

GOING PUBLIC

Dear Georgetown Families,

This spring we invite all students and young adults to participate in **Going Public**, Georgetown's program to ready young people for public profession of faith.

We want the Going Public experience as accessible, simple, customizable, and engaging as possible. This will be a guided, "independent study" style program that includes two main features: partnership with a Faith Friend mentor and the composition of a Faith Expression.

Fast facts:

- Going Public is open to all middle school, high school, and young adults.
- Sign up before April 25 by emailing Eric
- After you "sign-up", Eric will send course booklets for the student and Faith Friend. These booklets will contain information about the program, lessons, discussion questions, journaling questions, a Faith Expression prompt, and follow-up meeting guides. All the materials the Faith Friend/Student duos need to talk, reflect, and write will be in the booklet.
- When you receive the booklet, you can choose and arrange for any Faith Friend you prefer. It can be a parent, brother or sister, grandparent, family friend, or church member. The student and Faith Friend can engage the booklet and material in their own way and with their own timing. As this will happen outside of the church campus context, parents should be mindful of safety practices for their children.
- When the student completes the course booklet and Faith Expression prompt the student, Faith Friend, and family are invited to a special capstone dinner and conversation time with the Elders on Wednesday, May 11 at 6:00pm at the Kuperus Barn (4374 64th Ave. Zeeland, MI, 49464). We will eat together and have small groups where students can share their Faith Expression with the Elders and have conversation about their journey with their Faith Friend.
- After the Elder capstone dinner, students can choose either May 22 or June 5 to make public profession of faith in the morning worship service. They will answer to the "four questions" and share their faith expression with the congregation.



We are excited about this opportunity and are hopeful many will participate! It's good for all of us to profess our faith throughout our lives. We pray this process not only leads to an "official" public profession of faith, but a lifetime of claiming the promises of Jesus as the hope for our lives.

