

Peace Lutheran Church Plan for Pastor John's Sabbatical June 8 - September 7, 2025

Peace has granted Pastor John a three-month sabbatical after six more years of service as pastor to our congregation. He has completed 18 years of service to Peace, and this will be his third sabbatical as our pastor. He, his wife Leigh, and children Luke and Joy will be away **June 9 – September 6, 2025**. We'll bless and send Pastor John and family on their journey in worship on Sunday June 8. We'll welcome them back in worship on Sunday September 7.

What is a sabbatical? In an effort to nurture health and wellness in ministry, Peace Lutheran Church grants rostered and full-time program staff a three-month period of leave every six consecutive years of full-time ministry. A sabbatical gives Pastor John time away from the rigors of pastoral ministry to reflect on the call to ministry, his relationship with God and God's people, and theology and practice that will sharpen congregational ministry. This sabbatical will be a time of rest and renewal for Pastor John and an opportunity to reflect on the theme of Christian hospitality and its importance in our ministry at Peace as well as pay attention to his own personal growth as person and pastor. He will bring back his learning to our congregation when he returns, renewed and enriched for ministry.

How will the pastoral work get done? Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Brendan Nelson and Deacon of Congregational Care and Community Resources Charissa Carroll will be pastoral point persons during the sabbatical. Two resource pastors, Rev. Lynn Longfield and Rev. Jim Riede, will support them. Pastor John has lined up preachers and Holy Communion presiders (with permission from our Bishop) for the summer. Our church is in good hands. The congregation had meaningful experiences during Pastor John's last two sabbaticals and took more ownership of our worship life, mission, and ministry, which is the work of our whole church, not just the pastor. The sabbatical is a great time for the whole congregation to step in and serve where needed and to support church staff and leaders in Pastor John's absence. So please, "get in where you fit in"!

What will Pastor John, Leigh, Luke, and Joy be doing on sabbatical? Here's the plan: Pastor John will begin with a centering retreat, receiving the hospitality of a monastic community. He and his family will spend time at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in the Cascade Mountains, giving and receiving hospitality in community. They will go on a US road trip visiting family and friends, camping, exploring, and experiencing our country's beauty and hospitality. They will travel out of the country visiting friends and experiencing the beauty and hospitality of far-away lands.

During the sabbatical, Pastor John will periodically update the congregation with photos and reflections. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

FAQs during Pastor John's Sabbatical:

- Who will preside over Communion? Our bishop has given dispensation for several Peace leaders to preside over Communion in worship, including Brendan Nelson, Rev. Lynn Longfield, and Rev. Jim Riede.
- What if I have a pastoral care concern? Please contact Deacon Charissa or Brendan. Care ministers and resource pastors will also be available for pastoral care.
- What if there is a death in our community while Pastor John is away? Contact Deacon Charissa and Brendan. Resource pastors will also be available for memorial services.
- Any other questions? Reach out to Deacon Charissa and Brendan.