

First United Methodist Church  
Preschool  
HANDBOOK

201 S Road St  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

252-335-7615

## History of First United Methodist Church Preschool

First United Methodist Church participated in the Elizabeth City Ministerial Association's Elizabeth City Kindergarten from 1946-1975. It consisted of 4 churches taking turns serving as hostess. It was dissolved with the beginning of public kindergarten.

In 1979 Brenda Sanders and Jodi Lauria received support from the church council to start a preschool program here.

Busy Bee Preschool began under their leadership. With their job opportunities elsewhere, Laurie Jennings was asked to head the preschool program beginning 1980-1981. First United Methodist Preschool began with a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday program. In a few years a Mother's Morning Out babysitting service was begun on Mondays and Fridays. Eventually it was turned into one 5 day program.

## F.U.M.C. Preschool Program Mission Statement

We the Preschool Staff and the members of First United Methodist Church pledge to provide a safe Christian atmosphere in which young children can learn and develop socially, emotionally, academically, physically, and spiritually.

The F.U.M.C. Preschool program welcomes all children regardless of race, religion, or sex. **QUALITY CARE OF CHILDREN IS OUR NUMBER ONE CONCERN.**

We use developmentally appropriate instructional methods and tools to help children learn how to relate with other children and adults and how to grow in their own skills and abilities.

Teachers will plan activities to:

Encourage children to express themselves through materials, movement, and language.  
Encourage children to develop positive attitudes toward teachers, school, and learning.  
Encourage independence.

Encourage children to explore the environment and to develop curiosity and questioning ability which will promote future learning.

Encourage children to develop good self images and feelings of success.

Encourage children to learn by example and teaching.

## Enrollment Information

Enrollment begins each year in February for the fall programming. Classroom registrations are taken in the following order:

1. Current students
2. Siblings of current students
3. Members of First United Methodist Church
4. Open enrollment

All registrations are accepted and noted with date and time of their arrival in the preschool. Classes will be filled in the order registrations are received without exception.

Registration packets will be available on a date in February that will be announced. It is your responsibility to be aware of advertised dates for the registration process.

## Fees and Payments

Registration Fee:	\$50
Toddler Time Program:	\$65 per month (1 day)
Two Day Program:	\$95 per month
Three Day Program:	\$130 per month
Five Day Program:	\$210 per month

Payment is expected by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. A late fee will be assessed for accounts not paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> at a rate of \$10 per week unpaid. Checks are payable to FUMC Preschool.

Please check your child's folder for an envelope at the end of each month to be used for the next month's payment. Return payment with your child to school or send it to: 201 S Road St Elizabeth City, NC 27909 ATTN: Preschool

### Late Pick -Up Fees

Late fees will be assessed for not picking up your child promptly at the end of each school session. If preschool staff must wait beyond dismissal time for your arrival, you will be charged \$3 per minute. Payment of all late pick-up charges is due within five (5) days of receipt or additional fees will be applied.

### Returned Check Fee

There is a \$25 charge for any returned checks. In the event that two (2) checks are returned on your child's account, future tuition payments may only be paid by cash or money order.

## Drop Off and Pick Up Instructions

We look forward to our time each day with your child, but we ask for your cooperation regarding drop off and pick up times. Please note the appropriate times for your child. We use the time noted on cell phones as the "correct time". Please plan accordingly.

### Drop Off Time

8:45-9:00 a.m. for all programs all days

Please do not bring your child before the scheduled drop off time....this is our teachers preparation time.

Our classes are ready to begin at 9:00 am. Our time with your children is limited and we want to make the most of it. Please make every effort to arrive on time. Arriving late for a class that is already in session is disruptive to everyone.

### Pick Up Time

All toddler time and two year old classes release between 11:35- 11:45.

All three year old classes release between 11:45-11:55.

All four year old classes release between 11:55-12:05.

Please note if you are not in the pickup line at the end of your child's release time, you will be charged a late fee. (Refer to previous information regarding late pick-up fees.)

## Curbside Service with a Smile

To help transition your child into the classroom, please use our curbside service. As you pull in front of our curbside area, our staff will open your car door and escort your child inside. If you use this service, we ask for your assistance in keeping the line moving. Have your child ready when our staff approaches your car. If you need to speak to someone at length, please pull into the parking lot.

For pick ups, please place your colored name card in your driver's side visor or windshield so that preschool staff can identify who you are picking up. Please pull forward and we will open your car door and help your child in the car. Our staff cannot buckle your child into a carseat! Drive slowly as other children are being escorted across the street.

If you desire to walk your child in or are picking up early, please park in the church parking lot, not on the road.

\*If your child is in Toddler Time, you will need to drop off and pick up from the classroom.

## Authorized Pick Ups

Your child will be released only to those named on your authorized pick-up list. Please give each person on the list a color card to keep in their car to use for curbside service.

Preschool staff reserves the right to ask for picture identification before releasing children.

If you have any changes to your child's transportation arrangements, please send it to your child's teacher IN WRITING.

## Daily Bible Devotion

All classes will have a daily bible devotion. We want to instill the knowledge of Bible stories, lessons, and biblical concepts (love, forgiveness, patience, etc.) to our children.

## Sharing Time (Show and Tell)

Some teachers may have your child bring in an item from home to share with the class. Please do not have your child bring any toy items to school that are scary, that resemble weapons, that are valuable, or may get easily broken.

