

# Parent - Student Confirmation Handbook

Word of Life Fellowship – LCMS  
213 Coy Lane, Cibolo, Texas

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**Confirmation** is a public ceremony preceded by a process designed to:

- 1) **TEACH** youth the primary teachings and practices of the Christian church,
- 2) **DEVELOP** passionate disciples of Jesus Christ who actively **go** to their friends, family and fellow students and help connect them with Christ, who **worship** regularly and **learn** in classes and groups and **serve** Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and
- 3) **PREPARE** youth to make a personal, public proclamation of their faith.

Prior to receiving the Lord's Supper, it is necessary to be instructed in the Christian faith, so one may examine themselves.

*Individuals must determine whether what they are doing is proper when they eat the bread and drink from the cup.*

*1 Corinthians 11:28 (GW)*

Faithfulness to Christ involves not only hearing His Word but also actively doing it.

*Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

*Revelation 2:10 (NIV)*

Confirmation Sunday gives each confirmand an opportunity to make a personal, public profession of the faith and a pledge of lifelong fidelity to Christ. Jesus says:

*I will acknowledge in front of my Father in heaven that person who acknowledges me in front of others. But I will tell my Father in heaven that I don't know the person who tells others that he doesn't know me. Matthew 10:32-33 (GW)*

**Confirmation** is an intensive study program for students who have attained at least a 7th grade level of education. Classes correspond (when possible) to the academic schedule of local school districts.

This process **requires** participants to be **active with their families** in Sunday worship and Youth Group activities. It provides additional instruction and group learning - led by your pastor. A reasonable amount of weekly homework and memory is required. Parents are also required to help in instructing their child.

*Teach them to your children, and talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up.*

*Deuteronomy 11:16 (GW)*

Upon completion of Confirmation requirements, the confirmand is given the opportunity to become a communicant member of Word of Life.

## GOALS

As confirmation enables young Christians to be instructed, developed and prepared, it expects them to develop into servant leaders who eagerly live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ in their families, church and community. Word of Life is committed to providing them with the opportunities for servant leadership development within the ministries of our congregation.

Toward this goal, Confirmation seeks to help confirmands grow in:

- knowing and professing the Christian faith as their own
- following Jesus as their Lord and living as members of God's family
- appreciating and faithfully receiving God's Word and the Sacraments
- sharing in the worship and work of the Christian congregation - especially as it seeks to bring others to faith in Jesus Christ.

To assure well-balanced growth and development, the confirmation process utilizes four functions of the church:

**Go** - Go to those who are not pursuing a relationship with Jesus Christ, demonstrate Christ's love with our lives and tell them about Him, our faith and our congregation.

*So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.* Matthew 28:19 (NCV)

**Worship** - Receive God's Word, His Sacraments, His forgiveness and respond with sacrifices of praise, tithes, offerings and prayers.

*We must also consider how to encourage each other to show love and to do good things. We should not stop gathering together with other believers, as some of you are doing. Instead, we must continue to encourage each other even more as we see the day of the Lord coming.* Colossians 3:16 (NIV)

**Learn** - Apply God's Word through home sized groups or classes.

*Every day in the Temple and in people's homes they continued teaching the people and telling the Good News - that Jesus is the Christ.* Acts 5:42 (NCV)

**Serve** - Experiment with different acts of service for church and for the community until we find the ones that fit our unique, God given gifts.

*Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.* Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

## MEANS AND SCOPE

Confirmation **requires** active participation by the confirmand and family members in weekly worship, Christian service, youth group, family time and instruction. Each of these is essential to the student's faith development:

**Weekly Worship** - Regular worship attendance (3 of 4 weekends minimum) enables the confirmand to be fed with God's Word and to respond in prayer and praise in the company of their family and other saints of the Christian Church. It is important that each experiences how their presence in worship not only benefits them but others as

well. The parents' regular worship attendance is vital in setting a godly example to follow. So that the confirmand develops a more mature understanding of the worship service, each will be responsible for completing **required** LifeLesson notes.

