



Parent Handbook
August 2011-12

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PARENT'S PRAYER

*O Heavenly Father,
Make me a better parent.*

Teach me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say, and answer all their questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting them or contradicting. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me. Forbid that I should ever laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame or ridicule when they displease me. May I never punish them for my own selfish satisfaction or to show my power.

Let me not tempt my child to lie or steal. And guide me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness.

Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me. And when I am out of sorts, help me, O Lord, to hold my tongue.

May I be ever mindful that my children are children and I should not expect of them the judgment of adults. Let me not rob them of the opportunity to wait on themselves and to make decisions.

Bless me with bigness to grant all their reasonable requests and the courage to deny them privileges I know will harm them.

Make me fair and just and kind. And fit me, O Lord, to be loved and respected and imitated by my children.

By Garry C. Meyers

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Family of Christ Preschool. Our program strives to help each child develop self-awareness and self-esteem through positive recognition, reinforcement and successful play. We wish to instill curiosity in our children towards the world around them. To do this we provide materials, activities, and opportunities that allow for growth and learning and also provide “readiness” for the future. We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our school is licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (651-296-3971).

PHILOSOPHY

Family of Christ Preschool is a faith-based, positive, safe, nurturing, and fun environment where young children can learn through play. The program is designed to meet the individual needs of two to five year old children not yet in kindergarten in the areas of spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are Family of Christ Preschool dedicated to nurturing, strengthening and affirming children in Christian faith.

Family of Christ Lutheran Church’s mission statement calls us to action for the benefit of our household of faith and community. This action has three elements: Worship, Families, and Outreach.

PROGRAM

Description of Program:

Believing in our philosophy, we are committed to the fair and equal treatment of all children and their families, including all prospective children and families, without regard to race, religion, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability or any other factor prohibited by law. A detailed Child Care Program Plan is available from the director.

Educational Methods: We employ a method of teaching, which gives support and promotes self-esteem in each child. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate and is planned so activities and learning opportunities are integrated for a given subject into every part of a day’s program. Therefore, children can learn a concept through experiences in many different well-equipped and well-planned environments under the supervision of their teacher. Children are supervised at all times.

Age of Children: The preschool is licensed to serve 50 children at a time who are 24 months of age or older by September 1st. When a birth date falls after September 1st, enrollment will be at the discretion of the director. We have classes for 2’s, 3’s, 4’s, and 5’s. Class size is up to 16 children with a teacher and an assistant teacher. Our Taste of Preschool class (2 year olds) is limited to 6 children with one teacher.

Special Needs: If your child has special needs, a pre-enrollment conference with the director and the teacher is requested to ensure proper provisions are made and any training needs for staff are met. We also recommend collaboration with other services the child may be receiving.

Time of operation: Our preschool has several class sessions within the program. Morning sessions are from 9:00 to 11:30 am. Afternoon sessions run 12:30-3:00 PM. Please check with the director for the specific days of classes.

Our Lunch Bunch, Stay & Play and Terrific Tuesdays Programs are offered on afternoons between 12:30-2:00 PM. (more information on page 15).

Daily Schedule: The daily schedule consists of the following:

Arrival/Circle Time

Lesson (Small group activities in basic skills appropriate for three, four and five year old development including art, science, social studies, language, health, reading and math readiness experiences.)

Creative Free-play (Opportunity for socialization through both self-selected and teacher directed activities.)

Snack

Large Muscle/Outdoor play

Story-time, Music, Large group activities

Cleanup/Review/Dismissal

** Preschoolers also have opportunities for Chapel Chats with the Pastor and music with the Music Director. These activities take place in the Sanctuary.

CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT/INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PLAY

Each classroom is divided into interest centers where the children may choose from a variety of activities. These areas are designed in order for the children to develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically as this development happens simultaneously. The following is a list of the interest centers and samples of activities offered in each.

1. ART CENTER activities include painting of all kinds, cutting and pasting, collages, clay, play dough, crayons and markers.
2. BLOCK CENTER activities include building with blocks, which are small, wooden, and large cardboard. This center is accessorized with figures of animals and people as well as small and large vehicles.
3. BOOK CENTER activities include using picture and story-books, puppets and flannel board stories. This is an area where the children may relax and have some quiet time. The books are used for story time each day.
4. DRAMATIC PLAY can happen anywhere and can take on many different forms. We have a playhouse area located in both classrooms. Accessories include baby dolls, dishes, and food. These areas are sometimes transformed into a grocery store, shoe shop, etc.
5. TABLE GAMES/MANIPULATIVES CENTER activities are designed to improve eye/hand and fine motor coordination -- pegs and pegboards, puzzles, lacing bead stringing, links, etc.
6. SCIENCE CENTER activities include simple experiments and hands on experiences with magnets, magnifying glasses, and weather changes. Games that can be found in this center would be smelling jars, mystery box, sorting games.