## Discipline

At all times we will love and care for your children. We will also promote acceptable behavior to ensure that all children are safe and comfortable. During class time, our teachers will offer close supervision, give their attention to the children, offer praise and encouragement, and redirect behavior if needed.

If children are disrupting the classroom or putting other children at risk, a time out approach will be used. A time out approach is a temporary removal of the child from the situation.

We will follow three steps:

1. Remove the child from the activity/situation to a quiet place within the classroom.
2. Explain to the child why he/she has been removed from the activity.

3. Encourage the child to return to the activity when he/she can stop the inappropriate behavior. The length of time for time out will not exceed one minute per year of the child.

If the behavior does not change, the teacher will remove the child from the classroom and the child will stay with the director. If all techniques do not change the behavior, preschool staff may request a conference with the parents to determine the best course of action.

## Dismissals

The preschool may discontinue admission to class if the child fails to adjust to group experiences or if the parent fails to:

Provide current health and immunization information

Pay tuition and fees in a timely manner (past 6 weeks)

Keep program policies and procedures

## Celebrations

Children enjoy special days and parties. The preschool will observe these holidays:

Fall Party in October (no costumes)

Thanksgiving in November

Christmas in December

Valentine's Day in February

Easter in Spring

Parent participation is needed during the celebrations. Parents are asked to take the lead in planning the event in the classroom. A sign up sheet is available with your child's teacher. Please see the director for ideas and suggestions.

## Birthdays

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday. Let your child's teacher know when you would like to have a party. Your teacher will need advanced notice. You may provide a special snack to share with the class, as long as classroom allergies are taken into account. Please do not bring balloons or piñatas. Please choose age appropriate snacks, themes and other miscellaneous items. If parents choose to provide treat bags, children will not be allowed to open them until they get home. Siblings are welcome to attend birthday parties.

## Field Trips

Field trips are a wonderful way to learn, see and touch. Field trips will be age appropriate and within reasonable travel distance. Plenty of adult supervision will be

needed. Planned trips will be announced in advance and permission slips will be sent home. A small fee may be charged to attend. Siblings may not be allowed on some of our field trips.

## Visitation

We encourage parental involvement in your child's educational experience. Parents are welcome to observe their child's classroom at any time. However, if you accompany your child into school in the morning, refrain from staying as the teachers begin the school day. If you wish to talk extensively with the teacher, please schedule a time so that you and the teacher can have an uninterrupted conversation.

## Conferences

All parents of four year olds will receive progress reports in February and will have the opportunity for a scheduled parent-teacher conference in April.

At any time throughout the year, please feel free to request a conference if you have questions or concerns about your child's progress and experience.

## What Do We Need?

### Backpacks

Your child will need a good sized backpack to handle each day's work and notes for parents. Please label with first and last name. Check backpacks for your child's folder everyday for notes and information. This is how we communicate with you!

### Snacks

A snack time is scheduled each day for your child's class. You are responsible for providing your child's snack. Please label your child's lunch box or containers. Due to time constraints, we ask that you only send a drink and one food item with your child. Consider a snack that will be easy for your child to handle and will provide energy for the rest of the day. Please also consider not sending whole grapes, popcorn, whole hot dogs, or other foods that are known to choke children. We ask that you send a healthy snack. Please do not send gum, candy, or soda. We are happy to help your child open packaging, but please be considerate of the teacher's time and do not send unpeeled oranges, microwavable popcorn, or other snacks that require time consuming preparation.

Provide drinks in spillproof containers, not glass.

We also ask for your sensitivity and concern for children in our preschool with food allergies.

## Clothing

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes that they can fasten and unfasten independently. We will play outside, weather permitting. Please label all jackets, sweaters, coats, etc. In the beginning of the year, please send an extra outfit in a labeled zip lock bag. We will hold it for the year in case of an emergency.

## Withdrawals

Written notice is required for withdrawing your child from FUMC Preschool programs. As stated on the registration form, two weeks' notice is required (equivalent of ½ month tuition). Please note that any withdrawals after April 30 will require payment of May tuition in full.

## Health and Wellness Policies

In an effort to keep our preschool as healthy as possible, please keep your child at home if they have noticeable signs of illness. Children will not be permitted to stay at preschool with the following symptoms:

Elevated temperature

Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours

Pink Eye

Contagious rash

Suspicion of communicable disease (chicken pox, measles, impetigo, strep throat, lice, etc.)

Inability to participate in preschool activities

Please be respectful of other families in our preschool by keeping your child at home during illness. Your child is welcome back when he/she is ready for a full preschool schedule.

Please contact the director if your child has a communicable disease so that other families can take precautions. All personal information will remain confidential.

## Inclement Weather Policy

FUMC Preschool follows the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank School System for both holidays and school closures. Even if you do not have school-age children, it is your responsibility to monitor information about school delays and closings. Please listen to local TV and radio for school closings mentioned for Elizabeth City-Pasquotank School System. The director will also send out an email announcing the closure. Missed days will not be rescheduled.



In the case of delayed openings, due to weather (whether it be a one or two hour delay), FUMC  
Preschool will open doors at 10 am to start taking in children. We will offer curbside service  
from 10am until 10:15am. We will release at the regularly scheduled time.

Please print out this page, sign and return to your child's teacher.

I have read the FUMC Preschool Handbook.

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Parent Signature

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Date

