

Confirmation, Reception & Reaffirmation – from the Episcopal Church

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/confirmation>

The sacramental rite in which the candidates "**express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop**" (BCP, p. 860). Those who were baptized at an early age and those baptized as adults without laying on of hands by a bishop are expected to make a mature public affirmation of their faith, recommit themselves to the responsibilities of their baptism, and receive laying on of hands by a bishop (BCP, p. 412). Adults baptized with the laying on of hands by a bishop are considered to be confirmed.

The Prayer Book rite for Confirmation includes forms for Reception and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows. In some dioceses, those who have already made a mature Christian commitment in another denomination are recognized as members of the one holy catholic and apostolic church, and received into the fellowship of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. In other dioceses, those who have been sacramentally confirmed in the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches are received and others are confirmed. Those who have returned from a time of religious inactivity to an active practice of faith may publicly reaffirm their baptismal vows. Others who have experienced a renewal of faith or desire to renew their Christian commitment may also reaffirm their baptismal vows. Reaffirmation may be repeated, depending on the pastoral needs of the person. Preparation for Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation should help the candidates discover the meaning of Christian commitment in their lives, and explore ways that their Christian commitment can be lived. This preparation may draw upon the baptismal covenant (BCP, pp. 416-417) and An Outline of the Faith (BCP, pp. 845-862).

Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation are rooted in the baptismal covenant. Candidates for Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation are presented in separate groups by their presenters. Candidates may have individual presenters who will support them in their Christian life by prayer and example. It is not necessary that the presenters be members of the clergy. The candidates reaffirm their renunciation of evil, and renew their commitment to Jesus Christ. They reaffirm the promises made by them or for them at the time of baptism. Those present in the congregation promise to do all in their power to support the candidates in their life in Christ. The bishop leads the congregation in renewing the baptismal covenant. The Prayers for the Candidates from the baptismal liturgy may be used as the Prayers for the Candidates for Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation (BCP, p. 417). The bishop lays hands on each candidate for Confirmation, and may do the same for the those being Received and Reaffirmed.

