

Going Public information and sign-up package

- Going Public is a program designed for young people around middle school age to prepare them for public profession of faith
- It is one of several ways members of [Georgetown] can prepare to profess their faith.
- Key elements
 - Faith Friend (See attached sheet for more details)
 - A Faith Friend is a spiritually mature adult mentor who will help the student prepare for profession of faith
 - The Faith Friend will be alongside the student for the retreat and profession of faith worship service
 - The Faith Friend is encouraged to continue their relationship with the student, encouraging them spiritually throughout the year following their profession and, if desired, in the years to come.
 - Faith Expression
 - Each student, with the encouragement and assistance of their Faith Friend, will compose a Faith Expression
 - Each student will share their faith expression at the Sunday morning worship time at the retreat and at their elder interview. They are also encouraged to share it during the Going Public worship service.
 - Faith expressions are normally written statements in the form of a creed or short essay to tell the world what the student believes. Faith expressions may be creative and unique but should express the student's belief in the Lord and their personal desire to live for him. See the attached Faith Expression options sheet.
- Components - See also attached schedule
 - Retreat
 - Designed with young people in mind. A mix of educational sessions, fun activities, and Faith Friend cooperative experiences.
 - Takes place at [Camp Geneva located north of Holland]
 - Participants will be housed in [the newer cabins on the grounds]. Sessions, meals, and recreation will take place on the grounds as well.
 - Students will compose their Faith Expressions Saturday night at the retreat with the assistance of their Faith Friend.
 - Sunday morning will feature a worship time with singing and an opportunity for each student to share their Faith Expression.
 - Elders will be present to hear their Faith Expressions, interact with the students, offer their support.
 - Students are encouraged to share their Faith Expressions with their parents upon return from the retreat.
 - Going Public worship service.
 - Students come forward to answer questions, professing their faith publicly
 - Students are invited to share their Faith Expression with the congregation
 - A reception after worship allows the congregation to congratulate and interact with the newest professing members.

Schedule

Pre-retreat meeting | [before April 30] | one-on-one with Faith Friend | Place of their choosing
Faith Friends and students meet to chat and get to know each other a bit more. They are invited to review the Faith Expression options and discuss initial thoughts.

Going Public Retreat | [April 30-May 1] | Camp Geneva, Holland
Students and Faith Friends attend. If appropriate, the Faith Friend can pick up the student and they can ride together to camp.

Saturday

8:30 – Participants arrive, settle in Cottages
9:00 – 9:30 Welcome and introduction
9:30-10:00 Get-to-know-you games, Ice breakers.
10:00-11:00 - **Session 1**
11:00-12:30 - **Session 2**
Noon – Lunch
after lunch – 2:00 – Free time - Recreation
2:00 – 3:45 – **Session 3**
4:00 – 5:30– **Session 4**
5:30 - 6:00 – Free time – Recreation
6:00 - Dinner
7:00-8:00 – **Session 5**
8:00-11:00 – Faith Expression discussion and composition + Free time
Bonfire and s'mores
11:00 – Lights out

Sunday

8:00 – Breakfast (with Elders)
8:00 - Worship service with Faith Expression sharing. Elders present to participate.
10:30 - Participants complete post-retreat survey
depart

Morning Worship | [May 22] | [Georgetown CRC campus]

Sunday

8:45am Students arrive to review the service
9:30am Morning Worship begins

- Students come forward to answer four questions, professing their faith publicly
- Students invited to share their Faith Expression

10:45am – 11:15am Post-service reception outside

- Refreshments are served
- Students and their parents and faith friends are received and congratulated (we ask the professing students remain for 15 minutes or longer)

Faith Friend qualifications

Students who participate in Going Public are paired with an adult mentor or “Faith Friend”

- Qualifications of a mentor
 - must be same gender as student
 - a person who lives out his or her faith and demonstrates spiritual maturity
- Responsibilities of a mentor
 - Participates in the Going Public preparation with the student: a pre-meeting, the retreat, and worship service. The mentor is also asked to meet with the student four times, once each quarter, in the year following the profession of faith. A discussion guide will be furnished to guide the conversation during these meetings. If both mentor and student so desire, the relationship continues throughout the students' teen years or for eternity!
- Procedure
 - The young person submits a name(s) for consideration
 - Those individuals approved by the pastors are contacted by [the Director of Student Ministries (Eric)] and are asked to serve as a Faith Friend
 - [Eric] connects with the Faith Friend to confirm their participation and provides Going Public details and materials.

The mentoring relationship begins with Going Public. After a student professes his or her faith, the Faith Friends and student continue to meet together four times in the year following profession of faith. This may be done at church, at a restaurant, at the young person’s home, or any other appropriate place. The primary purpose of this mentoring relationship is to provide ongoing spiritual encouragement. A discussion guide will be provided to help facilitate these conversations.

[Georgetown Christian Reformed Church] has a Protection Policy. It requires that all mentor/student matches be of the same gender, that parents be notified of a planned meeting and grant their permission, and that mentors and students meet in a public place, avoiding isolated situations.

Faith Expression

Write your story:

Tell how God has brought you to this point in life, a place where you want to profess your faith in him. Include in your story things like:

- **Significant people who have influenced you.** Describe the influence of your parents, friends, teachers, pastors, or others in shaping your faith.
- **Important events that have made an impact on your life.** Moments that were full of joy or perhaps colored by pain.
- **Special moments that have increased your understanding of God or your trust in God**
- **Your experiences of God in your devotional life.** Has there been a time when you felt the power of prayer? Is there a special teaching, scripture, or book that made an impact on you personally? How has the church been a factor in your life?
- **Ways in which you express your faith.** Do you have a creative outlet? How do you share with others? How do you translate your faith into action?

Remember, your Faith Expression doesn't have to be perfect, but it should be honest, thoughtful, and meaningful to you. Aim to explain yourself to others so they understand a little about you and your love for the Lord.

Retreat packing list

Sleeping bag

Pillow

Toiletries

Towel

Something appropriate to sleep in.

A change of clothes

-Casual clothes, something comfortable for meeting

Clothes for sports

-We will have time for some active games, so bring shorts/athletic wear

A jacket

Shoes for gym

A flashlight

Pen/pencil

Bible – A new one will also be presented to students at the retreat

Journal/Notebook

Optional:

Camera

Any notes or other materials for writing for your Faith Expression

Card or board games

Frisbees, balls, or games for outside.

Water bottle

Cell Phones - The leaders will have cell phones for you to use if needed. Please do not use your cell phone during the group times. The retreat leaders reserve the right to take a cell phone from a student for the remainder of the retreat if the need arises.

Cell phone charger

Going Public sign up

Name_____

- I desire to participate in Going Public. (students do not make a commitment to profess their faith at this time, only to engage with the program. They will confirm their desire to profess their faith after the retreat)
- I have reviewed the program information and schedule and commit myself to attending each event.
- I understand that an important part of Going Public is being paired with a spiritual mature adult mentor called a Faith Friend. I have reviewed the mentor qualifications and I am indicating my preferences for Faith Friends below.

First choice_____

Second choice_____

Please assign me a Faith Friend

Signed _____ Date_____

Please submit to **[the church office or Eric DeYoung's church mailbox by Sunday, April 2.]** Also, please indicate any special dietary or health notes below.

Thank you!