**Christian Service** - Students are **required** to substitute an eligible Christian service activity for one LifeLesson note requirement each month. At least ½ hour of service is required for credit and the activity should be readily identified as a Christian witness or service. Students will be expected to do their best at each activity. Some service activities require skill or even auditions (e.g. singing, playing an instrument), but this should not prevent them from asking to serve. However, students should not expect to continue to serve in an area in which they are not growing in skill or making a positive contribution. Service in the community is encouraged, although some Christian witness should be evident (e.g. wearing a Word of Life t-shirt). Students may be creative, but if they're unsure about eligibility, they should ask ahead of time. The pastor will determine eligibility. Examples of eligible service activities include: participating in church workdays, helping with Nursery or Sunday School, running ProPresenter for slides, vMix for livestream, singing, participating in drama, playing an instrument, helping at RACAP and greeting. A Service Record form **MUST** be completed and given to the pastor to receive credit.

**Youth Group** - Various group activities designed for your students will be scheduled periodically. These are fun, meaningful experiences which will help your student grow in living like Christ and trusting in Him. Participation is highly encouraged. It is also a great place to invite friends. While your child may not be able to attend all events, some level of participation is **required**.

**Family Time** - Every week each confirmand will complete an assignment with their family which will involve either reading a brief chapter of a book and working on a weekly memory verse OR watching a brief video, completing a Family Connection Journal (reading five Bible verses and answering a question about each reading) and working on a weekly memory verse and Quizlet flash cards. These are **required** assignments.

**Instruction** - Confirmands will meet in weekly classes for a 45-minute session led by the pastor followed by 75 minutes of Bible study, social or service time in Youth Group.

One year (**The Faith Lived** year) will focus on:

- the **Christian lifestyle and worldview** and how they compare to others,
- the **claims of Christ and Scripture** and objective evidence for their validity, and
- the four most important **strategy steps** of Word of Life and how they apply to our lives.

The other year (**The Faith Believed** year) will focus on the most important parts of **Christian teaching**. We'll use the six chief parts of Christian doctrine as outlined in Martin Luther's Small Catechism:

- **The Ten Commandments** - The confirmands learn what God demands of us in His Law, so they might recognize their sinful condition and turn to God for forgiveness. The Law then guides them in living as God's forgiven and blessed children.
- **The Apostles' Creed** - The confirmands are taught the faith which Christians confess, so they may grow in trusting, praising and serving the Triune God as their Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.
- **The Lord's Prayer** - The confirmands study the Lord's Prayer so they may grow in knowing how to pray and in praying to their Father with confidence.
- **The Sacrament of Holy Baptism** - The confirmands learn the nature and importance of Baptism, so they may grow in understanding of what God has done for them (or will do) in Baptism, and what this means for their lives.
- **Confession** - The confirmands Confession and Absolution, and study the Office of the Keys, so they may share more fully in the church's ministry of Word and Sacraments.
- **The Sacrament of the Altar** - The confirmands learn to understand what God offers them in the Lord's Supper, so they may grow in their desire for the Sacrament and may receive it with blessing.

### **Required Learning Materials:**

#### **Faith Lived Year:**

The **Bible** (a modern version like *God's Word* preferred), **How to Be Your Own Selfish Pig, The Case for Christ** (student edition), a pen/pencil and a three-ring binder.

#### **Faith Believed Year:**

The **Bible** (a modern version like *God's Word* preferred), **Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation** (2017 edition, CPH), a pen/pencil, and a three-ring binder.

All books may be purchased through Pastor, usually at a discount.

Students are expected to bring their Bibles and the book currently being studied to each class along with a pen/pencil, and their three-ring binder.

Every week each confirmand will complete an assignment **with their family** which will involve either reading a brief chapter of a book and weekly memory work OR watching a brief video, completing a Family Connection Journal (reading five Bible verses and answering a question about each reading) and working on a memory verse and Quizlet flash cards. Weekly memory work will help students have ready access to the power of God's Word.

**If the student fails to complete the requirements, the student will NOT advance to the next year or participate in the confirmation service.** To do otherwise would be unfair to those who complete all the requirements. Makeup work may be done and a less focused, individual confirmation service arranged when all requirements are complete.

