



**May 11, 2008**

***Pentecost & Confirmation Sunday***

Preaching: Carlie Chmelik & Allie Hall

**Confirmation Sunday**

Carly Chmelick delivered this message:

During the months of confirmation we went through a journey of faith, to find out what we believe. Most people know that finding faith by yourself is difficult, but we had our mentors to help us through it. Every other week they would come and answer questions about the Bible, and what it means.

There are many ways of defining faith. I think the best verse is Hebrews 11: verse 6.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Throughout confirmation we learned what this verse is teaching. One lesson was about pleasing God, and another taught about believing in what is not seen. Confirmation taught our class about the different levels of faith, and how faith makes life worth living.

Our last leap of faith was going on our confirmation retreat.

On the first day, we "mingled" with other church groups from all over Illinois. We all had the same hopes of reaching and understanding God, and accepting Jesus as our Savior.

To get to know each other, we had a big group campfire. The next morning, we had a Bible Trivia test, which everyone pretty much failed. We also played "Ode

to the Chicken." It is a game of chaos, and the goal is to make sure the chicken does not fall off the alter.

The other church groups left after lunch, so the rest of the day was focused on our group and our faith statements. We took a lot of time working on our faith statements, because we all wanted to make them perfect.

It took time and focus to really break down everything we believe. Confirmation really helped us understand what we are confirming today, our belief that **Jesus Christ is our Savior.**

Allie Hall delivered this message:

As Carly said, Hebrews 11 reminds us, starting with verse 1: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

The author of Hebrews begins by giving a definition of faith and though it may not be comprehensive, it is certainly sufficient to give us some **BIG** insights into what we actually possess and how God intends to work in our lives.

We, as confirmands, have started our faith journey, and publicly acknowledge our faith and commitment to Jesus as our Lord.

Hebrews uses Abel, Enoch, Noah, and then the Patriarch Abraham as examples of faith and states, "without faith it is **IMPOSSIBLE** to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

From verse 17, it tells us Abraham, when tested, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."

Abraham is seen as the great example of what it is to live by faith, and yet we should never forget that Abraham was not a super-human, nor had a monopoly on spiritual things. Abraham was an ordinary man who had a supernatural encounter with the living God.

This morning we'll see that that same supernatural encounter is the one you and I enjoy in Christ today, which assures us of an eternal relationship with our God who loves us.

In verse 8 it says, "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

It was not Abraham who called out to God, it was God who, in His mercy and grace, called Abraham. The call was to follow. And the only response that affords one to follow is one of faith.

That's what this chapter is about: faith in action and what it produces.

Faith is the means of embracing Jesus Christ and this is a gift from Him. It enables us to gain access to Christ. The confirmation class is now boldly stepping out in front of the congregation of Baker United Methodist church, our families, our friends and saying we have started our faith journey to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and establish an ongoing relationship with Him.

God calls out to us. We are here today, responding, to God's call. Have you responded to God's call?

Have you taken a step IN FAITH that produces action?

All the people listed in Hebrews were living in faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. They were commended for their faith. God planned something better for us.

We have Jesus. We are here today to claim the promise BY FAITH and start our journey.