

Everything you
need to know to
run the Confirmed
course

CONFIRMED

Your journey to confirmation

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Leaders' Guide

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FOREWORD

ZOE PHILLIPS AND BISHOP GRAHAM TOMLIN

Hello,

I'm so glad you're interested in running Confirmed!

The idea for Confirmed came out of an intense ideation process we engaged in as one of the first steps of being a Youth Minister in the London Diocese. We were examining the 'rites of passage' and key faith formation markers we already have in the Church of England – instinctively we knew that exploring Confirmation in a fresh way could be significant.

We wanted to use the Confirmation process to engage young people in the practises of the Christian faith. It was our hope that young people became more aware of the Christian disciplines that sustain and support faith after the more 'shiny' or public moments of faith formation, such as Confirmation, Baptism, Communion, a Youth Weekend Away – whatever it is in your tradition.

Confirmed presents Christian disciplines afresh to young people and asks them to choose at least three to engage with consistently over the number of weeks in which the course runs. Each week the young people check in with each other and the course leader, which not only helps hold each other accountable, but also makes the process shared. It's also great – where possible – to get parents involved in supporting their children in the process. At the end of the course, each young person is awarded a badge that corresponds to whatever discipline the young person has undertaken. The badge does not

signify that they have finished with that discipline and never need to pray again (for example), but instead it is a marker of their progress in that area.

The aim is for young people to enter Confirmation more aware of the call to be a disciple and continually grow in faith, after they have confirmed. We hope it will enable a shared language between you and the young people and make it easier for you to check in with young people about how their Christian walk is going.

We have found this course helpful in our context, and we're encouraged by this support from Bishop Graham:

'I am delighted at the work that the youth team at Christ Church W4 has already done as one of the Youth Minsters in the diocese. They have pioneered a number of initiatives, such as the Confirmed course, and my hope is that this can begin to be of value to other churches as they develop their own ministry among young people.' – Bishop Graham Tomlin

We hope you really enjoy running the course; that it bears fruit for you and the young people you have getting confirmed in your church.

Blessings,

Zoe Phillips
Youth Minister

COURSE OVERVIEW

Confirmed is a four-session course (each session is one hour long) to prepare young people for confirmation and a life of discipleship.

The premise of Confirmed is that by accountably engaging in some practises of faith, young people will start to put faith into action and know more fully what a Christian life is like. The course utilises a model of progress similar to The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Scouts, or Guides – where young people participate in disciplines throughout the course. The challenge is for the young people to complete at least three of six set disciplines over an agreed time. For each discipline a young person completes, they are awarded a badge to signify their progress.

THE DISCIPLINES



BIBLE STUDY

Read a book of the Bible over four weeks and write a paragraph about what stood out to them.



ADVENTURE

sign up for a Christian camp away in the summer!



DISCONNECT

Fast screens for a day – no phones, Xbox, social media etc.



PRAYER

Pray for someone, or something over four weeks and document that process.



SERVICE

Commit to serving an area in church for four weeks. It could be pouring coffee, cleaning up after youth, etc.



SHARE

tell someone who doesn't know you're a Christian about your faith and invite them to your confirmation (you get the badge for asking, not for the person saying they'd come).

In the one hour sessions we examine two disciplines in more detail and share stories from the week about what it was like to do the disciplines and pray together regularly. We also look at the Confirmation Liturgy and the young people are given two opportunities to affirm again their choice to follow Christ.

HOW TO RUN CONFIRMED

1. Find a group of 10-15 year olds, who want to get confirmed in the Anglican church or take part in a different style of discipleship programme
2. Have a room / a space you can use regularly for 4-6 weeks in a row
3. Have a TV screen for the Powerpoint
4. Provide some snacks!
5. Start with an ice-breaker: The Fusion Discipleship Deck has great question cards – we began our time by each person answering one
6. On the first week, hand out the booklets and read through the disciplines. Challenge the young people to pray and choose at least 3 disciplines to complete over the coming weeks
7. Each time you meet, hold the young people to account on how the disciplines are going – hear their stories!
8. Follow the Powerpoint – unpack 2 disciplines in more detail each week, biblically and practically
9. Leave lots of time for questions and discussions – young people want to participate and share their real stories
10. Pray and minister to the young people. Give opportunity for young people to choose to become Christians (some may not have felt like they've made that choice for themselves yet)
11. On the last week, award the badges for completed disciplines and encourage the young people to keep going! Celebrate them.
12. Plan for young people to continue the best they can in completing the disciplines and serving in church.