1. THE INDOOR MUSCLE ROOM will provide an active play area when we cannot go outside to play. Equipment for this area includes a climbing block, slide, jump ropes, balls, etc. This area is also an area for large group games.
2. THE OUTSIDE PLAYGROUND provides experiences in climbing, running, and sliding. This area is also an area for large group games.

REGISTRATION

Registration for each upcoming school year will take place in December for current students and siblings. Alumni families and previous inquiries will then be given an opportunity to enroll. Registration will be open to the public on January 15th. Registration may be completed by mail or walk-in and will be processed on a “first come – first serve” basis. We would encourage anyone wishing to register to come for a visit.

A registration fee (per child) is due at the time of enrollment and is at no time refundable.

TUITION

Family of Christ Preschool is a non-profit school. The tuition rates are based on an annual budget sufficient to meet the operating expenses of a high quality program and to make the school self-supporting.

The yearly tuition (divided into 9 monthly payments for your convenience) is payable regardless of the number of days your child actually attends or the holidays during a given month.

Tuition is due on the 1st of the month starting in September. A \$15.00 late fee will be incurred after the 10th of the month.

There will be a \$15.00 service fee on any returned checks. After the second returned check all future payments must be in cash or money order.

A thirty-day written notice or one month’s tuition is required for withdrawal from the program. Any child enrolled as of May 1st will be charged tuition through the close of the year.

We understand that there may be extenuating circumstances regarding the above policy. Please contact the director if we can be of any assistance at any time.

The preschool is closed except for camps and minimal office hours by the director from June through August and for various holidays throughout the year. The full calendar is listed at the end of this handbook.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

The first day of school will be an Orientation Day. This will be a special time for you and your child to meet the teachers and become acquainted with the school. Regular class schedules will begin the following week.

Parents should park in the main parking lot and bring the children inside so they can help them hang up their belongings and sign them in, then deliver them safely to the classroom. The teachers will be ready to receive the children at 8:55 AM. Should you arrive early, please remain in the foyer until that time. At the end of class time the children will be dismissed from their classroom to you. If you are in need of assistance during pickup or drop-off times, please contact the director.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFE ENTRANCE AND EXIT FROM THE BUILDING. Please keep in mind that there may be meeting/activities on the upper floor so do not let the children run or be excessively noisy.

It is important to arrive on time, late transitions can be difficult for a child. If, for any reason, you know you will be late please call the school so that we may reassure your child. At no time will your child be left unattended. Should you be more than 10 minutes late a second time, a fee of \$10.00 will be charged. After 20 minutes we will make every effort to contact you or your emergency source. After 90 minutes we will call the police to make contact and advise us of further action. The well being of your child will be foremost in our minds and we will do whatever is necessary to ensure their safety.

PLEASE DO NOT LET YOUR CHILD RIDE THE ELEVATOR WITHOUT AN ADULT! IT IS DANGEROUS!

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

Family of Christ uses REDIRECTION AND GUIDANCE as its form of guiding behavior. Children are given the chance to work out their disagreements in a safe manner or directed to play in another area or with another toy.

At no time is any staff member or volunteer allowed to:

1. Subject a child to corporal punishment such as hitting, pinching, shaking, shoving, etc.
2. Subject a child to emotional abuse such as name-calling, threatening, humiliation, etc.
3. Separate the child from the group except in accordance with an approved program plan.
4. Punish for lapses in toilet habits.
5. Punish by withholding food, clothing, etc.
6. Physically or mechanically restrain a child except in the event he/she may harm him/herself or others.

CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in the fall and spring. Your child's progress report will be sent home prior to your visit to allow the time to look it over thus making the conference time more productive. Please be on time for your conference. It is important for you to have the entire time to discuss your child's progress and not infringe on another parent's appointment. We encourage you to discuss your child with the teacher at any time. Do not wait until conference time if you feel there is a problem. It may not be possible to speak to the teacher at the beginning of the day as her attention is with the children. She will be glad to make an appointment or have a phone conference. We ask that you do not discuss the child with the teacher in the classroom when children are present.

Each child's spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, and physical needs are the focus of our program. This information is shared with you at the time of your conference and kept on file at the preschool. This information is not released to anyone else without your written permission.

VISITORS/PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is encouraged in every part of the program. Parents/guardians are welcome to visit at any time and we encourage everyone to attend at sometime during the year. Family of Christ Preschool has an OPEN DOOR policy. We ask that you check in with the Director when you visit so that we are aware of who is in the building.

