**LLC Confirmation School**

Confirmation School

Exercise and Examination

LLC Confirmation Exercise - Guidelines

**Guidelines for Directors - The Confirmation Exercise**

The LLC board has reviewed and approved the Confirmation school exercise. Confirmation is a sacred act and includes the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Adding extras during the exercise can distract attendees from the sacredness of the ceremony. Additional items lengthen an already lengthy exercise.

**Picture Taking**

Picture taking can become quite distracting, and we wish to minimize it as much as possible. We would like you to communicate this to the guests during the family evening and again in the opening announcements for the Confirmation exercise. During the family evening, also announce the picture arrangements for the Confirmation Exercise. One-half hour before the start of the Confirmation exercise, the students will gather for a 10-15 minute photo session.

The following is suggested as wording for the opening announcement of the Confirmation Exercise:

*Welcome to the Confirmation service of the (year) (place) Confirmation School. Because*

*Confirmation is a Sacred Act and also includes the Sacrament of Holy Communion, we prefer that pictures would not be taken during the service. Following the Confirmation, Communion will be served. After the students and staff have received Communion, please proceed up the center isle and depart from the side isles. We will begin our service with (hymn or song). This will be followed by (hymn or song) while the students enter. Following the entrance of the students we will be served by brother (N.N.)*

**Staff Song**

If the staff wishes to select a meaningful song to sing to the students, this can be part of the program prepared for the staff-student evening or the family evening instead of during the Confirmation exercise.

**Student Songs**

The Confirmation exercise allows for one student song. During the time of the confirmation school, the students may practice additional songs. The family evening provides a good opportunity to incorporate additional student songs.

On some occasions classes have written their own songs. The director ought to make sure that the hymn is scriptural and substantive. The planned staff-student evening and the family evening may provide the most appropriate forums for composed songs.

LLC Confirmation Exercise

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**1. Picture taking**

*Because the volume of picture taking during the sacred act has become quite distracting, we suggest that it be discouraged as much as possible. We recommend instead that a picture taking session be scheduled thirty minutes prior to the start of the service. At that time the class could be assembled before the altar and individual and group photos could be taken. It would also be appropriate to give the confirmands their roses at this time.*

**2. Assemble students**

*Students should assemble and line up for their entrance about ten minutes prior to the ceremony.*

**3. Announcements**

*Just prior to the beginning of the exercise, the service director should welcome the guests and announce the communion arrangements. In addition, directions may be printed on the back of the program. He/she will then announce the entrance hymn by saying: The congregation will now sing hymn number* ***\_\_\_\_\_****.*

**4. Entrance hymn #\_\_\_\_\_**

*Confirmation class and staff enter during this hymn and are seated. After the class has been seated****,***

**T*he service director will announce the beginning of the service,***

 ***We will sing Hymn #\_\_\_\_, following, our brother \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will serve us .***

**5. Hymn #\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**6. Opening prayer – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**7. Sermon** *(Approximately 20 minutes) –* ***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

**8. Hymn** *(Collection during this hymn) -* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*The service director should announce:*

*We will now sing Hymn #\_\_\_\_\_, and following the hymn our brother \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will confirm the class.*

**Collectors: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**9. Introduction**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Confirming minister may keep an extemporaneous speech— 5 to 10 minutes in length—or read the following. If desired the minister may shorten this section by reading only paragraphs “a” and “d.”*

a. Beloved young children of God. Today, you have come to be confirmed and then to partake of the Lord's Holy Communion. Your Confirmation school is now over. During these days you have been taught, according to our Savior's command of baptism and teaching, the central truths of our faith, as they stand in the Word of God, and as they are believed in the congregation of God.

b. Faith is the most important matter in our life. The Apostle writes, "without faith it is impossible to please him [God]" (Heb. 11:6). The Bible unceasingly emphasizes the importance of personal faith. In its basic meaning, faith is not only knowledge of God and His Word, of the historical events concerning Jesus, and of the work of the Holy Spirit, but it is above all, personal trust and confidence in Jesus Christ and in His grace. Salvation cannot be found in anyone else. His suffering and death are the atonement of our sins. In the congregation of God we receive forgiveness of our sins, and we are justified by His grace, through faith, on account of the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.

