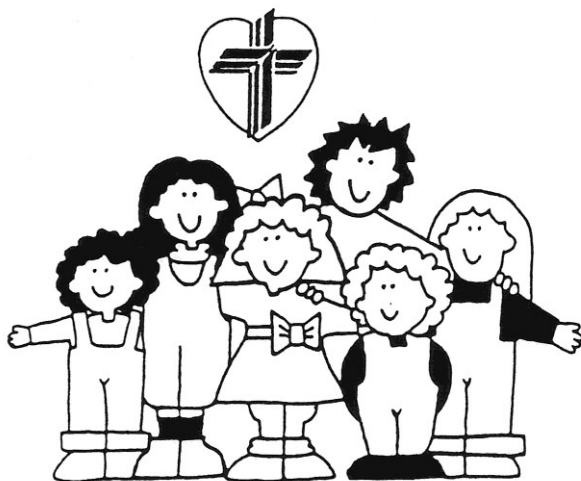


Messiah Lutheran Preschool Handbook 2024-2025



Making learning fun since 1987

2727 Five Mile Ne
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525
616-363-2553

Please read and keep this book for future reference

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

During the early years, children need a stimulating environment which will provide them with experiences that will aid them in developing to their full potential. They need supportive experiences which will help them develop a positive self-concept.

In light of this, Messiah Lutheran Preschool offers a program which will provide children with a wide variety of learning experiences. In a Christian environment your child will be free to explore and will receive guidance in participating in activities where he/she will be able to experience success.

Our goals are to provide experiences and activities which will enhance your child's basic individual needs: spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical.

SPIRITUAL:

To provide Christian learning about Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior through Bible stories, prayer, songs and conversations. Please read Messiah's statements of belief on marriage and gender on page 10.

EMOTIONAL:

To provide opportunities to help your child develop a healthy self-concept which includes accepting his/her self-limitations and talents as God has given.

SOCIAL:

To provide guidance as your child starts choosing to take part in small group and large group activities.

INTELLECTUAL:

To provide interests and experiences which stimulate your child's curiosity and imagination in developing ideas and concepts, preparing him/her for future learning.

PHYSICAL:

To provide materials and activities that encourage your child's development of large and small muscle development and concern for his/her own health and safety.

CLASSES OFFERED

***Terrific Threes (2 -3 days)** For children age 3 by September 1st. They will learn to share, play with others, listen to others during group time, and follow routines. Children will strengthen small and large muscles through various hands-on activities.

This class meets Tuesday and Thursday from **8:45 to 11:15a.m.**
Fridays are available for children who are 3 ½ by the start of school.

***Fantastic Fours (3-4 days)** For children age 4 by September 1st. Our main emphasis is Kindergarten readiness in the areas of pre-reading, math, social studies, science, language skills and handwriting.

This class meets Mon., Tues. and Thurs. (Fridays added in January)
Class times are **8:45 to 11:30a.m.**

Fabulous Fives (4 days) For children age 4 ½ by September 1st. This class meets with the Fantastic Fours (SEE ABOVE) with Fridays all year.

*Daily Jesus time is included in each program along with weekly chapel and music.

Extended Care Is available Tuesday and Thursday

- 1) Lunch bunch – 12:30p.m. dismissal with students bringing a lunch
- 2) Full day – latest pick-up time is 3:30p.m.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

A completed **registration form** and **non-refundable fee of \$50.00** are required for enrollment which will secure your child's spot in our program. Enrollments are accepted on a first come first served basis. In the event of full classes, a waiting list will be kept. Enrollment is open to any child between the ages of three and five regardless of race, color, creed, sex, or national origin.

Children must be completely toilet trained and be able to perform basic bathroom skills independently. Teachers will assist children in extreme instances. Children should wear clothes that enable them to dress and undress on their own.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Messiah Lutheran Preschool admits students regardless of race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies and other school administered programs.

WITHDRAW POLICY

One month's advance notice and payment is required if it becomes necessary to withdraw a child from the program during the school year.

SCHOOL SCHEDULES

The school year consists of 32 weeks of scheduled classes and activities.

Classes generally begin around the second week in September and run through mid-May. A complete school calendar will be provided to parents before school begins. **In case of poor weather conditions please tune into the local TV stations for closing information.**

Sample Daily Schedule AM (afternoon class runs 12:30-3:00p.m.)

~ 8:40 to 9:00	children arrive /table tops
~ 9:00 to 9:15	opening circle
~ 9:15 to 9:30	music /chapel (once a week)
~ 9:30 to 10:20	centers /small groups /free play
~ 10:15 to 10:25	clean up
~ 10:25 to 10:35	story & hand washing for snack
~ 10:35 to 10:45	snack /library time
~ 10:45 to 11:05	outdoor recess
~ 11:05 to 11:20	Jesus time
~ 11:20 to 11:30	whole group activity or music & movement

**Times may shift as the day dictates and teacher preferences.
Our 3's & Young 4's class dismisses at 11:15a.m.**

FEES AND TUITION INFORMATION

Payments are made August through April.

