

PARENT HANDBOOK

2009-2010

Welcome to Discovery Preschool at First United Methodist Church. We are looking forward to an exciting year with many opportunities for your child to “discover” more about themselves and the world around them.

The program is based on goals, objectives, and activities aimed at providing a flexible, enriching environment that will facilitate the physical, cognitive, spiritual, and social-emotional growth of children ages two to five.

There is a balance of fine-motor and gross-motor activities, indoor and outdoor play, individual and group activities, and teacher-directed and child-initiated activities.

Our preschool is part of the First United Methodist Church outreach and mission, which is an important part of our Christian community. Therefore we are considered a “Religiously Exempt” preschool under the state licensure codes. If you are interested in knowing more about the state preschool requirements, please contact the Director.

If you would like more information about our church you may contact our pastor **William White** at 540-662-3151. The church has worship services every Sunday at 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM, with Sunday school for all ages at 9:45 AM. The pastors would be more than happy to talk or meet with you if you have any question or concerns about the church or preschool.

STAFF

We are pleased to introduce an excellent staff. Our staff is thoroughly screened by the Director, approved by our Staff-Parish Committee, and certified annually by a practicing physician. Each teacher must have experience and/or education in working with young children. Ongoing training is required each year in our program, and the staff is certified in CPR and First Aid Training.

Mrs. Debbie Macknight	Director
Mrs. Milly Hood	M-W, T-TH 2's
Mrs. Paula Corbett	M/W/F 3's & T/TH 3's
Mrs. Maria Grimm	M/W/F 4's & T-TH 3's
Mrs. Cetty Shipp	T/TH/F 4's & Aide
Mrs. Jennifer Esparza	M-F 4's
Mrs. Laura Fost	M-F 4's
Mrs. Aimee Nuwer	M/W/F 4's
Mrs. Tracy Frank	Aide
Mrs. Nicky Grayson	Physical Education Teacher & Aide
Mrs. Michelle Scott	Aide
Mrs. Maria Nicely	Music Teacher
Rev. William White	Pastor
Ms. Kristen Grzywacz	Church Secretary
Mrs. Mary Vorous	Youth Director
Mrs. Queenie Dockney	Custodian

FEES

The preschool charges a **\$50.00 non-refundable registration fee** per child. This is due at the time you register for preschool. The \$50.00 fee secures a spot for your child in a preschool class, and goes towards equipment and supplies needed for the year.

Tuition for the preschool is yearly, divided into nine monthly payments for your convenience. You may pay one lump-sum payment or two semi-annual payments if you prefer. Listed below are the fees for the 2009-2010 school year.

\$125.00 month/ \$1125.00 year for two days a week
\$150.00 month/ \$1350.00 year for three days a week
\$225.00 month/ \$2025.00 year for five days a week

Tuition is NOT based on the number of classes in a month or the number of days your child attends in that time period.

Tuition is due on the first of each month, starting September 1st. You may pay with cash, money order or personal check **payable to Discovery Preschool.** Checks may only be mailed, brought into the preschool by a parent, or sent with your child in his/her preschool folder. **There will be a \$10.00 charge added to your account for any returned checks.**

No money will be accepted in the drive through. Please **do not** hand any money to anyone in the drive through; there is a risk that it could get lost, in which case you will be responsible for replacing that payment.

If your tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, a late fee of \$10.00 is automatically charged to your account on the 16th. If you skip a monthly payment, and are unable to pay in full the following month, your child will be dropped from the preschool. If you are having trouble with tuition payments, please see the Director before your child gets dropped from the preschool.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

In the event that you decide to **withdraw** your child from Discovery Preschool, at any time during the school year, please notify Debbie Macknight, Preschool Director, **in writing. You are responsible for tuition and late fees until we have received this official notice.** Charges to your account will terminate at this time.

HEALTH FORMS

We are required to have the following forms on file by the first day of school. **Your child will not be able to attend school unless the follow requirements are met.** You will be charged tuition to hold the spot until this information is obtained, or you will forfeit your spot with the preschool.

1. Birth Certificate
2. A copy of all immunizations signed by the child's Pediatrician. It is a state requirement that each child have at least one chicken pox vaccine before entering preschool.
3. A completed and signed Emergency Care Form that gives us permission to get medical treatment for your child in case of an emergency. Accidents can happen in the first days of school, and that is why it is crucial that we have this signed form.

