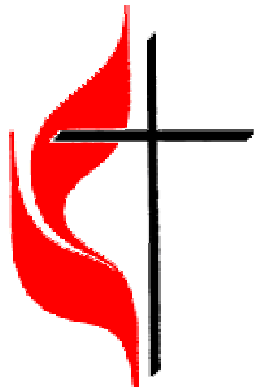


*Handbook
for
Parents & Guardians*



**St. Luke
United Methodist Church
Neighborhood Children's Program**

**FAITH
FUN
FRIENDS**

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Operating Information

Statement of Purpose and Philosophy

The Purpose of St. Luke Neighborhood Children's Program is to provide care for children in a safe and secure environment. It is an expression of the Church's response to Christ when He said, "Let the children come to me." In a caring Christian atmosphere, the children are encouraged to respect their own and others' rights, to share, and to handle responsibility.

Taking our philosophy from Luke 2:52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favor with God and man..." we want to help children grow in self-confidence, discover the ability to work and play cooperatively and develop a love and appreciation for each other and the world around them.

Telephone

During program hours (Summer 7:30-5:30), you may reach the Director or program staff by calling our mobile phone number, [402-9019](tel:402-9019). At other times, please call the church office at [843-2306](tel:843-2306). Church office hours are 8:30 am to 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm, Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 am to 11:30 on Friday. The phone will be answered by the church secretary or the pastor. An answering machine will respond when the office is closed or staff is not available. If there should be a catastrophic event, please do not call the mobile phone but, instead, leave that line open for emergency calling and proceed as soon as possible to the church to pick up your child.

Program Description

The daily program will include a nutritious snack, time for quiet activities, center activities, music, stories, and games. Supervised outdoor activities, when weather permits, will include both organized games and free play. Alternate indoor activities will include aerobic exercises and active games suited to the indoors. Field trips which extend concepts or which help acquaint students with the community are provided when appropriate. If the activity involves extra cost, parents or guardians are responsible for payment prior to participation.

Eligibility

Application should be made by completing an application form and all forms in the Registration Packet. Acceptance generally will be on a first-come, first-served basis, but the Board reserves the right to balance the population of the program as to age and gender. Children of members of St. Luke United Methodist Church will be given preference in enrollment.

To enter the Summer Program, children must be at least 5 years old and not older than 10 years by the start of the program.

Parents of children not chosen for the program will have the option of having their application forms kept on file in the event of any vacancies which may occur.

Calendar and Hours of Operation

The Summer Day Camp will begin following the dismissal of public schools for the summer. Hours of operation are 7:30 am until 5:30 pm. Memorial Day and Independence Day will be observed as holidays.

In the event of the loss of essential services (water, electricity, etc.) at the facility, parents will be called to come pick up their children.

Admission Procedures

St. Luke's program is licensed as required by Mississippi State Law. We comply with all regulations pertaining to licensure. Therefore, the admission procedure is not complete until all of your child's enrollment papers are on file in our office. The entire process must be completed within one week from the first day of attendance. If the student file is not complete within 7 days, your child will be excluded from the program.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) are responsible for updating their children's files regarding any changes in address, employment, phone numbers (home or work), doctor, family status, etc. Some of this information could directly affect children's safety or health. All forms must be updated annually.

All records are kept in the strictest confidence in accordance with Mississippi confidentiality laws.

Tuition

An application fee will be required and will be used for supplies. This application fee is refundable only if your child is not accepted to the program. In case the program is filled, you will be given the option of remaining on the waiting list.

A current payment schedule and due dates are included in the registration packet. Prompt payment of fees is expected. Non-payment is cause for dismissal by the Board. If payment is not received on the due date, you will have a grace period of 4 days to make payment. If payment is not received by the end of the week it is due, your child will not be allowed to attend the program until payment is made.

In families with more than one child attending the program, full tuition will be charged for the first child and each additional child will receive a reduction in tuition.

Full tuition will be charged regardless of the number of days of attendance. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by the Board. There will be no refunds for days missed due to illness, trips, music lessons, and other such activities.