c. In faith we have with the grace of the forgiveness of sins, also fellowship with the congregation of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This gives us power to confess our faith. Dear young children of God (young people): You (many of you) have been preserved during your childhood years as children of God in the fellowship and care of His kingdom. Today, you thank your heavenly Father for this. Now you will confess together your Christian faith and pray to God for power to give evidence of it in your life. In all of this, you are supported by the prayers of the children of God. May God give His grace to all of you and a desire for continual endeavoring in faith.

d. On this festive day, young children of God (young people), you may believe all your sins and transgressions forgiven in the name and precious atoning blood of Jesus. You can approach the future with a confident mind. The Lord Jesus Christ is the beginner of your faith, but He is also its finisher. He cares for you and preserves you in His kingdom, so that you would reach the goal of your faith, eternal life. Amen.

**10. Prayer**

Let us pray:

Almighty, Everlasting God. We thank Thee for all of Thy gifts, but we especially thank Thee that Thou hast enlightened and preserved us in the fellowship of Thy kingdom with the gospel of Thy Son. We thank Thee for Thy love. We pray that Thou would lead these young brothers and sisters who are to be confirmed, so that they could always grow in Thy grace and in the knowledge of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. We pray Thee: Give them the power of Thy Spirit to confess their faith, and to endeavor as Thy children according to the dignity of the gospel until the end of their lives. Give them one day the inheritance in Thy heavenly kingdom. Amen.

**11. Examination**

*If it is customary to openly examine the catechumens, the minister continues (he may use part or all of the questions):*

Beloved young children of God. We hope that you have received through faith the correct understanding of God's Word and the teaching of Christ. Let us now discuss the central content of our faith.

**Examination**

**1. What is the most precious matter in your life?** To be a believer. Living faith. Getting to heaven. Having my sins forgiven.

**2. How has God created the visible and the invisible world?** By His Word.

**3. Why is man a unique being?** God created man in His own image and has given him a living soul and a conscience.

**4. What can separate man from God?** Sin.

**5. What is sin?** Sin is thoughts, words and deeds that are contrary to His will.

**6 What is the “mother" of all sins?** Unbelief.

**7. Where did the Scriptures come from?** Holy men of God spoke and wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

**8. What is the main message of the Old Testament?** The promise of the coming Messiah, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

**9. What is the main message of the New Testament?** The fulfilment of the Old Testament promise concerning Christ.

**10. What is prayer?** Prayer is the speech of the heart to God.

**11. How did God reconcile the sin-fallen world with himself?** By giving His only Son for the sins of the world.

**12. How does the work of Christ continue in the world today?** Through the work of the Holy Spirit in His congregation.

**13. What are some of the names given in the Bible for the congregation or kingdom of God?** Mother, Mount Zion, the pillar and ground of truth, the True Vine, the sheepfold, Jerusalem, the golden candlestick, the Bride of Christ.

**14. The living Word of God is compared to a two-edged sword. What are the two edges?** The Law and the Gospel.

**15. To whom does the Law belong according to the Bible?** To the unbelieving.

**16. What is the Gospel?** The Gospel is the joyous message of Jesus Christ.

**17. What is the core message of the Gospel?** The proclamation of the forgiveness of sins.

**18. To whom is the Gospel preached?** To the penitent and remorseful.

**19. What is true repentance or conversion?** True repentance is remorse and distress over sin, believing in the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. This is followed by a change of heart and battle against sin.

**20. What is meant by the office of the keys?** The authority that Jesus gave to His own to forgive sins.

**21. Where and with what words did Jesus authorize His own to forgive sins?** In John 20:22,23, where he said “Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

**22. What are the sacraments?** Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

**23. Will the class please stand and recite the baptismal command?**

*(Signal to the class to stand)*

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28:19-20)

*(Signal to the class to be seated)*

**24. What is the significance of baptism?** Baptism is the covenant of a good conscience.

**25. What is the benefit of Holy Communion?** Our faith is strengthened and we are reminded of Jesus’ redemption work for us.

