

Church Council Policy on Confirmation and New Members Classes
Approved 5/10/16

- I. For Youth (beginning in 7th grade)
 - A. Instruction in the Heidelberg Catechism
 1. 52 weeks of instruction in Sunday School (September-August) with a minimum of 75% attendance¹
 2. 1 lesson of Heidelberg to be covered each week (as Heidelberg is structured across 52 weeks)
 3. Students are to complete the chapter on the workbook on Heidelberg Catechism with their parents *prior* to arrival in class to be prepared for instruction (see below)
 4. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend Catechism class with their students
 5. Attendance will be logged *both* in the Sunday School attendance book *and* will be indicated by the teacher initialing the workbook page by the lesson covered for the day
 - B. Complete Heidelberg Catechism Workbook with Parents
 1. Completed before the class on the Catechism Questions
 2. Initialed by parents to indicated it was gone through together
 3. At the end of the Confirmation process, the workbook will be turned in for review by selected members of the Church Council
 - C. Memorize *selected* questions from Heidelberg Catechism and scriptures for class and for Confirmation Sunday.²
 1. Heidelberg Questions to be memorized: 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 20, 21, 32, 43, 61, 62, 66, 81, 116
 2. Scripture to be memorized:
 - a) Deuteronomy 6:4-9
 - b) Psalm 23
 - c) Micah 6:6-8
 - d) Matthew 6:9-15 (Lord's Prayer, plus on forgiveness)
 - e) Matthew 7:12-14
 - f) John 1:1-5
 - g) 2 Corinthians 10:4-6
 - h) Galatians 5:22-26
 - i) Ephesians 6:10-20
 - j) Philippians 2:1-11
 - k) Philippians 3:17-21
 - l) Colossians 3:12-17

1. Note: prior attendance requirement was 66% of a total of 68 hours (45 hours minimum); 68 hour requirement has been reduced to 58 hours (52 weeks of Sunday School + 6 hours New Members Class), but raising Sunday School to 75% minimum attendance preserves the 45 hour minimum (75% of 52 weeks = 39 hours, plus 6 hours of New Member class = 45 hour total). Obviously students are encouraged to shoot for 100% attendance, not the minimums.

2. A student may recite these Catechism answers and Scriptures to the Pastor(s), Confirmation Class Assistant Teacher, or a member of the Church Council.

3. Other Essential Texts to Memorize
 - a) Apostle's Creed
 - b) 10 Commandments (Summary of the Commandments plus where to find the whole text)
- II. For All (including those Youth who complete the process above along with potential new members)
- A. New Members Class
 1. 4 Week Class (90 minutes per class)
 - a) 100% attendance
 - b) class video recorded that can be watched if makeup is needed
 2. Topics
 - a) Our Church Constitution and an overview of our church's Historical roots
 - b) Five Solas of the Reformation
 - c) TULIP
 - d) A Reformed View on Sanctification
 3. Memorize 3 short passages of scripture as a class
 - a) Isaiah 53:4-6
 - b) Romans 12:1-2
 - c) Ephesians 2:8-10
 4. At least 1 member of Council required to attend New Members Classes to build relationships with potential new members
 5. General congregation invited to New Members class
 - a) useful as teaching time
 - b) build relationships with potential new members
 6. New Members Class held 2x per year
 - a) Always (in September so those completing Confirmation class can attend at the end of the Confirmation process)
 - b) Also in the late Winter or early Spring
 - c) If there were a need, a 3rd time per year could be held
 - B. Meet with the Elders to share their profession of faith
- III. Admission to the Lord's Table is not tied to membership
- A. Having met with the student, Elders may give permission to someone who has not completed the above process, yet has a mature profession of faith, to partake of the table
 - B. This applies even to those students who opt not to complete the confirmation process as stated above.
- IV. Note: Adults who are new to the Reformed Faith will be strongly encouraged to complete the Heidelberg Catechism workbook prior to membership
- V. Note: Though youth and Adults may be taking the New Members class together, but adults joining the church will not do so on Confirmation Sunday, to preserve that as a special time for the youth
- VI. Note: Baptism is required for any youth or adult who is coming into membership. As Christian Baptism is only ever applied once to the life of an individual, one need not be baptized at St. John's (Burry's) Church.
- VII. Note: If approved, this will become the official process beginning with those who rise into 7th grade for the 2016-2017 school year
- A. Students in the current Confirmation class will have the option of either coming through with these rules or the prior rules, memorizing the Catechism.

- B. Students who have completed portions of the Confirmation process, but who have "fallen through the cracks" have the option of completing this process to come into church membership.