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# **PHILOSOPHY**

The United Methodist Preschool of Morris provides a Christian atmosphere where young children can learn through their play during center and group activities. The values of sharing, caring for themselves, others, and the world around them are stressed. These values will be fostered through various activities including Bible stories and Christian music. At no time is denomination discussed.

## **AREAS OF CONCENTRATION**

Your child will learn about many different topics throughout the school year by participating in an environment that encourages active learning at his/her own pace. In addition to teacher-guided activities such as storytelling, singing, games and reading, your child will learn and enrich skills and concepts through learning centers. A few examples of learning centers include reading/storytelling, writing, math, science, music, art, drama, transportation, and block/building. We want your child's preschool experience to be a fun and enjoyable adventure.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

- To develop an awareness of the wonder of learning
- To develop an awareness of the wonders of God's creation
- To assist young children in developing positive self-esteem
- To encourage social and emotional growth
- To foster independence and self-confidence
- To encourage group cooperation and the development of appropriate social behavior
- To develop gross and fine motor skills
- To provide learning opportunities through exploration and discovery
- To develop the ability for effective communication through listening and speaking
- To nurture creativity and self-expression

# 2022-2023 PRESCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Barbara Ewalt  
815/942-5428

Abby Wilkinson  
815/600-3457

Leann Hill  
815/942-5938

Michelle Macdonald  
815/712-7847

Stephanie Olson  
815/557-9069

Linda Klepp  
815/258-5965

## Ex-Officio Board Members

Rev. Dr. Keck Mowry  
815/942-0809

Rev. Ayla Samson  
815/942-0809

Suzanne Phillips, Director  
815/942-0809

## PRESCHOOL STAFF

**Suzanne Phillips** is our Director/Teacher. This is her sixth year with the preschool and her second year as director. She is also a former preschool aide and preschool parent. She has experience as a Kindergarten paraprofessional as well as a Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> grade substitute teacher.

**Mrs. Kelly Durdan** is our Teacher's Aide. This is her second year as a preschool aide, and she is also a former preschool parent. She has a lifetime of experience in childcare and development as her mother has owned and operated a state licensed in-home day care for 40 years. Our preschool is also blessed with amazing substitute teachers that have supported and taught at our preschool for over 45 years! You may know them: Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Klepp and Mrs. Woodard

## **DEVELOPMENTAL CONCEPTS**

We will be fostering learning by providing an atmosphere of play and safe experimentation using developmentally appropriate practices.

### **Social Emotional**

- \* Encouraging play with other children
- \* Encouraging taking turns and sharing
- \* Encouraging appropriate emotional expressions
- \* Creating an awareness/concern for another's feelings
- \* Providing activities that extend attention spans
- \* Providing activities that introduce responsibility
- \* Identifying the humor in absurd events/sights/sounds

### **Cognitive**

- \* Name & letter recognition/formation practice
- \* Numbers recognition/counting
- \* Basic color & shape recognition
- \* Basic body parts recognition
- \* Grouping, sorting, and matching objects
- \* Patterning, sequencing, and prediction
- \* Directional and positional concepts
- \* Calendar & time concepts
- \* Simple opposites

## **Speech and Language**

- \* Nursery rhyme play
- \* Using repetition and nonsense words
- \* Singing and storytelling
- \* Encouraging dramatic play
- \* Encouraging listening and following directions
- \* Using multiple word sentence structure
- \* Using problem solving language

## **Fine Motor**

- \* Encouraging pencil grasp
- \* Cutting with scissors
- \* Stringing beads
- \* Placing pegs in peg board/soft surfaces
- \* Building with blocks
- \* Drawing lines, shapes, objects, and people
- \* Rolling and shaping play dough

## **Gross Motor**

- \* Walking up/downstairs alternating feet
- \* Walking on tiptoes
- \* Dancing
- \* Hopping and jumping
- \* Skipping and galloping
- \* Throwing, catching, and kicking a ball
- \* Balancing on a beam and on one foot

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

Any child who is 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> is eligible for enrollment in the 3-year-old program. Any child who is 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> is eligible for enrollment in the 4-year-old program. Any child who is 5 years old and would benefit from an additional year of preschool will be considered for enrollment. Any child who is eligible for enrollment must also be toilet trained. This includes no pull-ups or diapers.

## **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

The following requirements must be met for enrollment:

### **BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

Each child enrolling in the preschool must have presented a certified birth certificate within 30 days of admission date and a photocopy will be kept on file.

### **MEDICAL PHYSICAL**

Each child enrolling in the preschool must submit a completed physical signed by a physician. All immunizations are current including Varicella (chicken pox) and up to date and that each child be assessed for lead screening and TB screening. Physicals are good for two years. Physicals must be on file before your child can attend class.

