

WELCOME TO MT. ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY

It is our goal, at Mt. Zion UMC Preschool to provide a Christian environment of developmental learning experiences. Through structure with loving, caring adults, we hope to be the first formal step in your child's life-long love of learning.

While attending Mt. Zion Preschool your child will participate in activities that reinforce:

- *Spiritual* growth through Bible stories, prayer and Chapel.
- *Intellectual* development through age appropriate lessons teaching colors, shapes, memory, number concepts, letters and more.
- *Physically* through small and large motor activities.
- *Socially* through positive interaction with other children and adults. Politeness and respect for others will be emphasized.
- *Emotionally* through literature, independent play and self-esteem programs.

We realize that each child develops at his/her own pace, and we encourage them to participate and grow accordingly. Each child will be positively reinforced for his/her efforts.

STAFFING

All staff members have met the necessary requirements for licensing from the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Child Care. The staff is comprised of a director, a teacher and an assistant in each class. The staff is governed by Mt. Zion Advisory Council, which consists of five congregation members and a church staff member.

RELIGION

Children from all religious backgrounds are welcome. The curriculum we use will reflect and teach the views of the Christian faith. Bible stories, verses, songs, dramatic activities and games will be used throughout the school year.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mt. Zion Preschool is open to all children regardless of race, sex, religion, or national origin. All children will receive the full benefits of our program and will be treated with dignity and respect.

ENROLLMENT

Children must be 2, 3 or 4 years of age by September 1st to enroll in our programs. The one day program is designed for 2- year olds, two and three day program for 3- year olds and the four day program for 4-year old students. A 3 and 4 year old combination class may be available as part of the 4 day program. Only 3 year olds with a fall birthday will be considered for this program. Children will be evaluated before admitted to this program.

Students entering the 2-year old class do not need to be toilet-trained, although we expect them to be working toward this goal. Pull-ups are **required**.

All other children must be toilet-trained prior to admittance into the programs unless a disability prevents toilet training and prior approval is obtained. The Director and the Preschool Council must be consulted for all exceptions or special arrangements.

The Maryland State Department of Education Division of Child Care requires that the following forms be completed and submitted before a child can be admitted to class:

1. Health Inventory Form (completed by Physician)
2. MD Immunization Form (completed by Physician)
3. Emergency Information Card
4. Lead Addendum (completed by Physician)

REGISTRATION

Mt. Zion Preschool requires a non-refundable registration and activity fee at the time of official registration. The class is filled on a first-come, first-served basis, in accordance with licensing regulations.

TUITION

Tuition is due by the 1st of each month for the subsequent month. All checks should be made out to Mt. Zion UMC Preschool. Bank fees for returned checks will be passed on to the family for reimbursement. If a problem should arise and prompt payment cannot be made, please contact the director immediately. A late fee of \$10 will be charged for tuition payments not paid by the **5th of the month**.

ASSESSMENTS

Children in the 3-yr. and 4-yr. old classes will be individually assessed in December/January and again at the end of the year in areas of fine and gross motor development, conceptual and academic skills in accordance with the Maryland State Department of Education guidelines. A report will be provided for parents and a mid-year conference will be scheduled to review the assessment.

SCHEDULE/POLICIES

Hours of Operation- 2 year old program is on Tuesday or Wednesday, 9:15 – 11:45. The 3 year-old program is on Tuesday and Thursday, 9:15 – 11:45 and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 – 3:00. The 4 year-old program is on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 9:00 – 11:30 and 12:30 – 3:00.

Arrival - Please sign in your child daily on the *Sign In Sheet* provided along with a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. Please do not enter the classroom before the scheduled time. The teachers need time to prepare for the day's activities in order to provide your child with their full attention and care. **Prompt arrival** is important. Many activities that determine your child's day are explained to the children at the beginning of the class. It is best for you and your child if you say a quick good-bye at the door. The tears dry up quickly when they get involved in an activity.

Dismissal- We also request that you be prompt in picking up your child. Parents of the 2-year olds are asked to come to the classroom to pick up your child. Three and four year old students will be brought to your car by the following procedure. You will be assigned a number that you must display in your car window. When you pull up one of our staff members will walk your child to your car and say good-bye. This will allow private comments regarding the day, and you will not need to bring younger children from your car. We hope this convenience will assist you. If someone other than the regular transportation provider is picking up your child, we must be notified in

writing or they will need to come inside, produce identification, and sign him or her out. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. If your routine daily transportation plans change we must be notified in writing. We require an acceptable photo ID of each person that has permission to pick up your child.

