

July 20, 2010

Dear Parents of Confirmation Students:

It's that time again. Time to go crazy getting your kids to and from...school, football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, lacrosse, hockey, track, gymnastics, martial arts, theatre, band, dance, choir, concerts, (okay, what did I miss?) and Confirmation *Road Trip* on Wednesdays from 7:00pm - 8:30pm!

Leona and I are again asking for your help as we begin this year. And the best help you can give us is by never being afraid to ask questions when you are uncertain or confused about ANYTHING having to do with this course and how your child is doing.

One thing I have found to work well in preparing parents and students and teachers for Confirmation is to try to address any possible questions right up front with the FAQ's of Confirmation. So...here is our attempt to do so with what we consider to be the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).

• **How do I know if my child is ready for Confirmation?**

If your child is in 6th grade through 8th grade, then your child is ready for Confirmation; no matter the grade level, no matter the learning challenges, no matter the personal desire or social commitments. Our goal is always to communicate what needs to be learned at the level of your child's understanding and give each child the opportunity to experience success in learning. The only expectation we have is that your child will do his/her best and that you, as parents, will support them in doing so.

• **What if my child is in 9th grade or above and still not Confirmed?**

You have three options:

1. Two-three times each year we offer a Confirmation Class designed for adults who are also interested in learning about what we believe and teach. This class is open to 9th – 12th graders as well.
2. Confirmation can also be completed as an Independent Study that I will set up with you on an individual basis. This format will have the same requirements, just a different schedule.
3. Your child can attend the Wednesday night classes. Just know that we love to have our older students serve as helpers as well.

• **Weren't some 5th grade students included in Confirmation last year?**

Yes, we included three 5th grade students in last year's class who received the nickname "Lab Rats." Our purpose was to "experiment" with younger children, who had proven track records of leadership and involvement in Club 45. The requirements for this were threefold:

1. Be selected by the leaders of Club 45 and/or Sunday School.
2. Receive a 100% on an exam testing their knowledge on the books of the Bible and themes and the Ten Commandments *before Confirmation began*.
3. Make a two year commitment to Confirmation; the first year to complete the course; the second year to mentor their peers.

• **What exactly will be required of me and my child during the Confirmation year?**

I'm really glad you asked the question this way because BOTH the parent and the child need to be involved and committed to the Confirmation process for it to be successful for all.

- Here's what is required of your child:
 - Attend class each Wednesday it is offered from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.
 - Complete the class requirements in memory work, community service and sermon notes.
 - Attend BOTH Sunday School and Worship each week.
- Here's what is required of you, as parent:
 - Arrange to have your child get to and from each event.
 - Model for your child attendance at BOTH Worship and Bible study.
 - Get involved in what they are learning by learning it with them.

- **Why is Confirmation Class starting at 7:00pm this year?**

We found that asking the students to attend back-to-back events (Confirmation and WNG) for three hours last year was just way too long on a school night. We also found that very few Confirmation students did attend WNG and missed out on connecting with other students. So...we have decided to integrate Confirmation into the overall WNG program. Everything will start and stop at the same time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm. And we are inviting ALL ages to participate. This includes YOU! When your kids are attending Confirmation Class, we invite you to join all the other parents for a little fellowship and a discussion of the very topic your kids will be learning about that same evening.

SAME TIME! SAME TOPIC! SAME PAGE!

- **What if my child can't make all the classes and/or events due to family circumstances?**

While we hope that you will help them prioritize Confirmation and activities, we are well aware of life situations that sometimes dictate what we can and cannot do. We will meet with each family who has these kinds of concerns and deal with them on a situational basis. Your child will NOT be punished for circumstances outside his/her control.

- **I have many more questions than are answered here. When can we meet to discuss these?**

While we try to address all possible questions, there are always those we didn't think about. So...we ARE meeting on **Wednesday, August 25th at 7:00pm** with you *and* your kids in the Sanctuary. This is an Orientation to WNG and Confirmation. We will walk you through the Wednesday night experience including worship, the class, the expectations and introduce you to the materials you will need for class.

- **Now that you brought that up, what exactly will my child need for Confirmation?**

What every child will need each class is a Bible, a Catechism, a set of Walk Through the Bible Flash Cards, a Confirmation Workbook, a pen or pencil and extra note paper. You may provide a Bible and Catechism for your student. The flash cards and the workbook are available for purchase from GSLC. We will also have Bibles and Catechisms available for purchase. Please complete the order form on the back of the Student Registration and return to the office by August 11, 2010 so that we may order enough materials for each student. The materials will be distributed at the Orientation on August 25th.

- **Okay...I will at least attend the Parent/Student Confirmation Orientation on Wednesday, August 25th at 7:00pm. But when do I register?**

Another great question! The best time to register your child for Confirmation is NOW! Please complete the attached Confirmation Registration form and the Materials Order form and return by August 11. You may also contact Susan Murray in the Church office to request a registration form be emailed or mailed to you (susanmurray@gslc.cc or 258-6227 ext. 13).

Confirmation is NOT the goal of a Christian. Confirmation is just the beginning of what it means to be a Christian. It provides the "head" knowledge to be able to better understand and hold tightly your saving faith in Jesus Christ. Where this "head" knowledge gets driven into the "heart" and then out into the "life" is through life experiences and discussions with peers who struggle with the same issues and deal with the same kinds of questions of life. With this in mind, please consider joining your child and all of us this year...on our Road Trip.

I hope this letter and these questions we addressed have been helpful to you. Please feel free to contact me any time you are uncertain or confused about any of this.

We want this to be a great year for you and your kids. We want this to be an experience they, and you, will never forget. In fact, we hope and pray this becomes a defining moment in your lives as God's love for you moves from your head to your heart to your life.

In Jesus' Love,

Pastor Marty & Leona

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