



HOLMES PRESBYTERIAN CAMP
2020 CONFIRMATION RETREAT
April 3-4, 2020

Living the Questions

February 28, 2020

Dear Confirmand,

Welcome. We're excited to welcome you to Holmes Camp this weekend for the Confirmation Retreat. Allow us to introduce ourselves. The retreat is being led by Rev. Bryan Breault, the Director at Holmes Camp (just "Bryan" will do) and Rev. Martin McGeachy, a Presbyterian pastor at Gilead Presbyterian Church in Carmel (again, just "Martin"). We've been meeting regularly for a long while in anticipation of this weekend.

Arrival: You and your adult church representative should plan to **arrive at Holmes Camp at around 6 pm** on Friday.

Directions: You can come directly to the building called **Nunemaker**. Program your GPS app to:

60 Denton Lake Road, Holmes, NY 12531

- That will bring you to a big **brown sign with yellow letters** "Holmes Camp and Retreat Center" that will let you know you've arrived at camp.
- At that sign take a **LEFT on Presbyterian Way**.
- Then, take your **first LEFT** and you will come to a loop where you will see the building and can drop off your stuff (adult drivers, you can unload there and then go 'round and park on other side of the loop)

-If you need more detailed directions call 845-878-6383.

-If you get lost or need to let us know you'll be late call Bryan's work cell at 845-235-6458 and we'll talk you through.

By **7:00** we'll have walked to another building, Agape, for dinner. (To get to Agape, take Presbyterian Way all the way to end.)

Preparation: We would like you to reflect on a few things before arrival. Our theme for the event is "*Living the Questions.*" Please read the quote on the top of the attached schedule and take some time to think about it. Considering your upcoming decision to be confirmed, what questions might you have? Write them out in a journal, or a notebook, or a computer, or on your phone. But please, take a few minutes and sit quietly. Take a few deep breaths and let your heart focus on whatever comes when you think about confirmation. Some topics to consider: Christianity, religion, church, the Bible, Jesus, God, the Holy Spirit, church membership, confirmation, spirituality and spiritual practice, justice, responsibility, forgiveness, living a life of meaning, community.

Now please, don't think of this as a typical school assignment and write out a basic question for each of those topics. Let that list (and more) wash over you. Some questions might be very basic, such as "what does Spiritual Practice mean?" Get those informational questions written down. And then, really go deep (sit and breathe another moment) to see what rises to the surface. What have you always thought about those items, that perhaps now you question differently? Do you feel like there are "right" answers, or that you "should" think or feel a certain way? Is there something inside you that tugs or twitches at those right answers? Do you wonder if there might be more? Do you have doubts? Start by reading the quote and remember, we are not going to quiz you, or give you definitive answers to the questions, rather we are going to honor them and look at how we might "live the questions." Make notes on what comes up. You can put your thoughts in the form of questions, or just statements. There ain't no wrong way to do this (except not to take it seriously) and

nobody will be judging you. We'll ask you to share some of what you write (but nothing that might make you uncomfortable). So write it all and then you can decide what you might share.

Things to bring

- Your list of questions and reflections
- A sleeping bag, or sheets and blankets
- A pillow
- Toiletries
- A towel
- Something on which to write and a pen
- Your Bible (if you have one, no stress if you don't, we have some)
- Simple snacks to share (if you want)

Things to know:

- At some point, you should thank the adults that accompany you.
- Be prepared to meet and get to know people outside your own group.
- Be respectful. If someone else's questions or reflections don't set right with you, remember we are aiming for enlightening discussion, not agreement, or arguing. Everyone has a right to their opinion and beliefs and it's OK if they are not the same.
- Cell phones. It's OK to bring your cell to this event, but there will be program times when we will instruct you to turn your phone off (not just on silent) so we can all focus.
- All the adults have authority, so if an adult outside your group offers you direction, please be respectful.
- Obvi, but for the record: bring **no** tobacco, vaping items, lighters, matches, illegal drugs, or alcohol.
- **All** prescription drugs (except epi-pens and inhalers) need to be turned over to your adult companion. They will distribute them. (Adults take note).
- No sexual activity.
- Please don't wander. We need to know where you are and there is to be an adult with you (not hovering necessarily, but in sight).

There is no supper served on Saturday night. We would like the group to stay together until the end of closing circle, which will be **done by 5 pm on Saturday**.

Thank you for joining with us, see you shortly!

Yours,

Bryan & Martin