SICK POLICY

If your child becomes ill or is injured at school, we will attempt to contact you immediately. The child will be isolated and cared for until you come. If you cannot be reached in an urgent or emergency situation, we will follow your directions on the Emergency Care Form.

If you know your child is sick, please do not send him/her to preschool. This just spreads illness and becomes a vicious cycle. Your child is not allowed to attend preschool with diarrhea, green discharge from the nose, or a fever of 99.0 or more in the preceding 24 hours. **If your child is sent home from the preschool with a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting that child may not return the next day or until the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours.**

SNOW DAYS

For inclement weather the preschool will follow the Frederick County Virginia Public School System announcements.

- If Frederick County Schools close, Discovery Preschool will be closed.
- If Frederick County calls a 1-hour delay, Discovery Preschool will be on a 1-hour delay. Preschool will then begin at 10:00 AM and dismiss at 1:00 PM.
- If Frederick County calls a 2-hour delay, Discovery Preschool will be on a 2-hour delay. Preschool will begin at 11:00 AM and dismiss at 1:00 PM.

If we have an excessive amount of days missed due to inclement weather, we will try to adjust the calendar to make up some days.

When the preschool is delayed, the staff is also on a delayed schedule. Please don't bring your child earlier than times listed above because, there will not be anyone to supervise your child. There are a few ways to obtain information on closings or delays.

- A message will be sent via email with the email listed on the Background Information Form regarding decisions made for inclement weather. If you have more than one email you would like it sent to please list all of them on the form.
- You may call the preschool at 540-665-1696 to hear any messages regarding closings or delays.
- The closing or delay will also be broadcast on **WINC 92.5 FM, WUSQ Q102 FM, and TV3**. The preschool announcements are not made everytime the public schools are broadcast, so you will need to listen carefully through the whole listing of schools. We are usually listed last under day cares and preschools.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

We ask that you come in Fairfax Lane westbound from Loudoun Street and pull up along the brown fence that parallels Fairfax Lane. This is our drive-thru area only. An adult will assist your child in/out of the car. By staying in your car, traffic will move along more quickly, and there are fewer parent-child separation problems. Please do not block the entrance into the parking lot. This entrance is used for the church and other businesses. If you cannot fully pull into the drive-thru, drive around the block until the drive thru is moving steadily. The local businesses get very upset when they are unable to get through to their offices.

Preschool drop off begins no earlier than 9:00 AM. No one will be available to greet them before that time. All classes begin at 9:15 AM. Please have your child at the preschool by that time, or they may be missing important activities and may not have the time to make them up, depending on the teacher's schedule. If you are late, please personally bring your child to the classroom.

Pick up begins at 1:00 PM and no earlier. If you need to pick your child up before 1:00 PM please come in the building and pick them up in the classroom.

If you walk over to the play yard to retrieve your child instead of picking up in your car, please come to the gate by the entrance to the preschool. We will have a teacher or an aide at that gate to hand over your child to you. Please refrain from coming to the drive thru side so that we can keep things running smoothly.

Please do not arrive in the drive thru before 1:00 PM. If we are not prepared to load the children, the line will get backed up, which in turn will block traffic trying to get through Fairfax Lane. If you arrive early, and we are not ready to load, please drive around the block to keep the traffic from getting too congested.

The drive thru is available for your convenience due to the lack of parking. If you come early and cars are backed up, it would be a big help if you drive around the block. We cannot impede the traffic on Fairfax Lane. It is very important not to block the intersection of Fairfax Lane and Loudoun Street. If we get a lot of complaints, the police will come and issue tickets.

If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please park your vehicle and come to the play yard instead of holding up the line.

Pick up is no later than 1:15 PM. A \$10.00 fee will be added to your account for every five minutes after 1:15 PM. Please be respectful of the staff and allow yourself plenty of time to get to the preschool on time. Coming through town can get hectic at times with the train and lunchtime traffic.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child, **we need written permission.** The preschool provides a sheet for you to list anyone that may pick up your child during the year. It is your responsibility to send in a letter to keep this updated if changes occur.

If anyone has a situation where a child's parent is not allowed to pick him/her up, please see the Director about this situation before school begins. The staff will be instructed on this sensitive issue, because the Director may not always be present at loading time and the staff will need to be made aware.