There will be a \$30.00 late fee assessed for the handling of any returned checks. The second returned check will result in acceptance of cash only for continued participation in the After School Program.

We offer the option of paying tuition by EFT. Please speak with the church secretary for more information about this procedure.

A limited number of scholarships may be available. Application may be made through the program director or the church office.

Tuition payments cover teacher salaries, supplies, and refreshments. Most equipment has been donated. The congregation of St. Luke supplies housing, insurance, and utilities. We appreciate the generosity of St. Luke's congregation for supporting this children's program.

Donations are welcomed whether in the form of supplies, snacks, funds, or time.

Insurance

St. Luke United Methodist Church has General Liability Insurance. Accident insurance is not provided and is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Custody

If custody is a situation applicable to your child, a copy of the custody papers--a legal document-- must be on file in our office. This is the only way we may legally deny access to a child by the parent in question. It is the custodial parent's or guardian's responsibility to supply this document.

Withdrawal/Removal/Late Fees

We ask that a two-week written notice of withdrawal be submitted so that we may fill the vacancy promptly. Tuition is payable for this period whether your child attends or not. Withdrawal forms are available from the church secretary or the director.

The Board reserves the right to dismiss permanently any child whose disruptive behavior may not be controlled by the means listed under "Guidance and Discipline." There are no refunds for such dismissal.

Non-payment of fees is cause for dismissal by the Board.

Habitual late pick-up will be cause for dismissal from the program. The Director and the Board will determine when to dismiss a child from the program due to lateness of pick-up. There are no refunds for such dismissal.

Failure of the parent or guardian to complete required enrollment paperwork in a timely fashion is cause for dismissal without refund.

Arrival and Departure Procedures for Children

Inform the staff in writing if your child is to be picked up by anyone other than those designated on the registration form.

You must escort your child into the building and sign your child in with your full name on the attendance list each day, as well as coming into the building to sign your child out. No one under the age of 18 may sign children in or out. Staff will ask for ID if a person other than a parent signs a child out. Copies of schedules, plans for the week, newsletters, and memos will be posted by the sign-in and sign-out lists.

When you bring your child to the program or come to pick up your child, please enter from Deering Street and park your vehicle in a designated parking place. **Do not park in front of the Fellowship Hall door.** Please do not use the circular drive during the program hours for safety reasons. Please exit the parking lot on Deering Street.

Consequences of Failure to Pick Up a Child

If a child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m., staff will notify local law enforcement officials to pick up the child. Habitual late pick-up will be cause for dismissal from the program. The Director and the Board will determine when to dismiss a child from the program due to lateness of pick-up. There are no refunds for such dismissal.

Program and Activities Information

Clothing and Belongings

Please dress your child in simple, washable clothing. The children will have a period of outdoor play, except in extreme weather conditions, so dress your child so that he/she can stay warm and dry. It is recommended that younger children bring an extra set of clothing to leave at the center. All clothing brought to the center (swimsuits, cover-ups, etc.) must be marked with the child's name.

Licensing regulations require that each child's belongings be stored separately, and cubbies are provided for this purpose. If your child has a backpack or other item that will not fit in a cubby, other areas are provided for storage. Please encourage your child to put his belongings in his proper space each day so they will not be misplaced. Please be sure that your child takes everything home each day.

Children are not allowed to bring cell phones to the program.

Guidance and Discipline

Every effort will be made to provide a caring, cooperative, productive atmosphere for children. Positive reinforcement encourages appropriate behavior in children. All discipline will be carried out in a positive manner. It is our goal to help children develop inner control so that they can manage their own behavior in socially acceptable ways. Preventive management will be used to:

1. reinforce appropriate behavior as often as possible
2. redirect misbehaviors
3. praise appropriate behaviors
4. plan activities which encourage appropriate behavior

When disciplinary guidance is necessary, however, one of the following means of discipline will be used:

1. exclusion (time-out) – supervised time-out or isolation from the group for a brief period of time
2. limitation of privileges - denial or limitation of privileges such as an activity, use of materials, etc. (not to include snacks or outdoor play)

The staff, in these situations, will:

- direct the discipline toward teaching the child to understand and practice acceptable behavior
- use it as an opportunity to build self esteem
- be consistent
- never be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to the child
- use strategies that are individualized and appropriate to the child's level of understanding

Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of disruptive behavior and asked to return a signed discipline form indicating they have discussed the incident with the child.

