burn. But it's a risk we must take if we want delicious bread.
- **Say:** The same is true for you and me as we grow into the people God created and called us to be. When we live our faith convictions, we may get burned.
- **Say:** The Old Testament tells us a story about three young Jewish men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who had been sent into exile in Babylon with thousands of other people of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, demanded all Jews eat food that was off-limits to the Jews. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused. Then Nebuchadnezzar demanded that all the Jews bow down and worship a golden statue. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego again refused. So Nebuchadnezzar threw them into a fiery furnace.
- Read Daniel 3:19-25.
  - **Say:** This story teaches us how to live in a culture that is toxic to faith. Ask the group to name ways our culture is harmful to the faith.
  - **Say:** Today, people are fired from their jobs because they are honest,

ostracized because they befriend lonely people. People who refuse to “run with the crowd” because of their faith can be burned.

- **Say:** Imagine you attend a school where you are pressured to drink alcohol, use drugs, take part in bullying or sexual activity. Peer pressure means that you would not be accepted (to some degree) if you refused to go along with these activities.
- **Say:** We pray for you because ...
  - God knows how difficult it is to fight off pressures for acceptance and conformity and that you will need to have wisdom and courage to endure.
  - Wisdom and all of the gifts of the Spirit take a lifetime to develop in our lives and a supportive, nurturing community to lift you up.
  - Faithfulness to God rather than acceptance by your peers is the true virtue. It takes courage to trust that that is true.
- Ask: Who was the fourth figure in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
- Read Isaiah 43:1-2. Discuss the promise of Isaiah 43:1-2 for you.

### 3. Break-Out Discussion for Confirmand and Mentor/Sponsor Pairs

*Resources needed: Bibles; Questions on a board or handout*

- “Baptism by fire” describes learning something the hard way through a challenge or difficulty. What have you had to learn the hard way?
- What risk would you be willing to take for your faith commitment to Jesus?
- How do you imagine the gifts of the Spirit helping you through the fire? How do you imagine your church helping you?

### 4. Special Music (optional):

*Resources needed: Musician to sing the song or a recording of Garth Brooks’ “Standing Outside the Fire.”*

Play song, “Standing in the Fire.”



## DAY THREE

### Session 5: Planning Worship

#### **Presentation Outline:**

The following outline offers guidelines that include some optional activities. Adapt and personalize for your group.

#### 1. Retreat Summary

*Resources needed: Bible*

- Read Matthew 13:33 (NRSV).
- Say: We know our identity and purpose—we are God’s bread, shaped and formed to feed the world.

#### 2. Video

*Resources needed: AV Equipment and link to “Justice.”*

Watch the video “Justice” at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/justice/>.

#### 3. Break-Out Discussion for Confirmand and Mentor/Sponsor Pairs

- What is the world hungry for? Love, affection, acceptance, friendship, justice, reconciliation, forgiveness, peace? How can you help feed the world?

#### 4. Plan Worship

*Resources needed: Bibles, Order for Worship (see below or adapt from your own tradition) printed on a newsprint sheet and posted.*

- Call to Worship
- Music
- Scripture Reading and Interpretation
- Prayers
- Offering
- Laying on of Hands and Prayer for the Spirit’s Gifts \*
- Communion (share the demonstration loaf of bread baked on Saturday)\*
- Sending with the placement of stoles\*
- Music

a) Read John 21:15-17 together.

b) Invite participants to select different parts of the service to prepare (except for those with an asterisk: Laying on of Hands, Communion, and Sending.)

c) Challenge them to create their portions of the worship service based on John 21:15-17.

- d) Also, encourage them to include meaningful aspects of the retreat in their reflections.
- e) Ask a pastor to prepare:
  - Laying on of Hands and Prayer for the Spirit's gifts, using the following prayer:

*O Lord, uphold your servants by your Holy Spirit.  
Daily increase (strengthen) in them your gifts of grace:  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,  
the Spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.*

- Communion
- Sending with the placement of stoles. In the "Justice" video, a white stole signifies ministry and doing justice, adding good to the world. Stoles are reminders of the time Jesus washed the disciples' feet as a servant and called us to serve one another. Place stoles the congregations made around the confirmands' shoulders, commissioning them to increase good in the world.

# Appendix

## Proverb Cards

Cut out the cards below and on the following pages in order to play the “Get to Know Your Proverbs” activity. There are 20 proverbs listed and space for you to create your own as well.

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Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Actions speak louder than words.

---

Adversity and loss make a person wise.

A fool and his money are soon parted.

All that glitters is not gold.

---

A ship in the harbor  
is safe, but that is not  
what a ship is for.

Be slow in choosing,  
but slower in changing.

Better to be poor and  
healthy rather than rich  
and sick.

Don't bite off more  
than you can chew.

Don't count your  
chickens before they  
hatch.

Fall seven times. Stand  
up eight.

Good things come to  
those who wait.

Half a loaf is better  
than none.

Grief divided is made  
lighter.

If you play with fire,  
you'll get burned.

It's no use crying over  
spilled milk.

Keep your mouth shut  
and your eyes open.

Look before you leap.

Where there's smoke,  
there's fire.

*Use these spaces  
below to make your  
own proverb cards.*

- Who named you? Share a story about the meaning of your name.
- What do you hope to get out of this retreat?
- Think about who you are. Name five relationships that describe who you are, such as sister, brother, student, etc.
- What do the ways you describe yourself tell you about your purpose in life?

## **Meal Time Table Talk 1**

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- What do you hope to get out of this retreat?
- Think about who you are. Name five relationships that describe who you are, such as sister, brother, student, etc.
- What do the ways you describe yourself tell you about your purpose in life?

## **Meal Time Table Talk 2**

- Complete the sentence: “When I imagine the Holy Spirit, I feel,....”
- Think about the person you are closest to. What qualities do you like most in this person? How do these qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Think about yourself. What qualities do you like most in yourself? How do your qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Which of the gifts of the Spirit do you want to develop? Why?

## **Meal Time Table Talk 2**

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- Think about the person you are closest to. What qualities do you like most in this person? How do these qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Think about yourself. What qualities do you like most in yourself? How do your qualities remind you of the gifts of the Spirit?
- Which of the gifts of the Spirit do you want to develop? Why?

- Enjoy the bread you baked. Talk about how it smells and feels to the touch, take it in with all of your senses.
- Why is touch important in your life? What does it mean to you?
- How can we encourage each other take risks for God? If you have baked more bread than needed, discuss what to do with the extra, perhaps donating it to the camp for a gathering or a food bank. Offer your ideas to the group.

### **Meal Time Table Talk 3**

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- If you have baked more bread than needed, discuss what to do with the extra, perhaps donating it to the camp for a gathering or a food bank. Offer your ideas to the group.

### **Meal Time Table Talk 3**



## ***About the Author***

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