



Gustavus Adolphus College, Spring 2024 Retreat



CONFIRMATION GUIDEBOOK

2024-2025

Peace Lutheran Church

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Welcome!

September 4, 2024

Dear Confirmation Families,

We are so glad that you and your students have decided to continue in the journey of spiritual formation through the Peace Lutheran Church Confirmation program!

Throughout our three-year Confirmation program, we'll be asking and discussing big questions together as we seek to better understand God, our faith, and their impact on our daily lives. As a congregation that seeks to continue *growing a community that nurtures a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ*, we also pray that this would be a place 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 the 2024-2025 school year, Confirmation will be exploring the Bible under the theme of "Being the Church." Each week we will dig into the stories of Jesus' ministry, the experiences of people in the early church, and the wonderings of faith communities that existed before Jesus was born. We will also have discussions about the ways we can live out our faith in daily life—and how we act, serve, and "Be the Church" today.

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
pastor.joe@peacebloomington.org

The Confirmation Program

Wednesday Evenings, 6:30-7:30pm

Location: Front Meeting Room at Peace

Primary Leader: Pastor Joe Orner

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

Curriculum

Year One: Bible Year A (2026-2027)

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 submit registration ASAP at:

peacebloomington.org/2024-25-cyf-registrations/

Membership

Everyone is welcome to participate in Peace's Confirmation program, regardless of family membership, as long as a registration is submitted. 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 3rd grade and to all new students as needed, and it is meant to be used as a lifelong Bible. Please bring yours each week!

Service

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

Service Opportunities:

- Feed My Starving Children, September 11, 2024
- Harvest Pack Sunday, November 10, 2024
- Service Assistant Training Night: January 29, 2025
- Service Assistant Sundays: February 9 and 16, 2025, and Rite of Confirmation, April 27, 2025

Sunday School Teaching and 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 and adult teachers. Students can serve full time (2+ Sundays/month) or as needed as a substitute (expect once per month).

Retreats

- Fall Retreat
 - Sunday, November 17, 2024; 8:00am-2:00pm
 - Location: Local ELCA Congregations
 - Theme: What Is Church?
- Winter Retreat
 - Saturday, February 22 or March 1, 2025; 8:00am-8:00pm
 - Location: Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN
 - Theme: Jesus, the Church, and Me

Important Dates

- September 11: Start of Confirmation (6:45pm, Feed My Starving Children, 18732 Lake Drive East, Chanhassen)
- April 23: Rite of Confirmation Rehearsal and Dinner (5:30pm for 8th Graders and families); Final Confirmation meeting of the year (6:30pm; all students)
- April 27: Rite of Confirmation Service (9:30am, during worship)

No Confirmation

- October 16 (MEA)
- November 27 (Thanksgiving)
- December 25 and January 1 (Winter Break)
- March 5 (Ash Wednesday)
- April 2 (Spring Break)
- April 16 (Holy Week)

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. For special circumstances, please discuss options with Pastor Joe.

Through the program, it is our hope that your student would find a sense of belonging within the congregation while also developing a heart to serve others 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 regularly (at least monthly).
- Have faith-focused conversations with them each week.
- Make Confirmation attendance and church engagement a top family priority.

Behavior

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

Phones, tablets, headphones, and other electronics are to remain silenced and put away during the Confirmation hour. Confirmation Leaders reserve the right to confiscate devices, to be returned under the parents' discretion.

If students engage in inappropriate behavior, or behavior that is distracting to those around them, they may be asked to leave for the remainder of the meeting.

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

Participation

Families are expected to make attendance at Confirmation a top priority (85% or more).

Students are expected to be present and engaged in conversations and activities during our weekly meetings. Attendance at retreats and service events is mandatory.

If, for some reason, your student cannot attend, please contact Pastor Joe as far in advance as possible.

Worship Attendance

Students and their families are expected to consistently attend worship together (at least monthly)—either in person at our 9:30am service, or online through our YouTube channel (live or recorded).

During Advent and Lent, Confirmation meetings are shortened so that students can attend Midweek Worship services (6:30-7:15pm), with their families before class (7:15-8:00pm).

Worship Leadership

We invite our Confirmation students to lead our congregation on Sunday mornings throughout the year as Service Assistants: greeting, ushering, reading scripture (lectoring), assisting with communion, and hosting fellowship time with donuts and coffee.

Faith Development

Faith Conversations

Each 6th and 7th grade student, along with their parents, will meet with Pastor Joe in early 2025 to discuss faith and life as the student continues through the Confirmation program.

Each 8th grade Confirmand and their parents will spend time talking with Pastor Joe about their Faith Statement and living out their faith 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 mutually decided upon by the student and their parents) to discuss how that mentor lives out their Christian faith, the challenges they've faced in their lives and on their faith journeys, and how the student might live out their faith in daily life.

Discussion guides will be sent in January 2025, and students should meet with their Faith Mentors advance of the student's Faith Conversation with Pastor Joe.

Faith Statements

Each 8th grade Confirmand is asked to create a Faith Statement project 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 contains 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.

Phone

Pastor Joe is available at Peace during his office hours (Monday-Thursday, 9:00am-4:00pm) for in-person visits and 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.

Website

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

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.



Peace Lutheran Church

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