



CONFIRMATION GUIDEBOOK

2023/2024

Peace Lutheran Church



Welcome!

September 6, 2023

Dear Families,

We are so glad that you've decided to continue in the journey of spiritual formation through the Confirmation program here at Peace Lutheran Church!

Throughout the three-year Confirmation program, we'll be asking big questions together as we seek to better understand God, our faith, and the impact they have on our daily lives. And as a congregation that seeks to continue *growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ*, we pray that this would also be a community where your student can challenge, celebrate, and experience God's great love for them—and that faith would be central to your student's life and the foundation to your family's home.

By the end of Year 3, with the Holy Spirit as our guide, students are invited to affirm the promises of God that were proclaimed at their baptisms and to be blessed in their responsibility to continue their lifelong journey of faith formation as an adult member of the congregation.

For 2023/2024, Confirmation will be exploring the Bible under the theme of "MyStory: How Our Stories Are All Part of God's Story." The Bible is full of amazing stories from our ancestors in the faith, yet sometimes they can seem strange and distant when we read them today. As we take a deeper look into both the Old and New Testaments, we'll discover how their stories and messages have never been more relevant to us—and how we are all part of God's Story.

It is an honor to walk alongside you and your students as we dig deeper into our core beliefs and experiences as Christians. May God bless us in the year ahead!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Joe Orner, Associate Pastor

The Confirmation Program

Wednesday Evenings, 6:30-7:30pm

Leader: Pastor Joe Orner

Location: Main Floor Front Meeting Room at Peace

Format: Confirmation students will gather with Pastor Joe and adult leaders for weekly meetings centered around scripture, discussion, faith, and fellowship.

Curriculum

Year One: Bible Year A (2023/2024)

Year Two: Bible Year B (2024/2025)

Year Three: Catechism (2025/2026)

Objectives

- To experience, understand, and be affirmed in the baptismal promises of God's love.
- To gain a better understanding of the Bible and one's faith.
- To be empowered to take responsibility for one's own faith formation.

Registration

Please complete Peace's online registration form. The link can be found on Peace's website or in the Thursday CYF Blast or scan this QR code.



Membership

Everyone is welcome to participate in Peace's Confirmation program, regardless of family membership, with registration. If you know someone who is interested, or have a friend you would like to invite, please do so!

Tuition

Confirmation is a free ministry of Peace. As a congregation, we are committed to **growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ**. For us, that means making Confirmation accessible and cost-free for all of our students.

Bibles

Every week we will use the Lutheran Study Bible during class. This Bible, edited by many ELCA-affiliated professors and scholars, is given to all Peace students in the 3rd Grade, and is meant to be used as a life-long Bible. Please bring yours each week, and plan to make notes in it too.

Service

God has called us to love God and to love our neighbors, and throughout the year, Confirmation students will serve our greater congregation and community. Details about each service event will be communicated by email in advance.

Sunday School Teaching and Sunday Education Hour

Every Sunday morning after worship, from 10:45-11:45am, students are invited to help teach Sunday School, where they can develop their leadership skills alongside other student assistants and adult teachers. Students can serve full time (2+ Sundays/month) or as needed as a substitute. Alternatively, students may participate in the Education Hour in the Parish Hall.

Retreats

- Fall Retreat: October/November, 2023
 - Location: TBD
 - Theme: Understanding our Faith Ancestors
- Winter Retreat: February/March, 2024
 - Location: Gustavus Adolphus College
 - Theme: God's Story, My Story

Important Dates

- September 13: Start of Confirmation
- October/November: Fall Retreat
- February/March: Winter Retreat
- April 17: Rite of Confirmation Rehearsal and Dinner (5:30pm for 8th Graders and their families)
- April 17: Final Confirmation meeting of the year (6:30pm; all students)
- April 21: Rite of Confirmation Service (9:30am, during worship)

No Confirmation

- October 18 (MEA)
- November 22 (Thanksgiving)
- December 20 and 27 (Winter Break)
- February 14 (Ash Wednesday)
- March 23 (Holy Week/Spring Break)

Expectations

The confirmation program at Peace Lutheran Church begins as students enter into 6th grade and concludes in the spring of their 8th grade year with the Rite of Confirmation. It is our hope that your student would find a sense of belonging within the congregation while also developing a heart to serve in and outside of it.

