

FAQs for Youth Leaders about the Confirmation Retreat

Sponsored by The Reformed Institute

1. Who is this retreat for?

The Confirmation Retreat is for any teen going through the process of preparing for a public confession of faith. Often this process happens in 8th or 9th grade, but we have had teens ranging from 6th to 12th grade to attend successfully.

2. What is the purpose of the retreat?

We see this retreat as aiding churches in their task of preparing youth for a public confession of faith by teaching how the Reformation was a revolution, a concept that is both understandable and relevant to teens.

3. What content is covered and how is it presented?

There are three presentations given by a leader. The presentations are highly interactive. Each presentation is followed by or interwoven with a small group experience.

The three presentations include:

- a. A revolution in worship – medieval worship was very different from today; how? Why? And what was the motivation? We do this by reenacting a medieval worship service then unpacking it together. Our leader is careful to say that the modern Roman Catholic church is not the same as the medieval Catholic church; that they have undergone enormous changes as well.
- b. A revolution in authority – an examination of how scripture was lifted up as the highest authority, as opposed to tradition or the priest holding the highest authority.
- c. A revolution in our understanding of grace – that grace is freely given and unlimited, not something we earn.

4. What is the flow of the retreat?

Participants arrive on Friday in time for dinner. After dinner there are icebreakers followed by the first presentation (the medieval worship service). After unpacking that presentation briefly, there is a devotion, snack and then bedtime.

Saturday morning includes a wonderful prayer walk in stations, the second presentation and small group, then lunch. There is a period of free time after lunch, then the third presentation later in the afternoon.

We show a movie on Saturday evening as well as having some fun activities. After an early worship service on Sunday morning everyone departs, about 10:30 a.m., in order to be back at their home churches by noon.

5. Who is the leader?

The presenter is Dr. Jonathan Gray, formerly in the church history department at Virginia Theological Seminary and now in the religion department at Middlebury College in Vermont.

6. How do the small groups work?

Youth are divided into small groups with at least two participants from a church in a group. The planning team and back-home adults who accompany youth to the retreat who are church professionals or experienced church school teachers are asked to lead the small groups using prepared materials.

7. What is the cost?

The cost is \$165 per person. This covers room and board for the individual and includes a \$10 supply fee. It does not pay for other retreat expenses (such as the leader).

8. Are scholarships available?

Please contact Mary Hill at the Reformed Institute (mhill@reformedinstitute.org) to discuss any need.

9. Any other benefits?

The Confirmation Retreat may be one of the few times youth in our presbytery mix with other Presbyterian youth who are also going through the confirmation process. To be part of this group gives your youth a wonderful sense of the larger church and the support it can offer.

The registration form for the retreat is now available at www.reformedinstitute.org and will be sent to the Thursday Mail as well.



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