

# COMMIT: A PATHFINDER CONFIRMATION INTENSIVE

## FAQ

### ***What are the differences between CORE/Summit and COMMIT?***

CORE (6-8<sup>th</sup> grade) and Summit (9-12<sup>th</sup> grade) are weekly student gatherings that run year-round. They are a place where all students can grow in their faith, invite their friends, and grapple with the real-life issues they are facing daily. It consists of a fun and impactful large group time with a student-led band, relevant teaching, and small group discussions led by adult mentors. CORE meets in Cornerstone on Sundays from 11am-12:10pm and Summit meets on Wednesday evenings in Cornerstone from 7:00-8:30pm.

COMMIT, on the other hand, is our one-year confirmation intensive. COMMIT is for students who (1) recognize that they are imperfect followers of Jesus and (2) who are also serious about making a greater commitment to walking with Jesus in their daily life. COMMIT is an optional faith development program that any student (8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade) can participate in if they desire to explore (1) The greatest commandment, (2) the importance of love in forming our character and faith, and (3) Luther's six chief parts of the Christian faith (The Apostles' Creed, The Ten Commandments, Baptism, Confession & Absolution, The Lord's Supper and Prayer).

COMMIT classes launch each calendar year in January and end in November with a special Rite of Confirmation worship service, where students publicly profess their faith in front of family, friends, and the church.

### ***Does COMMIT have any Pre-requisites?***

- 1) Serving at Pathfinder** – As soon as a student registers to be a part of COMMIT, we require them to find a team to serve on here at Pathfinder. Opportunities abound. Students can serve in children's ministry, hospitality, student's ministry, tech ministry, worship ministry, etc. Different ministries require different amounts of time, but most ministries need students to serve once a month. Parent Info Meetings (about COMMIT) will include information about getting connected to a team. We expect students to serve in some capacity the entire time they are a part of COMMIT.
- 2) First Communion** – See below.

### ***Why does COMMIT start with First Communion?***

Holy Communion (The Lord's Supper) is an incredible gift where God gives His people the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, which brings forgiveness, life and salvation. Parents and students should make a mutual, prayerful decision about when to begin receiving Communion based on the student's personal faith in Jesus and their ability to properly examine themselves. As students mature, we want to give them the opportunity to experience this gift when they are ready. We also don't want to hamstring students who may be ready to take communion but aren't ready to engage in COMMIT. By offering First Communion to all students every year in January, we ensure that students can participate in both options, when they are ready.

- If a student participates in First Communion as a 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grader, they will not need to be trained again as a part of COMMIT.
- If a student is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or above (and has never participated in First Communion) they will do so as part of their COMMIT experience.

- We will be offering two dates for **Communion Training: January 28, 2024 (Sunday) and January 31 (Wednesday). First Communion Sunday will be February 4.**

### ***How is COMMIT for 2023 structured?***

#### **One Year, Three Seasons:**

The COMMIT Intensive officially launches with a retreat in February over **President's Day Weekend**. The retreat will focus on (1) The Greatest Commandment (2) setting expectations for the year, and (3) building strong and caring relationships.

The rest of the year will be split into three separate seasons.

#### **The Three Seasons:**

- **SPRING** (February-May): COMMIT meets concurrently with CORE on Sunday mornings (11:00-12:10). COMMIT students attend CORE, but leave after worship for their own teaching and small group time. Students will study the 10 commandments, in conjunction with remaining focused on what they're committing to: Loving the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. In April, they will write a simple reflection paper on what they've learned so far, as well as plan a group project where they'll get to live out loving God and loving their neighbor. (To be completed sometime in May or early June.)
- **SUMMER** (June-August): Students attend Summit weekly on Wednesdays. They will also attend a day retreat (offered twice in June) that focuses on (1) presenting student's Greatest Commandment Projects, (2) studying baptism and the apostle's creed, (3) choosing their Life Verse, and (4) writing a draft of their faith statement. They will also be expected to turn in three message reflections (answering What, So What, and Now What) by August 11. These will be messages they've heard in-person at Big Church.
- **FALL** (September-November): As students kick off a new school year (and enter the tail end of their COMMIT year), we expect them to ramp up their engagement. For the two months of their fall season (September & October) we expect them to:
  - Attend a 9am Sunday morning COMMIT class. It would last eight weeks and focus on (1) what it means to be a disciple, (2) brain science and what it teaches us about how we grow as disciples, and (3) spiritual disciplines.
  - Attend Big Church at 5pm on Saturday evening or 11am on Sunday and (as part of that) turn in 3 additional sermon reflections.
  - Continue serving on a Pathfinder Team.
  - Attend Summit on Wednesday evenings at 7pm.