SESSION GUIDANCE

The following outline is a loose guide to help you plot out the course. Feel free to tailor the content and sessions for your context.

Also, this format explores the six Christian disciplines over four weeks, but if you would prefer a longer course, you can extend the course by looking at one discipline per week and having a separate session for the 'awarding of badges' ceremony.

A typical session could look like this:

4:00 – 4:30	Set up the space: chairs/bean bags, snacks, set up PowerPoint on screen, pray
4:30 – 4:40	Young people arrive: have an ice-breaker game ready
4:40 – 4:50	Check-in: Session one: introductions and share why you're getting confirmed Following sessions: How has the week of engaging in Christian disciplines gone? Go around and share: What's gone well? What's been hard?
4:50 – 5:05	Teaching and activities focused on the theme for the week
5:05 – 5:15	Questions and discussion
5:15 – 5:25	Mini taster time of the discipline you explored in detail. Final session: award the badges to the young people! Invite parents to come along.
5:25 – 5:30	Wrap up, encourage young people for the week ahead, pray to close.

SESSION ONE: WHY CONFIRMATION?

The first week explores what confirmation is and outlines what will be expected of the young people who engage in the Confirmed course.

- Spend a bit of time on introductions and why the young people are wanting to get confirmed
- Explain what Confirmation is in the Church of England. Good explanation and FAQs found here. If you have time, you could also read through the confirmation liturgy on the Confirmed PowerPoint: explain language and how the service with work
- Address that the confirmation is not just a "tick box" activity – do it and then move on
- rather it is indicative of a life long choice you are making to follow Jesus as a disciple. If you have time, share your story of how you came to follow Jesus and how your faith has sustained and grown over the years.
- Outline what the Confirmed course is. Go through the six Christian disciplines and hand out the Confirmed booklets. Ask the young people to choose which three disciplines they are going to engage with. Fill in the booklet.
- Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*, is a useful aid in unpacking clearly what is distinct and helpful about each discipline.

SESSION TWO: STORIES OF FAITH

This week explores the disciplines of Bible Study and Prayer and links these disciplines to our stories of faith.

- Check in how the first week of the doing the disciplines has gone.
- Teach what Bible Study and Prayer is. Ask for the young people's current experience and engagement with Bible Study Prayer.
- Consider how a rootedness in Bible study and prayer could give depth to our faith.
- Outline simple tools and techniques for young people to study the Bible and pray in their own time.
- You may find it helpful to create a prayer activity (see prayerspacesinschools.com/topten)
- A good Bible passage to unpack together could be Matthew 7:24-27 – the wise man who builds his house on the rock.

SESSION THREE: FAITH FOR LIFE

This week explores the disciplines of Adventure and Service and examines how these practises can aid us in the hard times of life.

- Check in how the week of the doing the disciplines has gone. Ask those who have chosen the Adventure and Service disciplines what they are doing.
- Unpack with Adventure (another name for spiritual retreat) is good and helpful for our faith.
- Likewise, explore together why serving in church (and in other contexts) is good for our faith.
- This session acknowledges that life is not always easy, and in the hard times it can be hard to hold onto faith and belief in the goodness of God etc.
- Ask and share how these two focus disciplines could support us in the hard times.
- Consider what else helps us in hard times; you may touch on community.

SESSION FOUR: THE JOURNEY FROM HERE

This week explores the disciplines of Share and Disconnect, and the course wraps up by awarding the badges to the young people.

- Check in on how the week of doing the disciplines has gone. Encourage them to keep going!
- Unpack why Share and Disconnect are important, but also hard!
- Hear the stories of those who have disconnected – in other words, fasted – screens.
- Hear the stories of those who have invited – shared – their faith with another person.
- Ask what the young people have learned and gained from the process.
- Encourage them to keep going; these last few weeks are just the beginning of a life-long process.
- Invite parents, carers, clergy etc, to come and join in the award ceremony.
- Get each young person to stand and say which disciplines they engaged with. Pray for each one and encourage them with something you observed of them over the course, and award them their badges.



USING THE SLIDES

The PowerPoint slides are designed to be a visual aid for both you and the young people. You can use these each week by just clicking along to the relevant session title. Feel free to add in slides to support your teaching and discussion.



USING THE WORKBOOK

The workbook is for the young people. Give them out on the first week so they can use them to document their process of engaging with the disciplines.

The young person will mark in their workbook which disciplines they have chosen, and at the end of the process, a parent can sign off that they have engaged with the discipline. Likewise, the course leader can also sign off engagement with a discipline.

