

# *Rite of Christian Initiation*

## **Confirmation**

*Emmanuel Anglican Church Customary*



The Reverend Noah Lawson, Rector  
The Right Reverend Eric V. Menees, Bishop

## Introduction

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the completion of the Rite of Christian initiation. It follows a mature commitment to, and a public profession of, a person's baptismal covenant with God. The confirmand receives the laying on of the bishop's hands with prayer (Acts 8:14-17; 19:6). In Confirmation, God strengthens the work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian for His daily increase in their life and ministry (Acts 8:14-17; 19:6).

The Sacrament of Confirmation is made available for baptized members of Emmanuel Anglican Church who are in regular attendance and support the work of the church. Those desiring to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation must complete the yearlong catechism class that begins each Fall semester. Candidates are confirmed at the bishop's annual visitation on the Feast of Pentecost.

## Candidates

Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation are to be active members Emmanuel and the Anglican Church. The Anglican Church of North America defines active membership in the Duties of the Laity (Anglican Church in North America Constitution & Canons: Title I, Canon 10 §2) which says:

Members of the Church Commit Themselves to:

- A) To worship God, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, every Lord's Day in a Church unless reasonably prevented;
- B) To engage regularly in the reading and study of Holy Scripture and the Doctrine of the Church as found in Article I of the Constitution of this Church;
- C) To pray regularly for our needs and those of others, for the Church and its mission, and for the concerns of the world;
- D) To observe our baptismal vows, to lead an upright and sober life, and not give scandal to the Church;
- E) To present our children and those they have led to the Lord for baptism and confirmation;
- F) To give regular financial support to the Church, with the biblical tithe as the minimum standard of giving;
- G) To practice forgiveness daily according to our Lord's teaching;
- H) To receive worthily the Sacrament of Holy Communion as often as reasonable;
- I) To observe the feasts and fasts of the Church set forth in the Anglican formularies;
- J) To affirm and follow the biblical standards of sexual morality and ethics in Canon II.8;
  - 1. Section 1 - Clergy and lay leaders of this Church are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality as a condition of being appointed or remaining in office.
  - 2. Section 2 - In view of the teaching of Holy Scripture, the Lambeth Conference of 1998 and the Jerusalem Declaration, this Church upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is

right for those who are not called to marriage, and cannot legitimize or bless same sex unions or ordain persons who engage in homosexual behavior. Sexual intercourse should take place only between a man and a woman who are married to each other.

3. Section 3 - God, and not man, is the creator of human life. The unjustified taking of life is sinful. Therefore, all members and clergy are called to promote and respect the sanctity of every human life from conception to natural death.
- K) To continue our instruction in the Faith so as to remain an effective minister for the Lord Jesus Christ;
  - L) To serve our neighbor, sacrificially demonstrating the love of Christ to the poor, the sick and those in need.
  - M) To devote ourselves to the ministry of Christ and the proclamation of the Gospel among those who do not know Him, utilizing the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us, for the effective extension of Christ's Kingdom.

Adult Candidates must commit to honor these duties.

### **Sponsors (Godparents)**

Being asked to serve as a confirmation sponsor, or Godparent, is an honor. The sponsor is chosen for a special relationship with the one to be confirmed, with the confirming community, and with God. A decision to accept an invitation to be a sponsor is one that should not be treated lightly and should be discerned prayerfully.

The root of the word sponsor is *spondere*. It means to "promise" – and is also the root of espouse and spouse. In the early days of the Church, when the threat of persecution was often a reality for Christians and there was a fear about spies, sponsors vouched for the candidates to the Christian community by presenting them and guaranteeing that they were who they said they were. The sponsor stood as a witness to the Christian community that the person seeking admission was truly desirous of following Christ and of serving and loving God. In addition, sponsors joined their candidates starting in their days of baptismal preparation. This walking together included praying for the candidates, instructing candidates in the faith, helping candidates understand what they were turning from and toward, and preparing candidates for Christian living in the world. Qualifications for a sponsor include:

- The sponsor must be a baptized and confirmed Christian. Only a Christian can make the required baptismal renunciations and promises with the candidate.
- The sponsor should be active in their own spiritual disciplines of prayer, scripture reading and study, stewardship (godly use of time, talent, and treasure), and regular attendance in their home church.
- The sponsor is willing to commit themselves to a lifelong relationship with their candidate.

\*While it is not required, it is strongly encouraged, that sponsors be members of the church where the candidate will also be a member Emmanuel Anglican Church.

It is expected that the sponsor will:

- Cultivate a personal relationship with the candidate.
- Represent Christ and the Church to the candidate before and after the baptism.
- Set an example of Christian life discipleship for the candidate.
- Commit to regular prayer for the candidate before and after the baptism.

How Can a Sponsor Prepare?

- Review the Confirmation Liturgy.
- If geographically reasonable, attend baptism preparation sessions with the candidate and parents in the case of infants.
- Be willing to explore questions, issues, and expectations around baptism with the candidate, a member of the clergy, and/or the family.
- Pray for the members of the confirmation party, especially the candidate, that they might approach the sacrament with reverence and thanksgiving.
  - O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

How Can a Sponsor Be Involved with Their Candidate?

- Remember the anniversary of the baptism and confirmation through a card, letter, phone call or visit.
- Note the candidate's major life events in a Christian manner (birthdays, graduations, marriage, birth of children, illness, bereavement).
- Attend worship services with the candidate.
- Express an interest in what the candidate is learning and experiencing in Sunday School/Christian Education, discipleship classes, or in other settings of religious education.
- Personally help the candidate learn the basics of Christian worship and practice (Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, the Ten Commandments, the promises of the Baptismal Covenant).
- Discuss, read, and study the Bible with the candidate so they develop a knowledge and understanding of the scriptures.
- Share your own spiritual journey and experiences (testimonies) with the candidate.
- Be present with the candidate when they make a mature affirmation of the Christian faith in the presence of a bishop in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### **For Further Study**

- Baptismal Themes in the Bible
  - Old Testament Passages:
    - Creation (Genesis 1:1-2:3)
    - Deliverance and promise to Noah (Genesis 5:32-9:19)
    - Abraham (Genesis 17:1- 8),
    - The Exodus (Exodus 13:17-14:3)
    - The people's of Israel's covenant relationship with God (Exodus 19:16-20:17)
    - Promise of the land and an inheritance (Deuteronomy 34:1-8)
  - New Testament Passages:
    - The baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:1-17, Mark 1:1-12. Luke 3:1-2. John 1:19-34).
- The Confirmation Liturgy

### **Next Steps**

If you are interested in the Sacrament of Confirmation complete the online application found on the Emmanuel website (<https://www.emmanuelfresno.org/sacraments-pastoral-care>) or call the church office at 559-222-3721.





emmanuelfresno.org | (559) 222-3721  
office@emmanuelfresno.org | 1300 E. Shaw Avenue, Suite 174 | Fresno, CA 93710