



CONFIRM
NOT CONFORM
FOR ADULTS

INTRODUCTION TO *CNC*
FOR ADULTS

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INTRODUCTION

The idea for *CnC for Adults* was born in a parking lot. We were watching parents drive in to drop off their kids for the *Confirm not Conform* program when we realized four things:

- 1) The parents would be coming back in 90 minutes to pick up their kids. Why not offer them a reason to stick around?
- 2) Chances were high that these parents had never had an opportunity to think seriously about faith issues since their own confirmations sometime in the previous millennium. Additionally, many parents had already told us that they had endured the very kind of confirmation class that *Confirm not Conform* was developed to combat: the no-questions-allowed, say-the-right-words, show-up-for-the-bishop, do-it-because-your-parents-said-so kind of confirmation. We could fix that.
- 3) If we provided an engaging class for both parents and kids, they were going to keep talking about what they'd learned during the week. It's good to get people engaged in the classroom; it's incredible to keep them engaged over the dinner table.
- 4) Any class for parents would work equally well for any adult in the parish—it could be made available to everyone.

The result was *CnC for Adults*, a unique program related to its youthful counterpart but with its own grown-up sensibility.

What's consistent is that *CnC for Adults* lets grown-ups ask all the questions they never got to ask. It's a time to cover the basics that may have been ignored. It's a chance to feel okay about not knowing, about doubting, about questioning. And it's an opportunity for people to figure out what they really believe and put that belief to work in their daily lives.

WHAT IS CNC FOR ADULTS?

CnC for Adults is a spiritual formation program based on the youth curriculum *Confirm not Conform* (*CnC*). Although originally designed to be run in tandem with the youth sessions, as a program for parents and other interested adults, it can also be offered as a separate program.

CnC for Adults shares the youth program's emphasis on building an authentic faith but with a focus on the spiritual and developmental needs of people in midlife and beyond. It therefore explores some topics not addressed in the youth program, such as work/life balance and end-of-life issues.

The 18 sessions of *CnC for Adults* invite participants to ask the questions they've always wanted to ask and to learn about faith from their adult perspective. The program helps adults explore what they truly believe, instead of what they feel they're *supposed* to think, and then integrate those beliefs into their daily lives.

The sessions cover the basics on the Bible, creeds, religious history, the Prayer Book, and sacraments—topics that may have been ignored or lost in the mists of time. Participants experiment with different spiritual practices to find what works best for them. And they also consider the important and often ignored topic of how they want to use the time remaining to them.

Like the youth program, *CnC for Adults* is flexible. Sessions, or parts thereof, can serve as a:

- Confirmation course
- General adult education program
- Sunday morning series
- Lenten program
- Newcomer orientation
- Retreat program
- And more!

Please see our *Quick Start Guide* for suggestions on how you can tailor *CnC for Adults* to fit your needs and your schedule.

OVERVIEW

CnC for Adults includes 18 sessions covering everything from the Bible to the history of Anglicanism to personal values. Although we have put the sessions in a particular order, they are yours to rearrange as you wish.

We have grouped these sessions into five rough categories:

- Spirituality (two sessions)
- History (four sessions)
- Theology (four sessions)
- Scripture (three sessions)
- Anglicanism (five sessions)

Of course, there's a lot of overlap among the sessions; these categories are not neat and precise.

Unlike the youth program, *CnC for Adults* asks participants to do homework assignments. We have found that the commitment to the program increases as we keep participants engaged from session to session.

One piece of homework is to do a spiritual practice of one kind or another. At the beginning of each session, participants are invited to share what worked and what didn't, thus developing their repertoire of religious devotions. A second homework assignment varies from week to week, depending on the topic under discussion. These range from asking friends and colleagues what spirituality means to them, to reflecting on the sacraments, to evaluating how they spend their time, to creating a plan for their funeral service.

CnC for Adults also asks participants to memorize a passage of Scripture and to teach on it. In the youth program, youth are expected to recite this Scripture in front of the congregation; in the adult program, we ask them to share with one another. Although a less public assignment, this task still proves to be a worthy challenge for adults as they learn a passage of Scripture by heart and articulate what it means to them.