**26. Who is an acceptable Communion guest?** A believer.

**27. What is confession?** Confession consists of two parts: the one is, that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution from the confessor as of God himself, in no wise doubting, but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.

Would the class please stand? *(Signal to the class to stand.)*

**28. Let us together recite the Lord's Prayer:** Our Father, who art in heaven: Hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven: Give us this day our daily bread: And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us: And lead us not into temptation: But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**29. Let us together recite the Benediction:** The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up His countenance upon us, and give us peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The catechumens come before the altar. Note that the catechumens should stand and face the altar and minister throughout sections 12 and 13.*

**12 Creed**

The minister says: Let us now together recite the Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Christian Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

*The minister continues:*

Are you willing to walk accordingly, with the help of the grace of God, in your life of faith?

*The catechumens reply:*

Yes, I am.

*(The class will remain standing.)*

**13. Exhortation and blessing**

You have now confessed your faith before God, our Heavenly Father, and His congregation. We pray that as living members of the body of Christ you would grow in Him, who is the head of the congregation.

May the God of peace sanctify you so that your spirit and soul and body would be found blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.

**14. Class hymn**

*The class will now turn to face the congregation and sing its class song.* **SHZ #\_\_\_\_\_ – “Title”**

*We recommend that only hymns/from the LLC hymnal be used. (On some occasions classes have written their own songs. If this is desired, the director ought to make sure that the hymn is scriptural and substantive. Hymn #229 has been written specifically for confirmation and is especially appropriate.)*

*(The class can be seated.)*

**15. Prayer**

Let us pray:

Merciful God, dear heavenly Father: We thank Thee for Thy great love, for Thou hast enlightened these young ones with Thy Word so that they have been able to confess in Thy congregation Thy grace and love in our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray: Enlighten and establish them with Thy Holy Spirit so that they would be preserved in the true faith and so that they would grow in the knowledge of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. On their own part, they are weak; strengthen them with Thy power. They are exposed to many temptations; protect them with Thy powerful arms. They must traverse a dangerous world; guide them with Thy instructions. Bestow upon them the grace of Thy Holy Spirit so that they would partake of the Lord's Holy Supper for the strengthening of their faith, love, hope and long-suffering. Strengthen them for the trials of life, comfort them with Thy peace, and refresh them with Thy joy. Give them the desire and the power to serve their neighbors and to fulfill their temporal calling. Help them always to be watchful in faith and to await the coming of Thy Son, Jesus Christ. Hear us, for the sake of Thy holy name. Amen.

**16. Exhortations to parents and godparents**

*A minister may keep a brief extemporaneous speech, or read the following:*

Beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: We have this day been present at the confirmation of these young believers. During confirmation school they have become familiar with the central content of our faith and have become established in their endeavor of faith. They need the keeping of God throughout their lives to remain as His children.

Therefore, you the beloved parents, godparents, relatives, and friends of these young ones must help and support them so that they could grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Guide them in what is good and true, so that they could avoid temptations and overcome them. Carry them faithfully in prayer.

Embolden them with the gospel of Christ to live according to its honor and to fulfill their responsibility both as members of the congregation of God and in their temporal calling. Care for them with the word of grace, and teach them in love and truth, so that they would receive power to walk on the narrow way of life and would be preserved as children of God to the end. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:7)

**17. Hymn**

**SONG LEADER:** The congregation will now sing Hymn # \_\_\_\_\_

**18. Introduction to Communion**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

**19. The Confession of Sins**

Being assembled before the face of our beloved Heavenly Father, we now desire to confess our sinfulness and in faith pray for forgiveness and peace, saying thus in our hearts:

O Thou most merciful, crucified Lord Jesus Christ: Have mercy upon me, a wretched sinner, and look upon me with the eyes of Thine compassion, as Thou looked upon Peter when he had denied Thee, and as thou looked upon the sinful woman in the house of the Pharisee, and as Thou looked upon the thief on the cross, and grant me thy holy grace: that with Peter I would weep over my sins, with the woman which was a sinner I would love Thee with all my heart, and together with the thief I could behold Thy holy face in heaven forever. Amen.

