

WILLOWDALE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

60 Hilda Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M2M 1V5
(416) 222-1711

www.willowdalechristianschool.org

Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

The Calvin Christian School Society of Toronto is the society that governs WCS. The society is made up of members, primarily parents of the school. We are asking that all families take the time to read the membership policy (link below) and consider filling out the Application for Membership (next page). The Membership Policy clearly defines the following:

- Reasons for becoming a member
- Requirements of membership
- Privileges and responsibilities of membership
- Term of membership

IMPORTANT – You can find the Membership Policy at www.willowdalechristianschool.org – in the “For Parents” tab under “Parent Information & Forms”. Several years ago we introduced an Annual Membership Fee of \$25/person. This fee is required by our constitution and is in line with membership fees required by other Christian school societies in Ontario. It also counts as a charitable donation. Payment can be made either by: 1) cheque that can be dropped off at the school, or 2) e-transfer to payment@willowdalechristianschool.org – in the memo put “Membership 2023”.

Completed forms and e-transfers/cheques may be submitted to the school office at any time during the school year. **Please note that if you have submitted this Application for Membership in the last 6 years (following the 2017 updates to our Membership Policy), then you need only send in the annual fee (\$25) to renew your membership.** The fee is only valid for the duration of the academic year from September 1 to August 31. If you wish to vote at the Fall and Spring membership meetings, the fee must be paid in full BEFORE the meetings. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (krystal.lee.d@gmail.com).

We hope you will prayerfully consider becoming a member and having a voice in the governance of WCS.

In Christ,
Krystal Plaxton
(WCS Board of Trustees, Chair)

MEMBERSHIP POLICY

For the Calvin Christian School Society of Toronto

(approved by Board of Trustees, June 2017)

The basis and purpose of the Calvin Christian School Society (CCSS) of Toronto, which operates the Willowdale Christian School (WCS), are defined in Bylaw 2 of the Constitution of the CCSS:

Article II – BASIS

The Basis of the Society is the infallible Word of God as interpreted in the Reformed Creeds: The Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Catechisms.

Article III – PURPOSE

The purpose of the Society is the erection and operation of a school or schools for elementary and secondary education in Metropolitan Toronto and vicinity, and the promotion of Christian instruction by way of school education, based upon the statements in Article II.

The Reformed Creeds referred to in Article II are summarized in **Appendix I (see page 3)**. A copy of the full Constitution can be obtained upon request from the school office.

The CCSS Constitution offers parents and supporters the opportunity to become members of the Society. Parents who desire to enroll their children at WCS are invited to apply to the Board of Trustees via the Principal for membership. **Membership in the Society is strongly encouraged, but not required of parents.**

Why become a member of this Society?

Our school is not controlled or owned by a particular church denomination nor by the province of Ontario. It is a society-owned school where members of the society share a common vision for faith-based education. Members elect a Board of Trustees to govern the school, and a constitution provides a set of bylaws for how the society shall function.

Becoming a member of this Society means you want to promote Christian education as a community vision. It also means you affirm:

- a) The Christian faith with active participation in a Christian church
- b) Support for the mission of the school
- c) Christ-centered education in all the subjects taught
- d) The importance of family in schooling
- e) The community character of the Christian school
- f) A desire to help advance Christian education in Ontario with Christians from all denominations.

--from the OACS Society Membership Committee Manual 2004

Requirements of Membership:

- a) Must be 18 years of age or older
- b) Agreement with the basis and purpose of the Society, as outlined above in Articles II and III
- c) Agreement with the Preamble to the Constitution (Bylaw 1, see **Appendix II**) which summarizes a rationale for Christian education
- d) Payment of annual membership fee of \$25*
- e) Sign the "Application for Membership" form, which must be approved by the Board of Trustees

*This fee will go toward the school's operating budget and counts as a charitable donation to be included in your annual tax receipt, issued in February.

Privileges of Membership:

- a) May vote at all membership meetings of the CCSS
- b) Eligible to be a candidate for the Board of Trustees

Responsibilities of Membership:

- a) Participate in the activities of the Society, such as membership meetings
- b) Volunteer to help and otherwise promote WCS
- c) Prayerfully support WCS

Term of Membership:

One year (September 1-August 31). Membership may be renewed annually upon payment of fee (\$25). If the fee is not paid, the membership will lapse. The Application form need only be signed when one becomes a member for the first time.

Appendix I: WCS Faith Statements

Willowdale Christian School derives its beliefs from the Bible, as expressed in four faith statements from the Reformed tradition (a prominent branch of Christianity stemming from the Protestant Reformation). The Heidelberg Catechism (1563) comes from the German Reformed heritage, the Belgic Confession (1561) from the Dutch Reformed heritage, and the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms (1647) from the Scottish/English Presbyterian heritage.

The **Heidelberg Catechism** was written to instruct youth in the basic beliefs of the Christian faith (expressed especially in the Apostle's Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer) by means of questions and answers. The catechism is marked by a comforting personal tone, which is evident already in the first question and answer: "What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ...."

The **Belgic Confession** is a summary of basic Christian beliefs in 37 articles drawn up by a martyr, Guido de Brès, on behalf of heavily persecuted Reformed Protestants in the Low Countries, to show that they were not rebels, but law-abiding citizens who professed the true Christian faith according to the Bible.

