

CONFIRMATION TEACHINGS

- Iona Eckard

I love the eighth grade student! They are a bundle of energy reaching out to young adulthood, curious, noisy, easily embarrassed, eager for new adventures, somewhat like an unopened present.....you never know what is inside.

I found a sense of fulfillment in the confirmation classroom trying to impart the Old Testament history which is full of great stories, beautiful poetry and lovely songs. History has always been a favorite subject of mine, and I look for ways to help the student feel what has happened in the past. One way to do this is to equate past events with something of the present. We do a family tree and that gives a visual picture of the family tree of the Old Testament. We take trust walks and talk about ourselves so that we might become a close-knit working unit.

The job of confirmation teacher fell on me because I was on the Board of Education, and we had not been able to secure teachers to implement our three-year program. Pastor Patten told me he wanted me to switch from fourth grade Sunday School to seventh grade confirmation teacher. That first seventh grade class had thirty-three students. My second year, the seventh grade class was discontinued, and I moved to eighth grade where I taught for twenty years.

Each class has its own distinct personality and each class had its own leader and cut-up. If you showed me a picture of each class, I could show you the leader and the clown in each group.

Although I firmly believe in structure in the classroom, I don't believe in a lot of rules. I have always had two:

You can't talk about another person in the room, and

you can't talk about a specific school. The eighth grade class usually has four schools who play each other in athletics and sometimes as many as six in its makeup. We have gripe sessions several times a month and you quickly learn what school teachers are not liked and which parents are truly concerned about their

children becoming responsible citizens. Parents have no secrets in a gripe session.

To help young people understand the wanderings of God's people, our class moves about the church property, carrying our chairs and confirmation materials for one of our classes. We move six times during the hour. This helps us to understand how God's people must have felt for all of those wandering years when their possessions were what they could actually carry.

The one thing I did that caused the most amount of grumbling was a Christmas Test. My mother, who will be 84 in November, teaches an adult Sunday School class in her church, and she gave me a copy of the test. The questions are all about the nativity and answers must be proven by giving the scripture verse where the answer can be found. It's amazing how much our traditions can change the real story.

I love to see former students being active in our church today. This was so evident several weeks ago when Todd, Rusty, Tracy, Julie and Kenny were members of the Acolyte Team, all grown up, but not forgetting what is really important.

One thing I would like to see today is parents telling their children that they are going to take part in church activities such as Sunday School, Choir, and Youth activities. It is easy to give in to the child who does not want to go but as responsible parents, we need to honor those promises made at the Baptismal Font.

COCK-A-DOODLE-DO

- Retta Hedrick

Pastor Jim and family had lived here a short time. One morning Paula was getting the children ready for school. It was time for the school bus to come, and Kristen was nowhere to be found. After calling and looking for her, she was found standing on the porch. When asked what she was doing, she replied, "I'm listening to the neighbor's rooster crow.