THE BUILDING

The preschool is housed in the First United Methodist Church education building. The church carries public liability insurance that is handled by Church Mutual. Currently, the capacity for the preschool is 115 children. We use seven rooms for our classes. The children have two fenced-in yard areas and the social hall for gross motor play.

PARENTS OF TWO YEAR OLDS

Please send in a small pack of diapers and wipes at the beginning of the year if your child is still in diapers. You do not need to send these supplies each day. We will store them for you and let you know when your child has run out.

PARKING

Being located in downtown Winchester, our parking facilities are extremely limited. Evenings and weekends, you may park anywhere. There are spaces located on Braddock Street, or Fairfax Lane, and in the parking garage located one block east of the church on the corner of Loudoun Street and Fairfax Lane. Please do not park in any area designated “private or reserved.” (See map) These are mostly rented spaces and must be available at all times to those who have paid for them. We appreciate your cooperation in respecting the rights of those areas that are not church property.

PRESCHOOL FOLDER

A folder will be used to transport parent letters, calendars, tuition checks and any other important information to and from parents and teachers. We hope to keep the parents informed of preschool events and to prevent information from getting misplaced by using this method. If you send tuition money in the preschool folder please put it in an envelope with your name on the envelope.

CONFERENCES/EVALUATIONS

We will be doing evaluations periodically during the school year to monitor your child's progress. If you feel the need for a conference please contact your child's teacher at anytime to arrange a time to meet.

BIRTHDAYS

You are more than welcome to send in treats for your child's birthday. We ask that you send in a small treat, such as, cupcakes, cookies, etc. You may send in a treat bag for each child in the class. This will be put in each child's cubby to open up at home. **Please no balloons or piñatas.** Just make arrangements with your child's teacher ahead of time for birthdays or any other thing you may wish to bring in, so they may incorporate it into their daily plans. If your child has a summer birthday, you may arrange a time with your child's teacher during the school year to celebrate.

SUPPLIES

Each child should have a roomy backpack that they are able to carry up and down the stairs each day for preschool. Please no backpacks with wheels. The backpack should be large enough to hold the child's lunch box, any projects or papers he/she may be bringing home, and their preschool folder. Any other supplies that may be needed will be requested in a letter from your child's teacher.

CLOTHES

Have your child dress comfortably and appropriately for preschool and the weather. We will go outside whenever possible, so dress them suitable for current weather conditions. Select shoes that provide support and comfort throughout the day. Please don't send your child in loose sandals or shoes that come off their feet easily. They go up and down stairs and play each day, so they need shoes that support these activities. Please send an extra set of clothes including underwear, which may be kept in your child's classroom in case of an accident. **Mark all clothing with your child's name and send it in a LABELED ZIPLOC BAG. Please remember to send in a different set of clothes at the change of each season.**

FIRE DRILLS

The preschool will hold practice fire drills throughout the year to prepare your child in case of a fire. The preschool is required to do one drill a month. We will practice these drills periodically during the school year. The children do very well with these drills, but if you have concerns, please contact the Director.

FIELD TRIPS

The three and four year old classes take several field trips throughout the school year. Some require a nominal fee to defray the cost. The state passed a law July 1st, 2007 that requires all children ages 8 and under to be in a car seat. If you are not transporting your own child to a field trip you must supply the school with a child car seat or your child will not be able to participate. **We will not transport any children not in a car seat.** Enclosed is a copy of the law and types of seats that are acceptable. We ask that all the children wear **RED** shirts or sweatshirts on these days. We have Discovery Preschool t-shirts and sweatshirts available to buy that are suitable for these occasions. We encourage parents to volunteer for the field trips. If you will be transporting other children, we will ask you to sign a form showing proof of a valid driver's license, and current automobile insurance.

Discovery Preschool School Calendar 2009-2010

School Begins	September 8 or 9
No School	November 2, 3
No School Thanksgiving Break	November 25, 26, 27
Christmas Program	December 18 @ 6:30 PM
Christmas Break	December 21-January 1
School Resumes	January 4
No School	January 18
No School	January 25
No School	February 15
No School	March 31
No School Spring Break	April 1, 2, 5
No School Apple Blossom	April 30
Last Day of School	May 28
Graduation Program (4's only)	May 28@ 6:00 PM