As with all our materials, you are welcome to pick and choose what works best for you. If you have any questions or wish to talk with us about how you can use *CnC for Adults* with your congregation, please don't hesitate to call us at 510-384-3223 or write to us at info@confirmnotconform.com.

Thank you for using *CnC for Adults*. We hope this program gives you the resources you need for a successful adult spiritual formation program—or programs—for years to come.

CNC FOR ADULTS: TABLE OF CONTENTS

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO CNC FOR ADULTS

Establishes the *Rules of the Road* and the calendar of assignments for *CnC for Adults*. Assigns each participant a world religion to study. Starts to explore unanswered questions, and sets up the expectation that questions are normal, acceptable, and good.

Homework: The Gospel According to You

SESSION 2: SPIRITUALITY: SPIRITUAL AND MAYBE RELIGIOUS

Examines our assumptions about what spiritual practices are or should be and explores the different ways people may experience their spirituality.

Homework: Spiritual Conversations

SESSION 3: HISTORY: A COMPLETE OVERVIEW OF ALL RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Gives a broad outline of the Judeo-Christian tradition and its many divisions, disagreements, and developments.

Homework: Technical Terms in Your Own Words

SESSION 4: THEOLOGY: HERETICS WE HAVE KNOWN

Explores heretics through history, heretics in contemporary society, and the ways in which we could be considered heretics.

Homework: Pick Your Favorite Heretic

SESSION 5: SCRIPTURE: A MAD DASH THROUGH A GOOD BOOK

Presents an overview of the Bible, its themes, and how it is put together.

Homework: Biblical History; People You May Know

SESSION 6: SCRIPTURE: THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Looks at figures in the Bible; participants report on the characters they have studied and what they learned about them. After learning how to use a concordance, participants are asked to pick a Scripture passage to memorize and present later in the program.

Homework: Pick Your Passage

SESSION 7: THEOLOGY: STUDYING GOD

Explores our assumptions about theology and discovers the tools we already have to do the work of theology in our own lives.

Homework: Doing Theology

SESSION 8: HISTORY: THE NICENE CREED

Explores the political and personal stories behind the Nicene Creed, showing how things are not much different now from what they were then.

Homework: Technical Terms In Your Own Words Revisited

SESSION 9: THEOLOGY: A COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH

Participants work together to develop a group creed.

Homework: Memorizing Scripture, World Religion Research

SESSION 10: HISTORY & ANGLICANISM: SO WHAT'S OUR STORY?

Gives a basic overview of the history and values of Anglicanism.

Homework: An Ad for the Church

SESSION 11: ANGLICANISM: THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

Explores the contents of *The Book of Common Prayer* and its importance in developing and maintaining Anglican values and beliefs.

Homework: It's Your Funeral

SESSION 12: ANGLICANISM: THE SACRAMENTS

Discusses the Anglican understanding of sacraments.

Homework: Sacrament Watch

SESSION 13: ANGLICANISM: THE CHURCH THROUGH THE YEAR

Explores the seasons of the church year and how they shape our understanding of theology.

Homework: Do Something Different

SESSION 14: SPIRITUALITY: PAIN TO POWER

Uses the Eucharist as a framework to explore how the story of the Resurrection applies to our own experiences of pain.

Homework: Pain to Power, Memorization Work, World Religion Research

SESSION 15: HISTORY & SCRIPTURE: REPORTS ON WORLD RELIGIONS AND TEACHINGS ON SCRIPTURE

Follows up on assignments from Session 1: participants give reports on their previously assigned world religion or present a memorized passage of Scripture and their teaching on it.

[Repeat this session as needed, depending on the number of people in the group.]

Homework: Baptismal Thoughts

SESSION 16: ANGLICANISM: THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

Examines the values underlying the Baptismal Covenant in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* and asks how we live them out.

Homework: Time Management

SESSION 17: THEOLOGY: WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?

Asks how the things we value compare with the ways we spend our time. Creates a framework to consider the changes needed to bring our values in alignment with how we live our lives.

Homework: Next Steps

SESSION 18: EVALUATION: TIME TO REFLECT

Allows participants to evaluate the program as a whole, reflecting on questions answered and left unanswered. Encourages participants to think about the practical steps they can take to meet the goals they have set for themselves.