Parents, the biggest impact on your student's faith formation is you.

We ask you to lead by example by committing to attend worship with them often, to regularly discuss faith with them and how we live it out in daily life, and to make Confirmation attendance and engagement a priority within your family.

Behavior

By enrolling in Confirmation, each student agrees to treat all students and leaders with respect, to help create a safe space where all people are encouraged and supported, to listen to each other, and to help each other grow as Christians and as people.

There is zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, intimidation, or violence of any kind.

Weekly Participation

Families are expected to make attendance at Confirmation a top priority.

Students are expected to be present and engaged in conversation and activities at weekly meetings. If, for some reason, your student cannot attend, please email Pastor Joe as far in advance as possible.

Worship Attendance

Students and their families are expected to consistently attend worship —either in person at our 9:30am service, or online through our YouTube Channel (Peace Lutheran Church Bloomington; live or recorded).

During Advent and Lent, Confirmation meetings are shortened so that students can worship with their families. Midweek worship will begin at 6:30pm, and Confirmation will run 7:15-8:00pm during those two church seasons.

Worship Leadership

We invite our Confirmation students to help lead our congregation on Sunday mornings through a variety of service opportunities: greeting, ushering, reading scripture (lectoring), communion assistance, and hosting donuts and coffee. Pastor Joe and Daina Sivanich will coordinate this with you at a later date. (Tentatively set for March 17, 2024 and April 21, 2024.)

Faith Development

Faith Conversations

Each 6th and 7th grade student, along with their parents, will meet with Pastor Joe in February 2024 to discuss faith and life as the student gets closer to being confirmed.

Each 8th grade Confirmand and their parents will spend time talking with Pastor Joe about their life, faith, and Faith Statement in March 2024 before the Rite of Confirmation in the spring.

Conversations will take 20-30 minutes and will be scheduled in January.

Faith Mentors

In the spring semester, 7th grade students will meet with a trusted adult (non-parent to be decided by the student) to discuss how that mentor lives out their faith, the challenges they've faced in their lives and faith journeys, and how the student might live out their faith in daily life.

Discussion guides will be sent in January, and conversations should be completed in advance of the students' Faith Conversation with Pastor Joe.

Faith Statements

Each 8th grade Confirmand is asked to write a Faith Statement that expresses their faith experience. This includes a written portion, a creative portion, and a scriptural portion. Faith Statements will be assigned in early January and are due in advance of the student's Faith Conversation with Pastor Joe.

Communication

Email

Pastor Joe can be reached by email at pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org.

Every Thursday, Peace sends out the Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) Blast. This email will contain

important information regarding upcoming gatherings and events—as well as discussion prompts to help families continue the week’s conversation topics at home. Please [subscribe!](#)

For special events and circumstances, Pastor Joe may send additional emails—with the promise to never overwhelm your inbox. Please read all Peace emails and communications diligently.

Website

Our website, peacebloomington.org, is always well-maintained and updated. Please visit for updates, registration links, ministry opportunities, past CYF Blasts, and more!

Phone

Pastor Joe is available at Peace during office hours (Monday-Thursday, 8am-4pm) for in person visits or phone calls (Peace Office: 952-944-6510).

When out of the office, Pastor Joe can be reached via cell phone at 952-836-7100; please plan to send a text or leave a voicemail.

Other Important Details

Health and Safety

If your student is sick or feels unwell, please have them stay home. Zoom is available upon request.

Weather Policy

Peace Lutheran Church often follows the guidance of Bloomington Public Schools. We will post building closures on our website and social media pages. For late notices and special circumstances, Pastor Joe will reach out by phone or email. Your family’s safety is always our top priority—if you are unable to safely make it to an event, we understand.

Medical Information

If your student has any known allergies, dietary needs, or any mental/emotional/behavioral health concerns or challenges, please indicate this in your Registration and discuss details with Pastor Joe before the Confirmation year begins.