### **VISION and HEARING SCREENINGS**

Each child enrolling in the preschool must submit evidence of an annual vision and hearing screening performed by their private physician or the parent hereby waives permission to have the Grundy County Health Department conduct a vision screening and a hearing screening on their child during class time for a fee. If a child fails to pass a screening, a follow-up appointment must be completed within 30 days of the initial screening.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Self-discipline is taught by following consistent routines. Classroom rules are based on consideration for others and self. Many discipline techniques are used to avoid causing frustration and confrontation. We think of discipline in a positive way – pointing out behavior we would like to see instead of what the child is doing wrong. Knowing what is expected helps with self-control. It's important that your child knows that preschool is NOT all play. He/She will be expected to participate in many activities while in school.

When a child is exhibiting disruptive behavior, he/she will be removed from the group to the Quiet Table located within view of the teachers; this allows the child space for calming their mind/body yet allows them to be present in the group. There are books and quiet activities available to aid in calming down. The child may rejoin the group when he/she feels back in control.

## **CLASSROOM RULES**

Here are a few rules that we ask the children to follow. Please discuss them with your child before starting school and frequently throughout the year.

1. Use walking feet.
2. Use an inside voice.
3. Sit carefully on chairs.
4. Share and take turns.
5. No toy guns or weapons.
6. Stay in classroom.
7. Sit at circle time.
8. Respond when called.
9. Play carefully with toys. No throwing or kicking.
10. Be kind and friendly to everyone.

## **TUITION PAYMENT**

Monthly tuition rates are as follows:

MWF am = \$150.00

MW pm/TTh am = \$125.00

Tuition is due ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH. Payment is made one month in advance. Checks are payable to the UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL. A receipt will be given for cash payments only, except upon request. A payment envelope will be sent home each month to return with tuition payment.

The tuition for each class is determined by an annual budgeted amount divided into 9 equal monthly payments. It is in no way to be considered a "\$ per hour" expense. Therefore, some months have more attendance days than others. There will not be a reduction in tuition due to illness, emergency, vacation, or discharge.

## **LATE FEES**

If tuition is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, there will be a \$5.00 late fee. If payment has not been received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, there will be a \$10.00 late fee. At that time, your child will not be able to attend school. All debts must be paid in full before your child can return to school or before a younger sibling can enroll at the United Methodist Preschool.

## **DELINQUENT CHECKS**

If the bank returns your check due to insufficient funds, we will need to be reimbursed the amount of the check, plus any bank charges.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Authorization for the release of the records of a student must be in writing by the student's parents or guardians. Records will be released only to persons authorized in writing by the student's parents or guardians.



## **ARRIVAL POLICY**

Please bring your child **NO EARLIER** than 5 minutes before class begins to ensure that a teacher will be present and ready for children. It is your responsibility to ensure that your child is safely inside the classroom. Preschool children are **NOT** to be carried up or down the preschool stairs. Transportation to and from preschool is the parent's responsibility. If a parent chooses to carpool, it is an individual decision and not under the direction of the United Methodist Preschool. An arrival/departure log is located at the top of the stairs. Your child must be signed in by whomever brings him/her to preschool. There is also a basket for any paperwork being returned for Mrs. Phillips.

## **DEPARTURE POLICY**

Please be prompt in picking up your child. There is a late charge for pickup. The fee is as follows:

15 min. = \$5.00

30 min. = \$10.00

45 min. = \$15.00

1 hour = Authorities will be notified

Children will be released **ONLY** to their parents or to whomever is listed in writing on the admission application. A name may be added or deleted at any time. To amend your child's pickup list, please complete an authorization form, listing the person's name, address and phone number. These are available by the arrival/departure log.

Whoever picks up your child will sign beside your child's name on the arrival/departure log. We **WILL** ask to see a photo ID if someone we do not know comes to pick up your child.

If there are any custodial arrangements or court orders that affect your child, we will need a copy of these documents for your child's file.

## CLASS SCHEDULES

### 4-year-old classes:

Mon/Wed/Fri mornings (MWF am) from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

### 3-year-old classes:

Mon/Wed afternoons (MW pm) from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Tues/Thurs mornings (TTH am) from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

### OPENING/ CIRCLE TIME

*MW 3-year-old classes: 1:00 PM-1:25 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 9:00 AM-9:25 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 9:00 AM-9:35 AM*

A teacher-guided group gathering during which topics are discussed using songs, finger plays and stories. Circle time also will include reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and updating the calendar, weather, colors, numbers, and letter of the day.