**Independent Study** - For youth unable to meet the group instruction requirements, an Independent Study option is offered with approval from the pastor. In addition to the Sunday morning worship, family instruction and memory requirements noted above, the Independent Study requires extensive study and successful completion of the workbook, **Exploring Luther's Small Catechism**, a 40 unit study and reading **How to Be Your Own Selfish Pig, The Case for Christ** (student edition), and completing worksheets on each chapter. Confirmation will be scheduled individually upon completion of these requirements.

Other arrangements will be considered if special needs are communicated to the pastor in advance.

### **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The aim of confirmation is to help your children learn to know and understand the Christian faith and the main teachings of the Christian church so they may apply them to their lives. You, your children, their pastor and Youth LifeGroup leaders are investing much time and energy to accomplish this. To enhance learning, an orderly environment free of disturbances must be assured. No one should be allowed to compromise the teacher's teaching or your child's learning. The following rules and four-step enforcement plan are intended to limit disturbances and enhance overall learning. **The following rules and discipline plan apply at all youth events involving Word of Life and any responsible adult should enforce them.**

## Rules

1. Be quiet when someone else is talking.
2. Listen the first time.
3. Speak **only** good of one another.
4. Stay in your own seat.
5. Keep your hands to yourself.
6. Bring required learning materials.

## Three-Step Plan

If a student chooses to disobey any of the rules, the pastor, leader or parent is responsible to take these steps:

1. Give a verbal warning.
2. After another violation of ANY rule, the student's parent(s) will be called to pick up their child (a "discipline").
3. After two "disciplines," arrange a parent-pastor/leader conference concerning their continued involvement in the class.

## EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Tardiness or absence may be excused by calling or texting ahead or by a note which includes the name of the child, the date and reason for absence, and a parent's signature.

Students will not be excused to leave the classroom except for illness.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the book readings and memory OR video, Family Connection Journal, memory and flashcard assignments are completed successfully at home.

Quizzes, mid-term, comprehensive final tests and participation grades will be given during the "Faith Believed" year. The student and parent(s) are responsible for scheduling make-up tests or retests.

Students are responsible to contact a classmate to obtain notes which were covered during an absence.

The minimum requirements for advancement or confirmation are:

- Attends Worship 3 out of 4 Times.
- Attains at least 75% on major tests (Faith Believed Year)
- Presents a testimony or approved project (Final Year)

## PARENTAL SUPPORT

Your child's confirmation and perhaps their better and eternal life are dependent upon you. You, as parents, have a vital, unique role in your child's confirmation instruction. Parents should have the same goals and expectations as the teacher. Your role is not only to support the work of the teachers, but to take an active part in the teaching and learning process. There are many ways in which you can help your child's growth. Here are some to consider:

- **Pray regularly** for and with your child that the Holy Spirit may help your child grow as one of God's people.
- **Set a good example** of Christian faith and life. Children need models if they are going to put into practice what they learn. In the long run, your regular Sunday Worship and LifeGroup attendance and serving will do more for your child's spiritual welfare than our minimum attendance requirements.
- **Make confirmation a priority.** This may help your child set priorities in the future which will lead to greater joy and strength in their lives.
- **Talk with your child** about the meaning and purpose of confirmation. Help your child see confirmation as the beginning of a new stage of growth and fulfilling service as a leader in living and sharing the Gospel with others.
- **Know what your child is learning.** Look through the schedule. Regularly read the chapter the class is studying, so you can discuss what is being learned and can help your child with any questions. (This may be a good time for you to grow with your child.)
- **Try to relate** what your child is learning to daily life situations - at home, school, in TV viewing, etc.
- **Include your child's confirmation learning** in your family devotions.
- **Help your child** with the memory work which is assigned. Emphasize the value of this and give encouragement to do it with joy - perhaps by getting the whole family to join in learning the material.
- **Arrange to sit in** on class sessions or group gatherings to show your interest.
- **Offer to help** with needed confirmation tasks.

If at any time you have questions or concerns about confirmation, immediately discuss them with the pastor. We look forward to our partnership in helping your child develop in faith and love.