**20. The Absolution**

*The minister then reads the following:*

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John I: 7,9)

Our Lord Jesus Christ says to His disciples: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:22, 23)

Beloved communion guest: Be encouraged to hold to these promises of God and believe all your sins forgiven in Jesus' name and blood and be of good cheer!

**21. Thanksgiving and prayer**

Let us thank and pray:

Almighty God, merciful Father: We thank Thee for Thy great grace which Thou hast shown unto us, when in Thy Son Jesus Christ, Thou hast redeemed us, forgiving us our sins and promising us eternal life through Him. We pray for a childlike mind in order that we might be preserved in the fellowship of Thy forgiving love forever. Grant unto us the power of Thy Holy Spirit that we would be able to celebrate the Holy Supper of our Savior in such a way that our faith would be refreshed by Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

It is truly meet, right, and blessed that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, Holy Father, Almighty Eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. Amen.

*Before reading the Words of Institution the minister will uncover the bread and wine trays.*

**22. The Words of Institution and the Lord's Prayer**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; this is my Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

After the same manner, also, He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in my Blood which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as often as you drink of it, in remembrance of Me."

Let us now all pray as our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us:

*The congregation will join the minister in praying aloud:*

Our Father, who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**23. The Peace of God**

The peace of God be with you always!

*The other ministers/servers will proceed to the altar at this point.*

**Song Leader: *The congregation will sing #603 “O Holy Lamb of God.”***

**24. Invitation**

The Lord Jesus says, Come, for all is now ready!

**25. The Distribution**

*Following the invitation, the communicants will come to the altar. The congregation continues singing songs and hymns suitable for the occasion.*

*The communicants will stand before the altar until the liturgist signals them to kneel. Once a full table of communicants is standing before the altar, the liturgist (the minister serving bread on the ministers’ right) will signal the communicants to kneel. The bread servers will then begin serving from the center to the sides. If there is only one set of servers, they will begin serving from the end to their left and proceed to the right. Upon reaching the end of their section, the ministers will immediately return to their starting position.*

*The ministers distributing the bread and wine shall say, respectively:*

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, given for thee.

The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, shed for thee.

*After all have received the bread and the wine, the minister shall say to the communicants:*

May the Body and the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your body and soul unto eternal life. Amen. You may go in the peace of God!

**26. Prayer and Thanksgiving for the Communion**

*When the distribution of Communion is completed, the minister says:*

Let us thank and pray *(he then chooses one of the following options)*:

**a.** Lord, Eternal God, Thou Who made us partakers of Thy sacraments! We thank Thee for Thy grace and pray: Make us, with all Thine elect saints, to be partakers of Thine eternal honor and glory through Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Lord, Who lives and has dominion with Thee and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

**Or:**

**b.** Lord Jesus Christ, Thou who hast called us to this Holy Supper! We thank Thee that Thou hast nourished us with Thy Body and Blood, and that Thou hast refreshed us with Thy grace and goodness. Lord Jesus, into Thy hands we commit ourselves and wish to be Thine own forever. Amen.

**Or:**

**c.** We thank Thee, Almighty God, that Thou hast comforted and refreshed us

with this precious and gracious Supper, and we pray unto Thee: Grant that it may increase our faith and our mutual love through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**27. The Benediction**

*In conclusion the minister shall say:*

Humble your hearts before the Lord and receive the Benediction:

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

**28. Closing hymn # \_\_\_\_, *Title***

**29. Distribution of Certificates**

*The confirming minister, camp director, or a teacher will now announce the distribution of the certificates and read the names of the confirmands who will come forward to receive their certificate when their name is called. The staff will line up to congratulate the confirmands as they go by.*

**30. Announcements**

*Lunch will be served following the next hymn. Parents and elders may exit the stairs at the back to the dining area. There will also be a serving line for guests under the deck*

**31. Hymn**

**SONG LEADER: Song # \_\_\_\_**