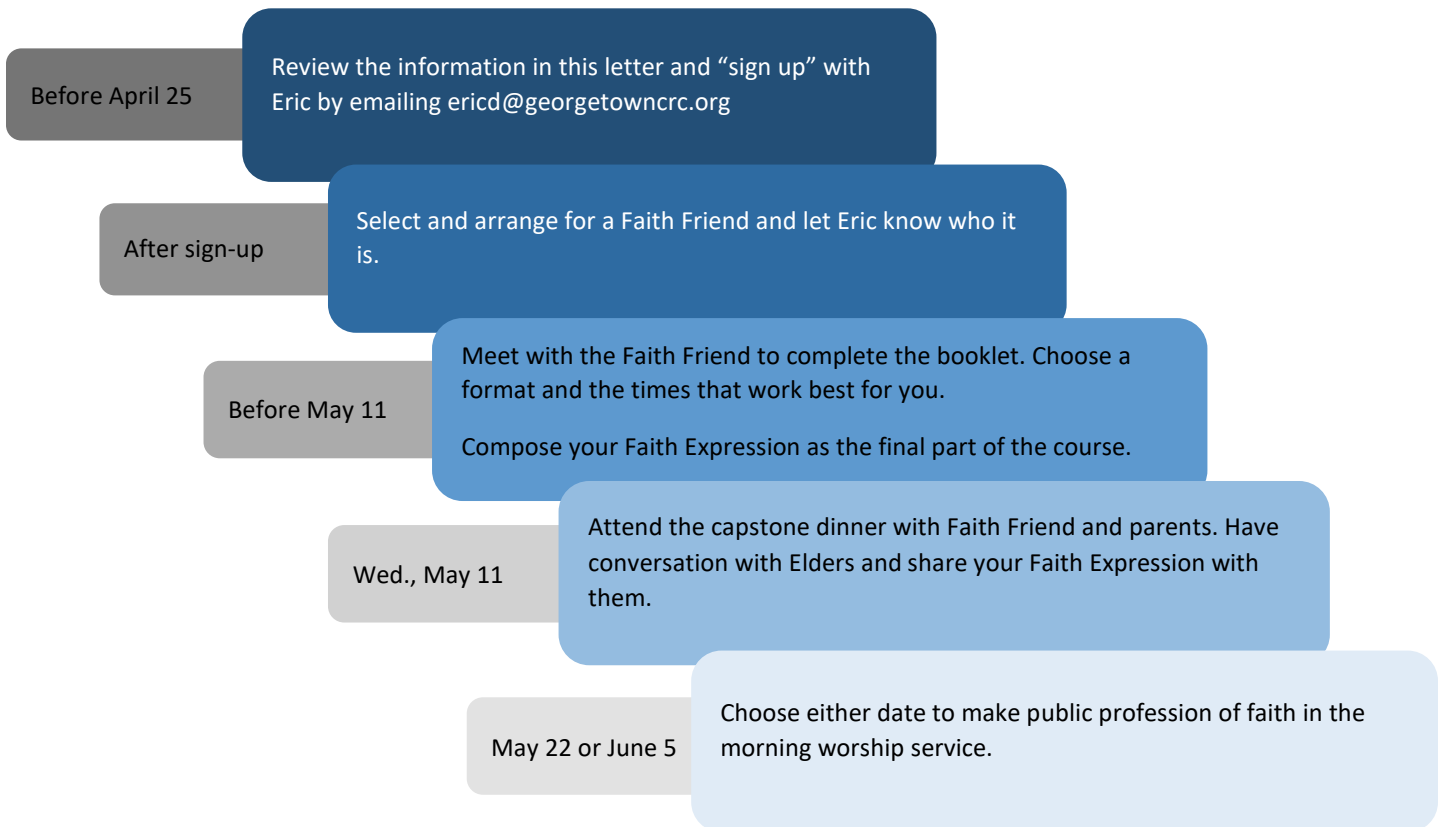
Thank you,

Eric DeYoung

God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill.

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Going Public Timeline



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Frequently asked questions:

Q: If I sign up, I am I locked in making profession of faith?

A: No, signing up only gets the Going Public ball rolling. You do not need to commit to participation until it's time for the Elder dinner.

Q: Who can be my child's Faith Friend? Does church have to approve or set that up?

A: The Faith Friend can be anyone your family would like and who is willing to serve in that role. It can be a parent, grandparent, sibling, or a family friend. It doesn't even need to be limited to one person. Church does not need to approve or make arrangements with that person since the program is so flexible. Your family should take appropriate safety precautions for the meeting.

We do ask that when you decide and make arrangements, you let Eric know via email who it will be.

Q: We don't have anyone in mind for a Faith Friend. Can you help us make a connection?

A: Yes. Pastor Marc, the staff, and I would be delighted to make recommendations and help your family find a good fit.

Q: I understand the program is flexible, but when and how should we meet? How many times should we meet?

A: You can choose to meet in any number of ways. You can choose to meet in person or over Zoom, at a restaurant over a meal or at your home. It's up to you.

The booklet has four sections of content to discuss. One model that has worked well for families is meeting once to go through sections 1 and 2 and discuss the Faith Expression prompt. Then meet a second time to review sections 3 and 4 and complete the Faith Expression. We would recommend no fewer than two meetings.

Q: How do I get a course booklet?

A: You can print one off at home or pick up a printed copy from the church office.

Q: I don't want to do this by myself. Who else is making profession of faith?

A: It's impossible to know right now who will sign up, however as the sign-up process progresses, I'd be happy to update you. I do know of a couple students who are interested.

Of course, you are welcome to talk to friends and congregants and invite them to participate as well!

Q: We are not available for the Elder dinner and/or the worship services, can we still participate?

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A: Yes. If circumstances demand, we will accommodate alternate meeting times or worship service opportunities.

Q: I have concerns about my child participating in a service that is livestreamed. Can you alter how the service is presented?

A: Yes. We can pause or stop the video and/or audio streams at certain times to accommodate concerns.

Q: My child doesn't feel comfortable in front of church, do they have to share with the congregation?

A: All students must respond to the "four questions", however if a Faith Friend would like to read the Faith Expression for the student, that is completely appropriate.

Q: Can I rent space in church to host an open house?

A: Yes, subject to availability. Contact Sara Duggins (office@georgetowncrc.org, 616.669.5280) to see if there is space available to reserve. Facilities will be rented on a first-come, first-served basis

Q: What are the "four questions" those making profession will faith respond to?

A: 1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent to redeem the world, do you love and trust him as the one who saves you from your sin, and do you with repentance and joy embrace him as Lord of your life?

2. Do you believe that the Bible is the Word of God revealing Christ and his redemption, and that the confessions of this church faithfully reflect this revelation?

3. Do you accept the gracious promises of God sealed to you in your baptism and do you affirm your union with Christ and his church which your baptism signifies?

4. Do you promise to do all you can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to strengthen your love and commitment to Christ by sharing faithfully in the life of the church, honoring and submitting to its authority; and do you join with the people of God in doing the work of the Lord everywhere?

Q: Why is the profession of faith program at Georgetown called Going Public?

A: This name was inspired by The Message's paraphrase of Matthew 5 in which Jesus encourages his followers to be a light on a hill.

*"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're **going public** with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."*

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