If you would like to do something special in the classroom please let your child's teacher know. We always enjoy having parents along for field trips and helping with special events.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Medical Examination and Immunization Records: State Licensing Regulations require that a completed Health Care Summary be on file for each child enrolled. The Health Care Summary must be completed by your child's physician and returned to us within 30 days of enrollment. Immunization records must be completed by the start of school or at the time of enrollment.

Illness: If your child shows symptoms of a cold, suspicious rash, or an eye or throat infection, please keep him/her home. Allergies (especially food allergies) should be noted on the Health Care Summary. The Preschool will notify you of infectious or communicable diseases occurring within the classroom. Should your child become ill during school, we will contact you to remove the child as promptly as possible. Your child will be made comfortable and allowed to rest in view of a staff member until your arrival. Please contact us if your child becomes ill or has a contagious disease. Please keep your child at home if he/she exhibits the following:

- Temperature 100 or above
- Skin rash (until identified and deemed non-contagious)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Inflamed or swollen tonsils, severe cough, or continual nasal discharge

Medication

Medication will be given ONLY with a prescription from the child's physician, and will be administered by the teacher or director. The prescription must have the child's name

and current prescription information on the label with instructions. All medicines must be kept in their original container. Records will be kept stating the name of child, name of medication or prescription number, date, time of dosage, and the name and signature of the person who dispensed the medication. The record will be available to the parent and maintained in the child's file. Parental permission is required to administer sunscreen and insect repellent.

Injury/Incident:

In the event of an emergency or accident, the Director or classroom teacher currently certified in first aid, will administer appropriate first aid, while another teacher prepares to call the parents and 911 if necessary. If the accident is minor, first-aid supplies from the first-aid kit will be used. If a child has become unconscious due to an obstructed airway, CPR will be administered by the Director or certified staff person trained in CPR until the paramedics arrive. The parents will also be called to inform them of the seriousness of the accident.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Clothing: Please dress your children in self-help clothing that allows freedom of movement and is appropriate to the weather. We try to go outside as much as possible. We will not go out if the wind chill temperature is 10 degrees or below. Please send appropriate clothing with your child everyday, i.e. jacket/coat, hat, gloves, snow pants, boots. The temperature can change quickly. For playground safety, please no long dresses or sandals. In the event of an accident requiring the change of clothing, a tee shirt, a pair of sweat pants, and underwear will be furnished for the child to wear home if alternate clothes of the child are not available. The soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home. Please wash the tee shirt and sweat pants and return to the school. **The underwear is new and may be**

kept by the child. You are also welcome to send an extra set of clothing with your child.

Cubbies: Each child is assigned a cubby where he/she can keep his/her coat, sweater, boots, etc. All papers completed during the day will be placed in the cubby. Please check your child's cubby each day before leaving. If you are carpooling, please check the cubby of EACH CHILD you are transporting. Please note that some cubbies are shared based on days attended.

Toy/Personal Belongings: Please do not let your child bring toys, food, or money to school, unless indicated as part of a sharing topic or activity. If your child needs a SPECIAL security item, please make sure it is clearly marked with his/her name. Explain to the child that the item will wait for them in their cubby until school is over.

Snack and Birthday Treats: Snack is provided by the parents on a rotation basis. It should include a beverage and a pre-packaged food item. The teacher will provide a list of ideas and a sign up sheet. Birthday treats are welcome, but must be purchased and in unopened wrappers. They will be served at snack time or before dismissal (please advise the teacher to your wishes). Children with summer birthdays may celebrate on their **half-birthday**. Please no latex balloons.

WE ARE A PEANUT FREE ZONE!!!!!! Check with your child's teacher for safe snacks. Suggestion lists will be handed out at orientation.

Lunch Bunch: On Mondays thru Thursdays Family of Christ Preschool offers a Lunch Bunch program. It is open to children on a first come-first serve scheduling basis. Payment will be invoiced monthly. A sign up sheet will be

available next to the parent board. The children will bring their own sack lunch. (We will provide milk and water.) The time is 11:30-12:45. The charge is \$9.00. If you sign up for a full semester, there is a \$1/day reduction in the fee (\$8.00).

Stay & Play: On Mondays thru Thursdays we offer a Stay & Play program from 11:30-2pm. The children will bring their own sack lunch. We will provide milk and water. After lunch teachers will provide supervised activities. The charge is \$18 a day. Sign up can be done in advance, or as needed with billing added to your tuition bill which is due on the 10th of the month. If you sign up for a full semester, there is a \$2/day reduction in the rate (\$16).

Terrific Tuesdays: This is an enrichment class designed for fours and fives. Students will have lunch and do small group enrichment activities based on various themes and concepts. This setting is designed for children preparing for their kindergarten year. Students must register for all sessions to reserve a space as space is limited. \$75 per month.