The board reserves the right to dismiss permanently any child whose disruptive behavior may not be controlled by the means noted above. There are no refunds for such dismissal.

The use of physical (corporal) punishment is never permitted. This includes, but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, etc.

**St. Luke United Methodist Church
Neighborhood Children's Program**

Disciplinary Action Form

Child's Name _____ Date _____ Time _____

Location of Incident _____ Referring Staff Member _____

Incident Summary (detailed description of the incident, including names of individuals involved)

SAMPLE

Action(s) Taken

SAMPLE

Director's Summary (Describe any previous disciplinary actions taken for the same offense)

_____ Disciplinary Action Form filed, no parent contact attempted at this time.

_____ Parent contacted by phone on _____ time _____ .

_____ Unable to make contact with parent, form sent home on _____ .

_____ Conference was held by _____ phone or _____ in person on _____ .

Transportation Policy

St. Luke Summer Day Camp will not transport any child to or from the program. All field trips must be approved by the Board. Transportation arrangements will adhere to Section 15 of the Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities of the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Staff will not be responsible for transportation of children to non-program activities.

Photographs

Children enrolled in the Summer Day Camp will not be photographed without prior written permission of the parent or guardian.

Extracurricular Activities

Parents are responsible for their child's participation in extracurricular activities not sponsored by the Neighborhood Children's Program, including but not limited to football, baseball, softball, soccer, ballet, gymnastics, music, or scouts. There can be no refunds for program time missed due to such activities.

Outdoor Activities

Planning for all outdoor activities will include sun-safe practices, including application of sunscreen with parent's permission. Sun-safe practices will be used between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. Outdoor activities will be held in areas providing shade or covered spaces. Swimming and water activities will be supervised in adherence to Section 19 of the Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities of the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Field Trips

Field trips may be planned during the Summer program for the purpose of enhancing a concept and/or utilizing community resources. Children must have permission slips signed in order to participate in any field trip. If for any reason you change your mind about allowing your child to participate, you must inform the staff prior to the scheduled trip.

Health and Emergency Procedures

Health Guidelines

You are urged to keep your child at home if he seems to show any sign of illness. If your child runs a fever, make sure he is free of fever for at least 24 hours before returning to the program. This is for his own benefit as well as for the benefit of other children in the program.

If your child becomes ill, you will be notified. Should he have a contagious disease, please let the church office or one of the staff members know immediately so that other parents can be notified.

MS State Department of Health Exclusion Guidelines

Keep your child home if any of the following conditions are present:

Fever:	Defined as 100 ° F or higher taken under the arm, 101° F taken orally, or 102 ° taken rectally.
Diarrhea:	Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools.
Vomiting:	Two or more times in a 24-hour period.
Rash:	Body rash <u>with a fever</u> .
Sore throat:	Sore throat with <u>fever</u> and swollen glands.
Severe coughing:	The child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
Eye discharge:	Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye.
Jaundice:	Yellow eyes and skin.
Irritability:	<u>Continuous</u> irritability and crying.

Children Requiring Medication

Medication will not be administered by the staff. Parents are welcome to come to the center to administer needed medication to their own child. Any exceptions must have Board approval.

Children Who Become Ill During Program Hours

If a child becomes ill during program hours, staff will contact the parent/guardian or other adult on the emergency contact list to pick up the child. The child will be isolated in a separate room with staff supervision until such time as an authorized adult arrives for him.

Emergency Medical Care/Emergency Transportation Plan

In the event of an accident, the staff will follow standard first aid procedures.