### PLAY/CENTERS

*MW 3-year-old classes: 1:25 PM-2:15 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 9:25 AM-10:15 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 9:35 AM-10:40 AM*

A variety of hands-on centers will be provided and scheduled in 10–12-minute increments. These centers encourage making discoveries, problem-solving and foster development at an individual pace. A take-home craft will usually be made during this time. We will also display the children's work throughout the classroom.

Various play activities are set-up throughout the classroom to encourage cooperative play, enhance social skills and increase self-esteem. The children may choose any of the activities which may appeal to them.

### ACTIVE PLAY

*MW 3-year-old classes: 2:15 PM-2:30 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 10:15 AM-10:30 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 10:40 AM-11:00 AM*

Group games and activities involving gross motor skills will give the children an opportunity to engage in fun, healthy exercise. If weather and time permits, we will play outside in our green space (North lawn next to Wesley Center).

### POTTY/SNACK TIME

*MW 3-year-old classes: 2:30 PM-2:45 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 10:30 AM-10:45 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 11:00 AM-11:15 AM*

Snack preparation will include an opportunity to use the restroom. Hands will be washed before snacks. A grace will be offered before snacks are eaten. During clean up, there will be a brief rest period.

### STORYTIME CIRCLE

*MW 3-year-old classes: 2:45 PM-3:00 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 10:45 AM-11:00 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 11:15 AM-11:30 AM*

Reading activities to encourage and develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Often, Bible stories are shared at this time.

### DISMISSAL

*MW 3-year-old classes: 3:00 PM*

*TTh 3-year-old classes: 11:00 AM*

*MWF 4-year-old classes: 11:30 AM*

The Preschool entrance door will be unlocked by Mrs. Durdan several minutes prior to dismissal-while Mrs. Phillips finishes our closing prayer. Parents may quietly enter and prepare to sign out their child.

***Cell phone use is not permitted in the preschool.*** Your child deserves your undivided attention during this time to exit our building safely.

## **REPORTING ABSENCES**

Absences may be reported via text through the Remind app or called in to 815-942-0809. Please ask for the preschool when calling. Please call to report an absence before class begins or during the first half hour of the session. When reporting your child's absence please give specific details regarding health symptoms if due to illness. This helps us to become aware of any outbreaks that may affect our classes.

## **HEALTH**

Staff will screen children daily upon arrival for any obvious signs of illness. A child having symptoms of communicable illness such as an elevated temperature, diarrhea or vomiting in the 24 hours before class must stay home. Children must be free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting for 24 hours without the use of medicine before returning to school. If your child has a rash, sore throat, chronic cough and/or runny nose, he/she should be kept home. If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the other children. Parents or other authorized persons will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. If your child is absent because of a contagious disease, i.e., chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, etc., please inform the preschool as soon as possible so that parents of the exposed class members can be notified.

## **PARENT WAITING ROOM**

Parents are requested to wait quietly in the room at the bottom of the stairs until class is dismissed. Please let staff know if your child needs to be dismissed early. During the winter, please use the room adjoining the staircase for boot drop off. Please have your child change into close-toed shoes for the classroom. This helps to preserve our carpet and saves cubby space for our backpacks.

## **ELEVATOR ACCESS**

Those individuals who are not able to use our Wauponsee Street entrance may use the elevator at the parking lot church entrance on Liberty Street. All others are asked to use our main preschool entrance on Wauponsee Street. Mrs. Durdan will open the preschool door when class begins/ends-no need to ring the doorbell unless late arrival/early release previously arranged.

## **FIRST AID**

The following first aid procedures will be implemented:

- For bumps/bruises: A cold cloth or an ice pack for a short time.
- For cuts/scratches: Wash with soap and water and apply a band-aid.
- For splinters: Wash with soap and water, attempt removal of the splinter by hand and apply band-aid.
- For a nosebleed: Cold cloth applied to bridge of nose.

If an injury/illness is more severe, the teacher would assist the child while staff notifies emergency medical services. Parents will then be called to meet the child at the hospital.

Please make sure that we have a current list of any medications your child is taking. Medical personnel will need this information in case of an emergency.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

Preschool staff will NOT administer medication.

## **COVID PROTOCOLS**

If your child tests positive for COVID they shall remain at home for 5 days (day 1 is the day after the positive test). Your child may return to preschool when symptom-free without the use of meds. No negative COVID test is necessary to return. We highly recommend masking an additional 5 days when returning.

## INSURANCE

Our preschool is covered by public liability insurance as required by law. In case of accidental injury, medical needs would be covered by the student's own insurance plan.