Field Trips

The children will go on at least two field trips during the school year with individual parental permission for each. They are educational and FUN. Individual classes may go on other field trips centered on the theme at the time. Parents will be chosen to chaperone the field trips on a first come basis. The teacher will explain their duties to them on the day of the trip. We are sorry but siblings are not permitted to participate at this time. This is a special time for you and your preschooler.

Pets: Pets are not allowed at school except for special pet days.

Permission for Research: Written parental permission will be obtained before each occasion of research, observation, or public relations activity involving your child.

Snow Days: Family of Christ Preschool primarily serves School District 112 families. Therefore we will close for snow days along with the district. Please listen to WCCO Radio 830 AM for “Eastern Carver County” school closing announcements. We will also post an announcement on the preschool voicemail. There will be four weather related closings allowed for the 4-day program, three weather related closings allowed for the 3-day program, and two weather related closings for the 2-day program. If more than the allowed days are missed, extra class times will be offered. In the event of a two hour delayed start, morning classes will be cancelled.

Fire Drill/Tornado: Fire drills will be held on a monthly basis. Tornado drills will be held in September, April and May. We encourage you to discuss the experience with your child when he/she tells you about it.

In the event of a real disaster, we urge you to follow the procedures listed below:

1. Do **NOT** call the school
2. Do **NOT** come to the school
3. Community disasters are reported on the radio and the teachers and director are listening to the same information you are.
4. Be assured that the teachers and other school personnel are giving your children any emergency care they may need.
5. The safest place in case of a disaster is off the streets and out of the way of emergency and rescue equipment.

Grievance Policy: Should a situation or condition in the classroom cause distress, it is important to deal with it quickly and openly. Upon hearing a grievance, the director and/or teacher will respond to the grievance within 5 (five)

working days. The parent/guardian should take the following steps:

1. Discuss the problem privately with the teacher clearly and sincerely. Describe the specific behavior and how it made you feel or why it is a problem.
2. If the problem is still unresolved after the first step, speak to the director. She will investigate the issues involved and/or facilitate further discussion.
3. If the problem remains unresolved the Preschool Director will take the grievance to the Director of Faith Formation or Pastor.

*A copy of the formal process is available upon request. Remember, without identifying and communicating the grievance, a resolution is not possible.

Family of Christ Lutheran Church: Everyone is welcome at Family of Christ. If you would like more information on Service times and/or Church School please contact Lois in the church office or call 952-934-5659. If you would like to be added to the church newsletter list, please let the director or office staff know this.

Fund Raising

Throughout the year Family of Christ Preschool will have fundraisers in order to raise money for various materials, i.e. playground and classroom equipment, continuing education for teachers, and helping to keep tuition costs down. We appreciate your help and support.

Thrivent, the financial organization for Lutherans, will match any monetary donation you wish to give to the preschool and it is tax deductible.

Family of Christ Preschool
Calendar of Events 2011-2012

September-

- 5 Labor Day
- 6 & 7 Teacher Set-up
- 8 & 9 Student Orientation
- 12-14 First Day of Classes
- 20 & 21 School Pictures

October-

- 5 Minnetonka Apple Orchard Field Trip
- 20 & 21 MEA (closed)
- 26 & 27 Fall Parties
- 31 Fall Conferences (closed)

November-

- 1 & 2 Fall Conferences (closed)
- 10 Ladies Night Out 6-9 PM
- 15 Reindeer Visit from Mustard Seed
- 21 & 22 Thanksgiving Classroom Feasts
- 23-25 Thanksgiving Break

December-

- 2-8 Scholastic Book Fair
- 2 Parent's Day Off 9AM-2 PM
- 15 Christmas Program 10AM
- 16-30 Christmas Break

January-

- 1-2 Christmas/New Year's Break
- 3 Classes Resume
- 27 ELEA Teacher Conference (closed)

February-

- 1 Stages Theater Field Trip for 4/5 classes
- 13-15 Valentine's Parties
- 20 President's Day (closed)

March-

- 5 & 6 Spring Conferences (closed)
- 30 Spring Break starts

April-

- 1-7 Spring Break
- 8 Easter
- 22-28 Week of the Young Child
- 27 Country Fair & Silent Auction 5-8 PM

May-

- 1 Field Trip to Gale Woods Farm
- 22 & 23 Last Days of School- Parent Picnics
- 23 Graduation 7 PM

Sources of Emergency Care

Fire and Police Emergency	911
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
MN Dept. of Human Services	651-296-3971
Emergency Medical Care Ridgeview Medical Center Waconia	952-442-2191 ext. 5030
Emergency Dental Care Strand Dental Care	952-361-3740
State Dept. of Health	612-676-5414
Others	
Preschool	952-380-9838
Family of Christ Lutheran Church	952-934-5659