In the event of an illness, accident, or serious injury, parents will be notified immediately to pick up the child or make arrangements with another family member to do so as quickly as possible. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will utilize the emergency contact information. If, however, parents or other adults cannot be reached and if medical attention is needed immediately, the child will be taken to the emergency room unless otherwise indicated on the emergency contact form. If it is necessary for staff to transport a child in a personal vehicle for emergency medical care, the driver shall be appropriately licensed and seat restraints shall be used. No children shall be transported in the front seat of a vehicle equipped with passenger-side air bags.

In the event that medical treatment for your child is waived and a medical emergency occurs, if in the judgment of the staff it is safe to move the child, the child will be isolated in a classroom with a staff member present, until the parent arrives. If in the judgment of the staff the child should not be moved, a staff member will remain with the child until the parent arrives.

Please make sure that the emergency information we have on file (phone numbers, doctor preference, etc.) is kept up to date throughout the year. Please notify us immediately of changes.

Procedures for Notifying Parents of Communicable Diseases

If staff are informed of the outbreak of a communicable disease among children in the program, parents/guardians will be notified and provided with guidelines from the MS State Department of Health.

Policy on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect will be made to the Mississippi Department of Human Services and/or local law enforcement officials in accordance with state law. Because abused or neglected children requiring immediate attention are often identified after traditional business hours of the Mississippi Department of Human Services, reports of this nature shall also be made to local law enforcement.

Policy on Smoking, Prohibited Substances, and Weapons

St. Luke United Methodist Church is a no-smoking facility. Smoking is prohibited in the building and on the grounds. Alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited in the building and on the grounds. Firearms and dangerous weapons are prohibited in the building and on the grounds.

Dangerous Situations Policy

Bomb Threat: Staff will call 911. The Director will be notified immediately. The building will be evacuated immediately, until a search of the building by the police has been completed. An Executive Officer of the Board will be notified once conditions have been normalized.

Individual with weapon: The Director will be notified immediately. The Director will decide if it is an emergency. If warranted, the Director will call 911 and report the last known location of the individual and description of the individual. All caregivers will be notified and will collect the children under their care and secure themselves in a classroom. Caregivers outside with children will remove the children under their care to the grounds of Parks Elementary School until the situation has been normalized. An Executive Officer of the Board will be notified once conditions have been normalized.

Violent individual: Staff will call 911. The Director will be notified immediately. Caregivers will remove children under their care from the proximity of the violent individual if at all possible and secure them in a classroom. Caregivers outside with children will remove the children under their care to the grounds of Parks Elementary School until the situation has been normalized. An Executive Officer of the Board will be notified once conditions have been normalized.

Emergency Relocation Plan

In the event of an emergency situation requiring evacuation of the facility, the primary relocation area for children and staff will be 1st United Methodist Church, 318 South Court Street. If it is not possible to relocate to 1st United Methodist Church, the children and staff will walk in a group or be transported by bus, if possible, to Shipman Chapel United Methodist Church, located on North Bayou Road. Staff members will make every effort to notify parents by telephone in the event of a relocation.

Nutritional Guidelines

Lunch

Due to the nature of the program, we will not provide lunches. During the Summer program, the parent/guardian must provide lunch and drink. Lunches will be refrigerated until served. Please do not send lunches that must be heated in oven or microwave.

The following policies are required by the licensing agency:

1. Each individual child's lunch brought from home shall be clearly labeled with the child's name, the date, and the type of food.
2. All food shall be stored at an appropriate temperature until eaten.
3. The food brought from one child's home shall not be fed to another child.
4. Children shall not share their food.
5. Food brought from home shall meet the child's nutritional requirements and the standards set forth in the regulations.
6. If a child's sack lunch does not meet the minimum nutritional standards for the child's age, the facility shall be required to supplement the lunch with items that meet the nutritional requirements.
7. Parents shall be notified in writing if a child's sack lunch does not meet the nutritional requirements of the child. The notice shall contain instructions as to what foods are proper for a sack lunch.

Snacks

Snacks which meet nutritional requirements will be provided. In the Summer program, a morning and an afternoon snack will be served.