Our hope is that our students would be deeply involved in the life of the church through this intensive. While participating in these activities, they will (1) develop meaningful relationships with other students and adults, (2) grow in their understanding of what it means to walk with Jesus, and (3) serve in ways that they are gifted. If this all takes place, we believe it gives our students a great opportunity to remain involved in faith-forming activities throughout their High School years.

### ***Why do we expect COMMIT students to also attend CORE (in spring) and Summit (in summer/fall)?***

COMMIT is an optional 1-year faith-building intensive, it is not a replacement for weekly worship and student ministry engagement. A healthy and whole life involves healthy rhythms. We at Pathfinder believe those healthy rhythms include regular worship. When a student completes their year with COMMIT, we want them to have touch points in place that will help them continue to grow in their walk with God.

### ***How do I get signed up for COMMIT?***

Register and pay online at <https://pathfinderstl.org/confirmation/>

### ***How much does COMMIT cost and what is the cost breakdown?***

The entire cost for the COMMIT year is \$250. This includes:

- Program materials and Registration (\$50)
- Kickoff retreat over President's Day Weekend (\$150)
- Rite of Confirmation Rehearsal and Ceremony (\$50)

This can be paid in one lump sum or in several installments.

### ***How does my student get registered for CORE (middle school) and Summit (high school)?***

We ask families to register students every year for our ongoing student ministry activities. You can register your student online at <https://pathfinderstl.org/students/>. There are no fees to attend CORE or Summit.

### ***How long will the program take?***

The Confirmation program is designed to be completed in one calendar year, January - November.

### ***Who will be teaching and leading the COMMIT classes?***

Our student ministry staff and called teachers will primarily teach and facilitate COMMIT classes. Our pastors will be worked into the schedule as their time allows.

### ***How old does my student have to be?***

Any student in 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade is welcome to participate in COMMIT. The majority of our students begin in January of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year in order to participate in the Rite of Confirmation in November of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. At the same time, many students feel waiting until later in high school is appropriate for them and we encourage families to put a lot of thought and prayer into making the decision about when to begin COMMIT.

### ***What is Confirmation and why are we calling this intensive "COMMIT"?***

Confirmation provides our students with the opportunity to confess for *themselves* what their parents confessed for them at the time of their baptism. Confirmation means "saying yes" to God and confessing your faith in Jesus Christ. It's the opportunity to express to those that you love that (1) you love Jesus and (2) desire to walk with Him the rest of your days.

We are calling this intensive "COMMIT" for several reasons:

1. It communicates the heart of the confirmation experience – students committing to imperfectly walking with Jesus the rest of their life.
2. It is a word that students understand much more clearly than the term confirmation.

3. It also signifies what we'd be asking students to do: make a commitment to prioritize growing in their faith for a year.

### ***When are the Six Chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism taught?***

The Six Chief parts are covered throughout the year:

- Spring – Communion // 10 Commandments
- Summer – Baptism // Apostles Creed
- Fall – Lord's Prayer // Confession

### ***What if my student has to miss a COMMIT class?***

We understand that life happens. There is much grace that comes with missing a class. At the same time, we recognize that this is an *optional* intensive for students. If you commit to participating in COMMIT...we expect you to be committed. ☺ With that in mind, we expect an attendance record of 80% or greater. This means missing no more than 2 (out of 7 classes) in the spring and no more than 2 (out of 8 classes) in the fall. If a student is missing more than that, Pathfinder student ministry staff will be in touch.

We expect everyone who registers to be in attendance for the kickoff retreat in February.

### ***Why is the Kickoff Retreat Mandatory?***

For an intensive like COMMIT to be beneficial, a couple things need to happen.

- 1) Students need to know what is expected of them for the coming year.
- 2) Students need to build strong relationships with one another and adult mentors.
- 3) Students need to be met where they're at, but also encouraged to grow past where they are.

To get everyone on the same page, it's best to start with a weekend retreat. Plus, it's fun! It'll provide ample opportunity to develop relationships and understand what the COMMIT year is all about.

### ***What happens at the Day Retreat?***

The day retreat in June is also a mandatory. During this retreat students will learn about baptism and the Apostle's Creed. They'll intentionally think through and choose their Confirmation verse, and they will spend time writing the rough draft for their Statement of Faith. Both retreat date options will be identical and students only need to attend one of the two dates.