You are welcome to pay in advance.

Terrific Threes (2 days)

\$120.00 per month for 9 months (\$1,080.00 per year)

Terrific Threes w/ Fridays (3 days all year)

\$170.00 per month for 9 months (\$1,530.00 per year)

Fantastic Fours (3 days, adding Fridays in January)

\$190.00 per month for 9 months (\$1,710.00 per year)

Fabulous Fives (4 days all year)

\$205.00 per month for 9 months (\$1845.00 per year)

Extended Care /per day increase – Lunch bunch (\$6)

\$25 Full day/Terrific Threes \$22 Full day/Fantastic Fours

Please make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church.

Tuition payments are made one month in advance and are due on the 10th of each month. Your first payment will be due on **August 10th** of the current school year. Families who enroll more than one child will receive a 10% reduction from their total tuition bill.

Monthly payments are scheduled for your convenience, other payment arrangements may be made by contacting the Director.

No reminders will be sent unless you are late in making your monthly payment. For tuition accounts 30 days late a \$10.00 late fee will be added. If a Tuition account becomes more than 30 days late, parents or guardians may be asked to remove the child from the program until your account is brought up to date.

The Preschool is self-supporting and the staff contracts are made on a yearly basis. Therefore, no refunds are made when a child is absent for a prolonged illness, vacation, snow days, or etc.

Tuition assistance is available when a need is shown and funds are available. Please see the Director if you do have a need.

HEALTH PLAN

The **Health Appraisal must** be completed and returned to the Preschool Office by the first session of class. This is a State requirement. This form must include current physical, up-to-date immunizations, your Doctor's signature, and your signature.

If for some reason your child is not current with his/her immunizations, you must contact the Kent County Health Department and schedule a consultation with them to obtain an approved waiver form which must be returned to the Preschool Director.

State Immunization Requirements:

DPT.....	4 doses
Polio.....	3 doses
Measles, Mumps and Rubella.....	1 dose
HIB.....	4 doses
Hepatitis B.....	3 doses
Varivax (or had chicken pox).....	1 dose
Pneumococcal Conjugate.....	Complete Series

Sick children must not be brought to school. Children should be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. **Please call the school or email the director before arrival time to report your child's absence.** If your child's health should deteriorate during class or become ill you will be notified so you can arrange your child's immediate pick up. Covid-19 guidelines and protocol are consistent with the Kent County Health Department.

The only medications we will dispense are those needed to control a condition such as asthma or allergies. We have a form that needs to be completed and signed by your doctor.

Children will be instructed to wash hands when they arrive to school, before and after eating, when they cough or sneeze into a hand, after using a tissue, and when hands or fingers are in their mouth or nose. We encourage coughing/sneezing into their elbow, rather than hand.

Staff will follow universal precautions when handling bodily fluids and are trained in Blood Borne Pathogens, First Aid and CPR.

EXCLUSION POLICY FOR CHILD ILLNESS

When your child's health does not meet the guidelines as stated in the pamphlet When to Keep Your Child at Home (published by Kent County Health Department and provided by the Preschool) you will need to keep your child at home.

NOTIFICATION FOR ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES

In the event of an accident or injury while in class, first aid will be administered by a trained staff member. You will be notified by the Lead Teacher at dismissal verbally and with a written explanation of the injury and treatments. A copy of this report will be signed by the Parent and kept in the child's file.

CHILD INFORMATION RECORD

A Child Information Record must be completed and returned on or before the first day of school. This card authorizes emergency care, provides emergency phone numbers for parents or guardians, authorizes who may pick up your child and informs us of your hospital preference. It is most important this information is kept up to date.

SNACK TIME

Daily classroom snacks will be provided by the parents on a rotating basis. A monthly snack calendar will be provided by the Teacher showing who is responsible for the snack each day. Birthdays will be scheduled as part of the regular snack rotation. Children with summer birthdays will be scheduled to celebrate their "half birthday".

If your child has dietary allergies or special needs, please inform us. The classroom Teacher will inform the class parents of any restrictions or allergies. We will have a 'Nut Free' classroom if needed! Snack suggestions include: fresh fruit and vegetables, crackers, pretzels, string cheese, popcorn, jello etc. Children will bring water bottles from home. We will provide water for snack time if anyone forgets.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We will do our best to provide a quality Christian program for each child enrolled. If we are unable to meet the needs of a child, we will assist the parents in finding a placement in a qualifying program.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We take every potential emergency situation seriously here at Messiah. We have established policies regarding fire, tornado, medical emergencies and others. If you wish to review these policies you may ask for the Emergency Handbook kept in the Preschool Office.

SUPERVISION/VOLUNTEER POLICY

Messiah Lutheran Preschool requires a PSOR check (Public Sex Offender Registry) on all employees and unsupervised volunteers. All staff and volunteers must sign the Volunteer/Staff Agreement Policy and be cleared prior to any involvement with the children. This includes field trips and classroom volunteers.