Snacks may be provided by parents provided they meet nutritional standards. Snacks should be nutritious, filling and attractive. They should encourage children to try new foods and should present a variety of colors, textures, and tastes. In selecting snack foods, avoid high levels of sugar, fat, and salt.

The following are some suggestions for snacks:

Raw fruits and vegetables	Muffins
Dips for fruits and vegetables	Cheese
Cheese toast	Finger gelatin
Meat sticks	Raisins
Dry cereal (watch sugar content)	Popcorn
Graham crackers	Cookies
Saltine crackers	Bread sticks
Custard	Milk
Hard-boiled eggs	Fruit juice
Yogurt	Water

Ways Parents/Guardians Can Help

1. You are welcome and encouraged to visit the Program, provided that your presence is not disruptive to daily activities.
2. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home unless he/she is willing to share.
3. Encourage your child to bring books for story time.
4. For the Summer program, provide an extra set of clothing at the center for your K-5 child, in case of accident or other need.
5. Mark your child's swimsuit, cover-up, towel, and other belongings, including toys and books, with his/her full name.
6. If you and your child wish to share something with the class, please check with the Director ahead of time regarding items and quantities.
7. If you wish to provide snacks for the class, please see the snack list for suggestions.
8. Take time to listen to your child's daily experiences in relation to the Program.
9. Confer with the Director or Board members about your child, but please refrain from discussing the child in his/her presence or in front of other children. If any problems should arise, please feel free to contact any of the above persons, beginning with the Director, for a private conference. Anything discussed will be kept confidential.
10. Please make any changes in your child's records to keep them current. ALL RECORDS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.
11. Please remember that children must be picked up by the parent or guardian or other adult specified by the parent/guardian. Exceptions will be made only with written authorization, and ID will be required.
12. Donations of craft supplies, snacks, and equipment, as well as your time spent with the children sharing your talents and playing games will be appreciated.

State Licensing Regulations

Summary and Contact Information

A summary of the licensing regulations is included at the end of this handbook. This summary includes information for contacting the Mississippi State Department of Health licensing official responsible for the inspection of the center. The Child Care Facility Complaint Hot Line number is 1-866-489-8734.



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,

The *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities* require that child care providers supply you with a summary of the Child Care Regulations that govern the licensure of child care facilities. You will find that information below.

The Child Care Regulations are the rules and regulations that each child care facility in Mississippi must follow in order to maintain their Child Care License. You, as a parent, are entitled access to these regulations. Among the subjects covered in the Child Care Regulations are:

Licensing Requirements	Health, Hygiene, and Safety	School-Age Care
Right of Entry and Violations	Nutrition and Meals	Summer Day Camp & School-Age Programs
Facility Policies and Procedures	Discipline and Guidance	Hourly Child Care
Personnel Requirements	Transportation	Hearings, Emergency
Records	Diapering and Toileting	Suspensions, Legal Action and Penalties
Reports	Rest Periods	Release of Information
Staff Requirements	Feeding of Infants and Toddlers	
Program of Activities	Swimming and Water Activities	
Equipment, Toys, and Materials	Children with Special Needs	
Building and Grounds	Night Care	

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statutes	Appendix F - Handwashing Procedure
Appendix B - Reportable Diseases	Appendix G - Diaper Changing Procedure
Appendix C - Nutritional Standards	Appendix H - Cleaning and Disinfection Procedure
Appendix E - Dishwashing Procedure	Appendix I - Communicable Disease/Conditions and Return to Child Care Guidelines

A full copy of the Child Care regulations should be located in the Director's office of your child care facility. It should be available for your examination upon request. You may also access the Regulations at www.healthymms.com (from the left menu, select Regulations and Licensure, then Child Care). You may direct your questions to the local licensing official, or you may contact the Child Care Licensure office in Jackson at (601) 364-2827.

Should you have a complaint concerning a child care facility, contact the licensing official listed above or call the Child Care Licensure office, toll free, at **1-866-489-8734**.