### ***Are there any other service requirements besides joining a Pathfinder Team?***

As already stated, service is a big part of our Confirmation program. We expect students to sign up for some type of Pathfinder Team. They are expected to serve on that team their entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade year and continue serving as a high schooler. In addition to this, we expect COMMIT students to serve at one Pathfinder Event::

- Christmas Experience
- Eggstravaganza
- Summer Blast

### ***How are my student's reflection paper and message reflections supposed to be turned in?***

All work should be emailed to [confirmation@pathfinderstl.org](mailto:confirmation@pathfinderstl.org) .

Message reflection pages can be picked up in designated hospitality locations in the sanctuary lobby and the commons.

### ***What are ALL of the important dates I need to know for the 2024 program?***

#### COMMIT: Dates and Lesson Plan

- December 10, 2023 Registration Opens
- December 10, 2023 Parent Info Meeting 12:15pm – 1:00pm in Cornerstone
- January 14, 2024 Parent Info Meeting 12:15pm – 1:00pm in Cornerstone
- January 21, 2024 Registration Closes

#### SPRING 2024

- January 28, 2024 Communion Training (Option #1 – Sunday)
- January 31, 2024 Communion Training (Option #2 – Wednesday)
- February 4, 2024 First Communion Sunday
- February 16-18, 2024 Kick-off Retreat (*President's Day Weekend*)
- February 25, 2024 Class #1 – Love God – 1st Command – No other gods
- March 3, 2024 Class #2 – Love God – 2nd Command – Names/Character of God
- March 10, 2024 Class #3 – Love God – 3rd Command – Sabbath
- -- March 17, 2024 No Class due to Spring Break (No CORE)
- -- March 24, 2024 No Class due to Spring Break (CORE happens still)
- -- March 31, 2024 No Class due to Easter
- April 7, 2024 Class #4 – Love Neighbor – Commandments 4-6
- April 14, 2024 Class #5 – Love Neighbor – Commandments 7 & 8
- April 21, 2024 Class #6 – Love Neighbor – Commandments 9 & 10
- April 28, 2024 Reflection Due – No Class due to We Love STL (No CORE)
- May 5, 2024 Class #7 – Greatest Commandment Project Planning

#### Summer 2024

- Saturday, June 8 – Day Retreat #1
- Saturday, June 29 – Day Retreat #2
  - Greatest Commandment Projects are presented
  - Study Baptism
  - Study Apostles Creed
  - Choose Bible Verse
  - Write draft of statement of faith
- 3 Messages Reflections – Due August 11 (in-person, Big Church)

#### Fall 2024

- The COMMIT Classes:
  - September 8, 2024 Class #1 – Being a Disciple
  - September 15, 2024 Class #2 – Thinking about God vs. Thinking with God
  - September 22, 2024 Class #3 – Hearing God's Voice
  - September 29, 2024 Class #4 – Fast Track & Slow Track (Conscious and Unconscious Brain)
  - October 6, 2024 Class #5 – Spiritual Disciplines // Bible Study
  - October 13, 2024 Class #6 – Spiritual Disciplines // Confession
  - October 20, 2024 Class #7 – Spiritual Disciplines // Lord's Prayer
  - October 27, 2024 Class #8 – The Rest of Your Life – 3 Message Reflections Due

■ Rite of Confirmation

- Practice & Faith Statements: Thursday, November 7, 2024
- Rite of Confirmation: Sunday, November 10, 2024

***What does it mean for a student to profess their faith? What will they ultimately profess at the end of the COMMIT program?***

To fully understand what students will profess during the Rite of Confirmation, please read the Leader prompts and student responses below.

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LEADER: As one of your pastors, I ask you, before God and His Church: Do you this day, in the presence of God and of this congregation, acknowledge the gifts which God gave you in your Baptism?

RESPONSE: I do.

LEADER: Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

RESPONSE: I do.

LEADER: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

RESPONSE: Yes, I know and believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

LEADER: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son?

RESPONSE: Yes, I know and believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

LEADER: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

RESPONSE: Yes, I know and believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

LEADER: Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

RESPONSE: Yes, by God's grace and with His help.

LEADER: Do you believe the Holy Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?

RESPONSE: I do believe.

LEADER: Do you desire to take next steps on your LIFE journey with us, as a part of this congregation?

RESPONSE: I do.

LEADER: Do you intend faithfully to conform all your life to the divine Word, to be faithful in the use of God's Word and Sacraments, which are His means of grace, and in faith, word, and action to remain true to the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

RESPONSE: I do so intend by the grace of God.