

NOVEMBER 22–28

This week's readings revolve around the theme of confirmation and our profession of faith as found in the Apostles Creed. Do not worry if many of the themes seem strange or unfamiliar to you—much of our task over the coming months is to become more familiar with these ideas. All you need do now is think and pray about them.

As a suggestion, consider ending each day's devotional time with the Lord's Prayer.

Date: _____

A Reading from *The Book of Common Prayer* (pg. 418)

Strengthen, O Lord, you servant (*your name*) with your Holy Spirit; empower *him/her* for your service; and sustain *him/her* all the days of *his/her* life. *Amen.*

This is the prayer that the bishop will say of you at your confirmation. It has three parts (strengthening, empowering, and sustaining). Which of the three speaks to you the most, and why?

Have you ever felt the strength of God in your life? Where?

Date: _____

A Reading from *The Book of Common Prayer* (pg. 412)

Confirmation is "a mature public affirmation of [your] faith and commitment to the responsibilities of [your] baptism."

Where do you feel most "mature" in your life? Most "immature?"

Say a prayer for your spiritual maturity.

Date: _____

A Reading from the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

The Apostles' Creed is our baptismal creed. These are the words of the profession of faith. What do they mean to you. In what sense is God 'almighty?' how is God 'creator?'

Say the whole Apostles' Creed (see pg. 96 of The Book of Common Prayer).

Date: _____

A Reading from the Apostles' Creed

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

This is the portion of the Apostles' Creed about Jesus. Are any parts of it surprising to you? Difficult?

Which portion of it is the most comforting?

Say the whole Apostles' Creed (see pg. 96 of The Book of Common Prayer).

Date: _____

A Reading from the Apostles' Creed

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

There are six things here to which we affirm belief. Pick two of them, and write a sentence or two explaining what they are.

Say the whole Apostles' Creed (see pg. 96 of The Book of Common Prayer).

NOVEMBER 29 – DECEMBER 5

At our meeting next Sunday we will begin our exploration of Old Testament themes, and it makes sense to begin...well...at the beginning. This week's readings come mostly from the Bible and revolve around the theme of God's creation. We proclaim God as the creator, both of the universe and of us as individuals. That's a big claim! Spend some time this week thinking about creation and about our role as creatures.

As a suggestion, close each day reciting John 1:1-4:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Date: _____

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (1:27)

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

You are made in the image of God? What does this mean to you? Does it affect your self-image?

Date: _____

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (1:31)

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

God's creation is very good. Think of 6-8 very good things in your world today and pray a prayer of thanksgiving.

Date: _____

A Reading from the Book of Psalms (139:13–14a)

For it was you who formed by inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

What is fearful (awe-inspiring) and wonderful about you? List some of God's greatest gifts that were a part of your making.

Date: _____

A Reading from the Song of the Three Young Men (A Song of Creation, BCP, pg. 88)

Glorify the Lord, every shower of rain and fall of dew, all winds and fire and heat.
Winter and summer, glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever. Glorify
the Lord, O chill and cold, drops of dew and flakes of snow. Frost and cold, ice and
sleet, glorify the Lord, praise him and highly exalt him forever.

*This is a hymn exhorting the natural world to praise the Lord. All of creation has a duty to praise God—
how does the cosmic order fulfill its duty? Can humans every get in the way of creation's praise?*

Date: _____

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (3:4b–5)

You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and
you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

*This is what the serpent tells Eve to convince her to eat of the fruit of the tree that God commanded her and
Adam not to eat. What sort of temptation is this? What weakness of human nature do you think the serpent
was appealing to?*