The **Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms** were drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, an important church council in the Presbyterian tradition. Both catechisms focus on basic Christian teachings, as well as the Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer, but the Shorter Catechism aims to instruct beginners, while the Larger Catechism is more exact and comprehensive.

Though the four faith statements vary somewhat in emphasis, they all affirm the basic beliefs of the Christian faith, the most important of which include:

- The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God in which God reveals himself and his will to humanity and tells the grand story of his mission in the world; Scripture alone is the basis of the Christian faith and life.
- The Trinity is one God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God was the creator of the whole universe, which was originally created good.
- By his providence God sustains, cares for, and sovereignly governs all things.
- The original fall into sin brought brokenness to the whole world and all of humanity.
- God sent his Son into the world, as a person fully divine and fully human, to bring redemption to the broken sinful world.
- The kingdom of God, which establishes his kingly rule over all creation, was inaugurated with the first coming of Christ and will be fully established with his second coming.
- By his death and resurrection, Jesus Christ, taking upon himself the sins of his people, suffered and died in our place so that we might be saved, and rose from the dead to make new life possible.

- God enters into covenant with his people, promising us salvation and new life in Christ and requiring faith in him.
- Christians do not earn their salvation by their own good deeds; rather, it is a wholly unmerited gift of God; we are saved or justified by God's grace alone through faith in Christ, and good works are a thankful response to that grace.
- We must personally repent of our sins and be converted to a life that follows Christ.
- God calls individuals to faith and to a life of service to God and neighbour.
- The Holy Spirit is working to renew, sanctify and guide God's people, so that our lives may more and more follow his will and glorify him.
- The church is the community of God's chosen people, who are called to worship him and to a mission to serve him in the world in all areas of everyday life.
- The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs of God's grace that represent Christ and his benefits and nourish the faith of his people.
- Christ will return to judge the living and the dead, and to finally renew all things in the new heavens and new earth.

Appendix II: Bylaw 1

PREAMBLE

Believing that the Lord God, by graciously giving us the Scriptures, has revealed to His people ordering principles intensely relevant to education, and requires of man and woman that he bring the word of God in all its power to bear upon education, we confess:

1. Life

That human life in its entirety is religion. Men and women must serve God everywhere, and our children must therefore be educated to that end.

2. Bible

That the Bible as the written Word of God is the Truth by which the Holy Spirit enlightens our understanding of God, ourselves, and the world; and is the infallible authority by which He directs and governs all our activities, including the education of our children.

3. Creation

That the world in its origin, gracious preservation, and ultimate restoration, is the work of the Triune God; and that its purpose is the glorification of His Name. Hence, we can understand the world rightly only in its relationship to Him.

4. Men and Women

That men and women were created in the image of God, to enjoy covenantal fellowship with Him and to reflect in their person and works the excellencies of their Maker; and was instructed to exercise dominion over the world in strict and loving obedience to God and to interpret all reality in accordance with His design and law.

5. Sin

That sin is disobedience to God's law and that men and women, by sinning forsook his office and task, estranged themselves from God and their neighbour and brought God's curse upon the creation. As a result, men and women became corrupt in heart and blind to the true meaning of life, repressing and misusing the revelation of God in creation and Scripture.

6. Christ

That the Christ of the Scriptures, truly God and fully man has reconciled the world to God and redeems our life in its entirety. Through His Spirit, He renews our heart to love God and our neighbour and redirects our understanding rightly to know God, ourselves, and the world.

7. The Kingdom of God

That the Kingdom of God is His righteous and universal regime through Jesus Christ, whose rule in grace and power makes education possible and meaningful. In obedience to Christ we submit in every area of life to His commandment to love the Lord with all our hearts and mind.

8. Purpose of Education

That the purpose of education is to direct and guide the child to commit their heart to Christ the Truth; to attain understanding wisdom and righteousness; and to perform competent and responsible service of the Lord in every aspect of life.

9. Parents

That God has given parents the responsibility to nurture and educate their children. Therefore, parents should establish and maintain schools.

10. The Child

That the child is entrusted to the parents by God. Children of the Christian home are a heritage of the Lord and share in the promises and demands of the Covenant. Needing direction, correction and instruction, these children also ought to receive Christian education.

11. The Teacher

That the teacher, a servant of God, has the office of educating the child and exercises authority in the school.

12. The Christian School

That the Christian School is an educational institution established and controlled by an association of Christian believers to function in total and voluntary submission to Christ, the King.

***APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
in the Calvin Christian School Society of Toronto**

**This updated application form was approved by the WCS Board of Trustees in June 2017. Completion of this updated form is only required once. Your membership will remain active as long as the annual membership fee of \$25 is paid.*

I hereby apply for membership in the Calvin Christian School Society of Toronto that operates Willowdale Christian School.

I hereby declare the following:

- a) I have read and confirm that I meet the requirements of membership as set out in the Membership Policy for the Calvin Christian School Society of Toronto.
- b) I will, to the best of my ability, fulfill the responsibilities of membership as described in the Membership Policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (Print): _____

Address: _____

Telephone (Home): _____ (Business/Cell): _____

Email: _____

**Please attach to this Application a cheque for the Annual Membership fee of \$25, made payable to Willowdale Christian School.
Or you may E-transfer \$25 to payment@willowdalechristianschool.org.
On cheque or E-transfer, write "Membership" on the memo line.**

Thank you for your support of Willowdale Christian School!

Approval by the Board of Trustees

Signature of Board Chair or Secretary: _____ Date: _____