Your child depends on you to be on time and may feel insecure if you are late. Parents will be charged late fees according to the following schedule:

- 6-10 minutes late \$3.00
- 11-15 minutes late \$5.00
- 16-20 minutes late \$10.00

If parents are habitually late at pick-up time, we reserve the right to request that your child be withdrawn from the program. Please be courteous and on time. If an emergency happens or you are running late, please call so we can reassure your child.

Holidays and Closings – Mt. Zion Preschool will follow St. Mary's Public School calendar and will open after Labor Day and end before Memorial Day. In the case of inclement weather or emergency closing, we will follow the public schools. If the schools are opening 2 hrs. late, there will be no AM class. If schools close 2 hours early, there will be no PM class. Days missed due to inclement weather will not be made up at a later date. A specific school calendar will be provided. Mt. Zion reserves the right to close school due to inclement weather and in the event of church events, which impact the preschool. Emergency school evacuation plans are also available upon request.

DRESS CODE

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing that will allow your child to use the restroom with limited assistance. The children will be participating in art as well as playing outdoors daily, weather permitting. During inclement weather, the children will participate in physical activity in the Family Life Center. No open-toed shoes or flip-flops permitted. Please label any coats, sweaters etc., which may be removed. We ask that children wear their school t-shirts on field trips. During the warm months, sunscreen should be applied before coming to school.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Show and tell days will be designated by the teacher to support the curriculum. At other times, please do not allow your child to bring toys or special items to school unless discussed with the director. It is much easier for children to learn cooperation and sharing when the toys belong to everyone. No gum or candy will be allowed. If an item is brought to school, it will be kept in the Director's Office for safekeeping until it is time to go home.

SNACKS

Snacks will be provided which will include milk or water to drink. If your child has any food allergies, please notify the staff.

LUNCH

Children enrolled in the 4 year old program will be required to bring a small lunch on the designated day.

JUMP BUNCH

Children in the 4-year old program will participate in a physical education program. On Jump Bunch days the school day will be extended by 30 minutes.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special, and we can celebrate the birthdays during our regular snack time. Make arrangement in advance with the teacher to schedule a birthday celebration. Individual vanilla ice cream cups with toppings to add are recommended. Discuss with the teacher allergies in the class. Children will NOT be allowed to bring goodie bags for their classmates.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents will be given advance notice of all field trips. Cost of the field trips is included in the activity fee. Parents or designated adults are required to provide transportation for all field trips. Some field trips require that younger children may not attend.

ILLNESS

The Maryland State Department of Human Resources requires that all children brought to a childcare facility must be clean and in good health, therefore, we cannot accept any child who exhibits signs of illness (such as a fever of 100 or higher, respiratory /breathing difficulties, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, sore throat or any communicable disease (i.e. impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, head lice, etc.) We ask that you report any communicable disease to the director, as we are required to report this to the Health Department. Children who exhibit symptoms of illness after they are dropped off will be removed from their class and isolated with adult supervision until a parent can pick them up. Parents are expected to immediately pick up a sick child once notified. We are concerned with the health of your child as well as the health of our other children. **NOTE:** Re-admittance to the preschool will be allowed when the child is either free from all symptoms, has been on medication for 24 hours, or with a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and can return to school.

EMERGENCIES

The health and safety of your child is of our utmost concern. In the event of an accident, the staff will administer first aid and, if warranted, call you. In the case of a serious accident, the rescue squad will take your child to St. Marys Hospital. All teachers are first aid/CPR certified. You will be informed of bumps, small scratches and other small accidents or incidents of which you should be aware. *EMERGENCY CARDS MUST BE KEPT CURRENT AT ALL TIMES.*

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

It is our goal to guide children so that they can make appropriate choices in social and academic settings. Understanding limits, expectations and consideration for others will be emphasized. Please review the Behavior Management Program and sign your willingness of support on your contract.

IN CLOSING

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your child's Christian Education. Parents and God's loving care are the first and most important teachers. God Bless you and your child in the lifelong journey of Christian Growth.