

# GOD

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mation went to their first class on Jan. 11. They will attend 10 classes before confirmation.

Church members Keith Murray, Larry Schuler and Nancy Silvi have volunteered to be mentors for the confirmation class. The mentors will serve as the confirmands' sponsors and guide them through their preparation for the event.

The daughter of Rick and Karen Hodle, of Dallas, Hodle is 13 years old and in the eighth-grade at Dallas Middle School. She was baptized at Shavertown United Methodist Church and has been attending the church and its Sunday School her entire life. At church, she plays the bells, sings in the choir and is a member of the youth group.

Outside of church, Hodle dances, plays field hockey and plays the piano. She wants to be a pharmacist when she is older, but she also hopes to do something professionally with

music.

She expects that confirmation will bring her closer to God and she was impressed with the first class.

"I liked it a lot," Hodle said. "It was really cool. I guess just because I got to know everybody that I'll be with and felt more comfortable with them."

Snyder says children become members of the United Methodist Church at baptism through the vows of parents and sponsors. Confirmation is a time when youths who are in the eighth-grade or at least 13 years old take over those vows and affirm their faith. Confirmation in the United Methodist Church is required.

But unlike the Roman Catholic faith, Methodists do not believe confirmation is a sacrament and the confirmands do not take the name of a saint.

Confirmands at Shavertown United Methodist Church will spend roughly four months getting ready for confirmation. They will attend 10 hour-long educational sessions on Sunday evenings and must be present at church services. In addition, the confirmands must

read the Gospel of Luke, read a copy of the church budget in order to understand the finances of the ministry, attend a church council meeting, spend time volunteering at church or a service agency, participate in a worship service, attend at least two youth group meetings and assist in a service project.

Karen Hodle is a lifelong member of Shavertown United Methodist Church and says preparation for confirmation has changed considerably since she was a teenager.

"Basically, we had to learn the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd song and attend two meetings and that was it," Karen Hodle said. "It's interesting to see how it's changed."

"I will be grateful if they understand themselves as children of God," Snyder said of the confirmands. "I will be doubly grateful if they understand how Christ is in their lives. And I will be grateful if they understand what it means to be a Christian in the world today."

Thirteen-year-old Tyler Tuck, the son of Dan and Albina Tuck of Shavertown, is also preparing for confirmation at Shavertown United Methodist Church. He, too, is 13 years old and in the eighth-grade at Dallas Middle School.

Tuck was baptized at the church and has been attending Sunday school classes since the second-grade. He is the lead drummer in his school's jazz band and has played a percussion part in church once before.

So far, Tuck says he's learned a little more about God and that he should have an image of God in his head while praying to him. He's also learned about his fellow classmates who will be going to confirmation.

"I'm really excited to be taking part in it," Tuck said. "To me, it's really nice because I'm going to be confirmed into the church I've been going to my whole life. I hope to learn a little more about God and Jesus Christ, our savior. I also hope to learn a little more about our religion as Methodists."

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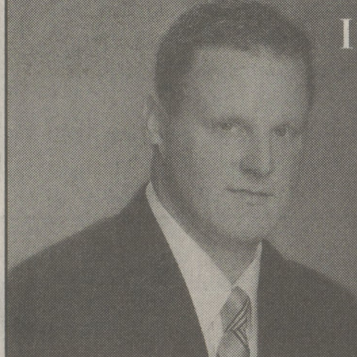
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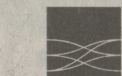
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