We've included an editable version (Microsoft Word) and two different PDF versions which are set up for different types of printer.



ORDERING YOUR BADGES

We suggest using Camaloon to order badges, as it's cost-effective and easy to use. Here's a step-by-step guide for those:

1. Find the six discipline icon images provided in this downloaded resource pack
2. Go to camaloon.co.uk/personalised-badges
3. Select the type of badge you like (round works best for the icons provided)
4. Select the quantity of badges you want
5. Click 'Start Designing'
6. Click 'Upload Images'

7. Upload one of the Confirmed icon images onto the Camaloon Site. It should automatically show up on the badge.
8. Adjust the size of the image as you see fit (within the dotted lines).
9. Add this badge to cart.
10. Repeat these steps for all 6 badge icons.
11. Go to cart to check out (You can adjust the quantity of your order here too)
12. Enter your address and card details
13. Your badges should arrive in 1-2 weeks!

Make sure you order them in advance of the final session. However, it is exciting for the young people to see the badges in advance as a motivator!

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FEEDBACK

When piloting this course, I made a point of gathering feedback from the young people who participated, so we could improve it next time.

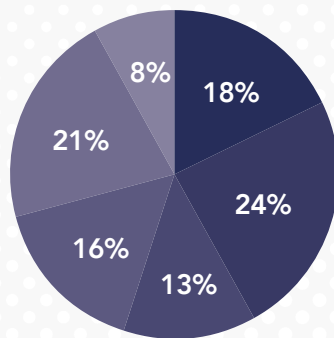
I've included the questions and our results from the first time we ran the course, in case you'd like to use them with your young people.

Results from our first nine participants, aged: 10 (1 ppt) 11 (1 ppt) 12 (4 ppts) 13 (3 ppts) – four girls, five boys.

Did you enjoy the Confirmed Course?
1 = no, it was horrible, 10 = I loved it

Mean score: 9.16

What was your favourite thing about the Confirmed Course? Tick as many as apply.



- Being with friends/people my age
- Chatting and learning about faith
- Getting a badge
- Doing the disciplines
- The snacks
- Other:

'The sense of friendliness and the way it had been organised'
'How easy it was to be open and honest with everyone.'

For next time, what would make the course better?

- 'More sharing activities and understanding what confirmation is for.'
- 'More people doing it as there would be more opinions'
- 'Doing more group work with everyone, also having time at the end to be with God'

Did engaging in the Disciplines help strengthen or support your faith? 1 = 'No way! If anything, my faith is worse' and 10 = 'It definitely did!'

Mean score: 8.3

Of all the Disciplines you tried, will you keep doing them even after the course is over?

- "I will continue to share my faith and serve the church"
- "I will because they kept me in touch with my faith"
- "I would carry on praying because it is so important to talk to God, and it should be done often, not just for a badge."

Do you think the Confirmed Course was the right length of time (4 weeks)?

- Longer course (4 votes) – but they only ever recommend a bit more time: 1-2 more weeks
- Longer session time (1 vote)
- Right amount of time (4 votes)

Would you have liked to have the opportunity (if time allowed) to get all six badges?

- Yes (8): 'It would have been hard, but I would have been proud after'
- 'It would have strengthened my faith more'
- 'I liked having the choice of multiple and would be happy to do 6 out of a possible 12.'
- No (1)

How likely are you to recommend this style of Confirmed Course to others? For example, your friends or younger siblings?

- Not likely (0 votes)
- Likely (1 vote)
- Very likely (8 votes)

Do you have any other comments or feedback? It could help shape the course for the future...

- 'It has been a great experience, as I didn't want to do it but actually thoroughly enjoyed it.'
- 'So amazing and informative. I loved the environment and the laughter. DEFINITELY recommend it!'



ABOUT ZOE PHILLIPS

Zoe Phillips joined Christ Church W4 in 2016. She is passionate about discipling young people and seeing faith become real and relevant to their daily lives. She studied Theology and Youth Ministry at St. Mellitus and a Masters in Christian Leadership. She is currently the Church Liason Officer for Christ Church W4 Youth Minster and a Youth Advocate for the Diocese of London; two projects that are part of Capital Youth.



ABOUT CAPITAL YOUTH

Capital Youth is an opportunity to see more young people welcomed, experiencing God and engaging in faith in every parish. Capital Youth aims to release and support the production of resources like this to help our communities become ones where young people are welcomed, experience God and engage in faith in every community across the Diocese of London.

To find more resources and receive support from the Capital Youth team, visit london.anglican.org/youth.

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