## SCHOOL ATTIRE

Please dress your child in "play clothes" for preschool. We do many activities that are a little messy.

It is also very important that your child wear clean shoes that are comfortable for active play and for sitting comfortably on the floor. Rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes are the safest.

PLEASE dress your child in clean gym shoes! ***Flip-flops and open-toe sandals are not allowed.*** Socks are required for dramatic play dress-up shoes.

Belts are not appropriate for children who are just learning to use the bathroom. Simple pull-on pants also are a good suggestion to eliminate bathroom challenges.

Our classroom is normally quite warm even in the winter because it is located above the furnace room. Most children will be comfortable wearing light clothing all year around. Layered clothing is a good idea for colder weather.

Please be sure that your child has "weather appropriate" outerwear every day. We will be going outside for activities, even during the winter.

## DISCHARGE POLICY

A parent and/or the director may decide at any time that it is in the child's best interest to discontinue enrollment. At that time, the director will be available to plan with the parents to meet the child's needs after leaving the preschool, including referrals to other programs or facilities. All outstanding debts must be paid in full at that time. There will be no refunds given for tuition already paid for the current month.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Formal parent/teacher conferences will be held April 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Sign-up for conferences will be on a first come/first serve basis through the Remind App. Informal conferences may be held at the parent or teacher's request at any time during the school year. Please let the staff know if you would like to schedule a conference during the year. The teacher is available most days before and after class.

## **PARENT BULLETIN BOARD**

Class calendars and reminder notes will be posted on the parent bulletin board located in the center of our room. Please check these regularly for any new information. Please also check the parent board for volunteer/donation opportunities for our special events. Calendars and notices will be posted through the Remind App.

## **SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB**

Book club fliers will be sent home several times during the year. The more age-appropriate books you provide to your child, the better your child will do in school. You may order from any or all these fliers at your discretion. Participation is totally voluntary.

## **“LIBRARY DAY”**

Each class will have a “Library Day” every week. This date will be noted on your child's class calendar. Your child may check out one book each week from our classroom library. The book is to be returned the following week on “Library Day”. If the book is lost or damaged beyond repair, please replace it with a comparable book.

## **UNSAFE CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS**

The Illinois Department of Public Health has compiled a comprehensive list from government sources to inform the public about consumer products that may pose a safety hazard to children. These recalls, ordered by federal government agencies like the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration are categorized by topic. Parents are welcome and encouraged to regularly check this website for updates.

<http://srs.dph.illinois.gov/webapp/SRSApp/pages/>

## **RADON TESTING**

The preschool facility has performed radon measurements to ensure the health and safety of the children, families, and staff. All radon levels were determined insignificant. A copy of the Radon test report can be provided to you upon request.

## **SCHOOL PORTRAITS**

Elbe Photography will be taking formal portraits of each student once during the year. Photos will be taken on September 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> during class time. Picture retakes will be scheduled directly between parents and Elbe Photography outside of preschool time.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Informal photographs of the children may be taken at parties, during field trips or in the classroom. These may be used by the teacher/director for classroom use, newspaper articles or for personal memory keepsakes for staff. **To ensure the privacy and personal safety of our preschool students and staff, photographs that include children other than your own, preschool staff, preschool facilities, and/or preschool activities outside the classroom are not permitted to be posted on the internet except when approved by participants/adults included in the photographs.**



## **BIBLE STORY**

Your child will participate in a Bible story lesson on most school days. The lesson may consist of music, story time, finger plays, discussion and/or a prayer.

## **MISSION PROJECTS**

Every month our school will have a mission project. For example, our projects will sometimes include donations of canned goods or loose change. These will be noted on your child's monthly calendar. It is our hope to expand your child's horizon to include their town, country and eventually, the world.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The classes will participate in two programs during the year. The Christmas program will be held on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> during class time. The Spring program will be held at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> for all preschool classes. Both programs will be held in the sanctuary. Refreshments will follow in Fellowship Hall.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

If the preschool board feels that there is a need, fundraisers may be held. These do help to keep down tuition fees. Your participation is greatly appreciated but is not mandatory.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Walking field trips will be planned throughout the year. If safety dictates, volunteer parent chaperones will be asked to accompany these trips.

## **CLASS PARTIES**

Four class party dates are listed on the last page of this booklet. Sign-up lists for volunteers will be posted on the parent bulletin board. The parties will be held for the following holidays: **Halloween** (The children come to school dressed in costume. Costumes must allow for comfortable movement; vision is not impaired by a mask and be in keeping with a preschool friendly theme. No weapons of any type, no blood, gore, etc.) **Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Year-End.** Class parties will include a snack creation station as part of the party experience.