SECURITY MEASURES

Messiah Lutheran Church has implemented security measures to safeguard the welfare of our Preschool. One of these is the electronic keypads on the main entrances to the building. Each Preschool family will be issued a four-digit code to be used to access the building. This code will only be active during the days and hours your child is attending Preschool and only for the middle (main preschool entrance) door.

For the safety of the children and staff it is necessary that families be aware of the following guidelines:

- ~ Codes will be kept secure and not given to anyone other than those responsible for Preschool drop off and pick up.
- ~ Maintain security by making sure doors are properly closed behind you.
- ~ Understand that certain doors will be unlocked during services and special events.
- ~ Inform the Church Office Manager if your code has been lost, compromised or if a problem occurs.
- ~ The Church Office Manager will be responsible for issuing and monitoring of codes. The Preschool Director will not have a list of codes.
- ~ Do not allow your child to enter your code.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

Use the center door on the upper level for arrival and departure. When arriving bring your child to the Preschool Hall and assist your child in hanging up backpack and coat under his/her cubby. Then wait with your child until the classroom door is opened (a couple minutes before class time) and your child is greeted by the Teacher or Aide. Do not leave your child unsupervised in the hall.

At dismissal time the children will remain in the classroom until the Teacher sees the Parent or authorized Adult. No child will be released to a person not authorized by the parents.

In the event you are running late please call the school so we can reassure your child. Consistent lateness at dismissal will result in a \$1 per minute charge after a five-minute grace period.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Limits are set to teach your child about safety, care of property, good health habits, and consideration of others. Rules are explained in a cheerful, positive manner while making sure they are understood by the children. When trouble occurs, we will try to redirect a child's activity or offer an acceptable solution to the problem. Occasionally a "time away" is needed. The child will be removed from the activity and asked to sit "away" for a few minutes.

This is done gently making sure the child understands the reason. This is always followed by a private discussion between Teacher and Child, the topic being, a better reaction next time and forgiveness and acceptance of the child. In the unlikely event a child is about to cause injury to self or another, the Teacher or Aide will intervene. If a discipline problem persists or becomes harmful to others the Parents will be advised.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences will be set up in February to inform you of your child's progress. In the meantime, do not hesitate to call or email at any time if you have questions concerning your child. PLEASE DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR CHILD IN HIS/HER PRESENCE.

ADVOCACY

It is the duty of Messiah Lutheran Preschool to maintain its role as an advocate for every child attending the Preschool. We will work in collaboration with the child's local school district if support services are beneficial or needed.

FIELD TRIPS

Various Field Trips will be planned with the Fantastic Fours throughout the year. These trips are planned as an extension of the current learning theme. Parents/Guardians will be informed in advance of any trips planned. Your signed permission for each of these trips is required.

We will ask for a parent/guardian to meet us at our destination and chaperone the children during our trip. We no longer transport children via 'other parents' due to strict state requirements. However, your child may be dropped off and picked up at the location if an adult is not able to stay the duration of the trip.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

A goal of Messiah Lutheran is to ensure that all families are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their gender, ability, ethnicity, language, or background. Our Preschool Program incorporates cultural competence with materials and lessons. (ex. celebrating Black History Month, the Chinese New Year, multicultural dolls, dress up, puzzles, etc.) The curriculum and classrooms reflect the diversity of the families in the program and local community. In addition, staff members are trained on culture and diversity.

PHOTOS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

There will be times when pictures of your child may be taken for educational use as well as for the news media, our Church and Preschool Facebook pages or web sites, or marketing. Your signed permission to use your child's image is required. WE WILL NEVER "TAG" YOUR CHILD and we respectfully ask if you post any photos of school activities that you do not tag children.

PRESCHOOL LICENSING NOTEBOOK

The licensing notebook is available to Parents during regular classroom hours. This is kept in the Preschool Office and contains all the licensing inspection reports since May 2010. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the child care licensing website at: Michigan.gov/michildcare.

STATEMENTS OF BELIEF

Gender -The Bible states that God created people as either male or female (Genesis 1:27), making no distinction between biological sex and gender. As followers of Jesus, we use the same definition. Therefore, in our school ministry we use pronouns and dress codes that correspond with the biological sex of each person.

Marriage -Jesus defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman (Matthew 19:4-6). As followers of Jesus, we use the same definition. Marriage is a gift of God by which He gives us a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

At school we play. Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that will allow your child to move freely. Rubber soled shoes are best for the Preschool classroom. Out of safety concerns your child may be restricted from an activity if wearing "fashion" shoes or flip flops.

Toys from home should not be brought into school unless for "Show and Tell". No toy weapons or guns are allowed at school.

A school bag or backpack is recommended to take treasured art work and show and tell items home. We also recommend you pack an extra set of clothes (including underwear) at the bottom of the bag for emergencies.

Parents are welcome to visit our program at any time. Please remember children often respond differently when parents are in the room. Parents will be asked to assist during class parties by using a sign-up sheet. Classroom volunteers will be required to sign the Volunteer Agreement Form prior to participating in the classroom.