## **SNACK POLICY**

The Preschool is dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles and to preventing life-threatening allergic reactions at school. Our preschool program includes a nutritional snack to be served each day from an approved list. Birthday treats will be provided by the preschool. We will celebrate all children's birthday with a special card, pencil, sticker, and sing along with a small treat at snack time. Summer birthdays will also be celebrated! Parents may send in birthday treat bags for the class if you choose. Preschool friendly contents please-no nuts

## **PEST MANAGEMENT**

The Preschool practices Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to control pests in our preschool facility and to minimize the exposure of students, families, and staff to pesticides.

The Preschool will perform:

- Regular monitoring to identify pest problems
- Preventive actions to reduce future pest problems
- Preference for the use of non-chemical control methods to address pest problems
- When necessary, use the least hazardous chemical control methods for pest problems
- Training for staff when needed

If a pesticide is necessary, parents and staff will be notified in writing at least two business days and no more than 30 days prior (anti-microbial agents and insecticide & rodenticide baits are exempt from notification). Pesticides will not be applied in the presence of children; and toys and other items will be removed prior to spraying. Children will not re-enter the treated area for at least two hours or as recommended stated on the product label.

## CALENDAR

The United Methodist Preschool is in session from late August until mid-May. We will follow the calendar of Morris Elementary School District #54 as closely as possible. Any day that the grade school is not in session, including teacher institute, conference days or holidays, we will not be in session. When the grade school has early dismissal, we will have our regular session. If Morris Grade School is closed because of a snow day, the preschool will also be closed.

An announcement will be made on the Morris radio stations if a cancellation is necessary due to snow or an emergency. **School closings** will be broadcast on the following stations: WCSJ –103.1 FM and WJDK – 95.7 FM.

I will also be utilizing the Remind App to send out notices via TEXT.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

We will conduct monthly fire drills. A whistle will be used in place of the fire alarm the first few months to allow the children to prepare for the eventual use of the live fire alarm. I will always let adults know at pick-up time that we practiced a safety drill that day. Our safe place is Pastor Keck's porch (blue ranch) on Wauponsee Street.

We will practice storm drills twice in the late winter/early spring. Our safe place is downstairs in the hallway across from Room 105.

We will be implementing a new shelter-in-place/lockdown drill that will be coordinated and approved by the Morris Police Department. Additional information will be provided as plans are approved.

# CALENDAR DATES

## August

August 22-25 Orientation Sessions  
August 29 Classes begin (MWF & MW)  
August 30 Classes begin (TTh)

## September

September 5 Labor Day - No Class  
September 14 School Portraits MWF & MW  
September 15 School Portraits TTh  
September 19 Open House Night (5:00 pm - 7:00 pm)

## October

October 10 Columbus Day - No Class  
October 27 Halloween Party-TTh  
October 31 Halloween Party - MWF & MW

## November

November 8 Election Day-No Class  
November 18 Teacher Institute-No Class  
November 21-25 Thanksgiving Break - No Class  
November 28-29 Class Resumes-MWF & MW/TTh

## December

December 14-15 Christmas Program - MWF/TTh during class  
December 19 Christmas Party-MWF Class  
December 19 Christmas Program/Party-MW during Class  
December 20 Christmas Party -TTh  
Dec 21-Jan 4 Christmas Break - No Class

## January

January 5-6 Class Resumes-TTh/MWF Class  
January 9 Class Resumes-MW Class  
January 16 Martin Luther King Day - No Class

## February

February 13 Valentine Party - MWF/MW Class  
February 14 Valentine Party - TTh Class  
February 16 Registration 5-7pm Current Families 2023-24  
February 20 President's Day - No Class

## March

March 6 Casimir Pulaski Day - MWF am No Class **MW PM-IN SESSION**  
March 30-31 Preschool Teacher Institute- No Class

## April

April 3-10 Spring Break/Good Friday/Easter Monday - No Class  
April 11/12 Class Resumes TTh MWF/MW  
April 19 Parent/Teacher Conferences-MWF No Class **MW PM-IN SESSION**  
April 20 Parent/Teacher Conferences-No School  
April 26-27 Lunch in the Park MWF/MW (After/Before class) TTh (After Class)

## May

May 3/4 Lunch in the Park (Rain Dates)  
May 9 Spring Program (MWF/MW & TTh Classes) 6pm-7pm  
May 10 Last Day of Class/Year End Party - MW  
May 11 Last Day of Class/Year End Party -TTh  
May 12 Last Day of Class/Year End Party-MWF