

LTUMC Preschool Parent Newsletter

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Volume 16 Issue 1

2010 Back to School Issue



Dear Parents,

Last year I shared a poem at one of our staff meetings that, I believe, captures the essence of LTUMC Preschool. It is called "The Heart of a Teacher" and it begins with the following words:

*The child arrives like a mystery box
with puzzle pieces inside
some of the pieces are broken or
missing
and others just seem to hide*

*But the heart of a teacher can sort
them out
and help the child to see
the potential for greatness he has
within
a picture of what he can be*

*Her goal isn't just to teach
knowledge
by filling the box with more parts
it's putting the pieces together
to create a work of art....*

This September each student will arrive at our school just like that mystery box. We know that each child is different, special and is a true gift from God....Throughout this new school year we will impart "knowledge," but we will do much more. The "more" is covered in the following Mission Statements:

Mission Statement for LTUMC Young Children's Ministries

*- To value all children as gifts from God and help them grow in "wisdom, stature and favor."
- Luke 2:52.*

Mission of the LTUMC Preschool

- To provide the children of our community with quality care in a Christian setting; to offer nurturing and encouragement; to guide them in learning about themselves, the world, and God's love; to build self-esteem; and to see them, not as they are now, but as they are capable of becoming.

These Mission Statements represent what we are, what we believe in and what we are dedicated to each day your child is in our building.

While we have a curriculum that prepares children for success in Kindergarten, we aren't just about teaching math, language literacy, etc. – as our Mission Statements show, we will do far more. The poem, "The Heart of a Teacher," emphasizes the same message, as the poem ends with these words:

*When asked which subjects she
loved to teach,
she answered this way and
smiled...*

*"It's not the subjects that matter....
It's all about teaching the **child**."*

We look forward to "teaching" your child this fall and creating a "work of art."

Blessings,
Darlene Chermak



IMPORTANT EVENTS

August 30 Meet Your Teacher and New Parent Orientation

August 31 Student Orientation Day and Enrichment/Extend a Day Registration 10-10:30am

September 1, 2, 3 First Days of School

September 6 School Closed

September 13 Enrichment/Extend a Day Program Begins

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

September 1

- September Tuition Payment Due
- Health & Shot Records Due



Parent Handbook Online

Our revised 2010/11 Parent Handbook is now on our website at www.ltumc.org under the preschool heading. Please read through it carefully as there have been a few changes.

After you have read the handbook, **please print off the cover page and sign the statement at the bottom.** You can mail it or bring it into our preschool office.



Building Character

Learning to read and write are fundamental for school success....but so are respect, responsibility and caring. Since the public school system has a “character component” to their curriculum, we do as well. As we begin each school year, we look for opportunities to highlight the following three character traits in our classrooms:

Respect

There are many ways we can show respect for ourselves, others, and school materials. A simple way is being a good listener. Listening quietly when a teacher or classmate talks shows respect. In our classrooms, we remind children who interrupt, to take turns speaking. We may respond, “Luke is talking. I’ll listen to you when he is finished.” When the child waits and acts respectfully, we will let him know that we appreciate it by saying, “Thank you for waiting quietly while Luke was talking. I know that was hard to do.”

Responsibility

At school your child is expected to help take care of his belongings, be responsible for his actions, and help with classroom jobs. All of these are done at an age appropriate level. For example, our 4 year olds are responsible for taking out their own lunches, opening them up, and putting them away when they are finished. In our 2’s rooms, we work toward our students throwing their napkin and garbage away when they finish eating. We also work toward all students helping our teachers during clean up time.

Caring

We try to implement activities that help our students care about themselves, others, and God’s world. We will ask a child who has hurt another classmate to see the sadness on their friend’s face. Empathy will help them realize that others have feelings too. And, we try to show our students ways to care for others and God’s world.

If you would like to work toward these same goals, please let your teacher know and we will be happy to share some ideas with you.



Is Anyone Anxious?

Do you anticipate your child being anxious on the first day of school? How about you? Are you anxious? Sometimes Mommies and Daddies can be as anxious as their child. Following are a few tips to help you prepare for your child’s first day of school:

- If your child has difficulty with separation – or if your child has not had the opportunity to separate – now may be the time to start. Over the next few weeks, we encourage you to try “mini” separations from your child. Leaving your child with someone (outside of your home) that you totally trust will help your child know that you might leave, but you always return. Make the first few separations short in length and build on the time you are away.
- Start talking about our preschool and make it part of your daily conversation. You might want to talk about the toys we have at school, what our classrooms or playground look like. If this is your child’s first preschool experience, does he know

that each child has their very own “mailbox” that we call a “cubby”?

- Point out our school while you’re driving by or feel free to pull up into the driveway and show your child our preschool building referencing it as “your new school”.
- Try to develop short “goodbye routines” whenever and wherever you leave your child. It can be two hugs and a kiss on their hand (so they can kiss themselves with your love any time they want), or a special routine that your child enjoys. Then, try to follow that routine whether you separate at a friend’s house, or your child’s church nursery, or the gym.
- If your child asks about preschool, always sound positive about the experience. Remind him that “mommies don’t get to stay” and that preschool is “just for you” and he will have “lots of fun”.
- Please establish a bedtime and wake up routine two weeks prior to school starting. Select a wake-up time that will allow for a relaxed morning at home before heading off to preschool.
- On your first day of school, plan ahead and arrive a few minutes early. When the classroom door opens please enter, help your child find his cubby and put his things away. The time of separation has arrived. Lengthening your goodbye often raises anxiety and does not necessarily make the final separation easier. We encourage you to always say good bye to your child, use the routine you have established and then leave. (You may stay in the building to check on your child, but we ask that you do not allow your child to see or hear you).

Unfortunately there are no guarantees that the above steps will work with every child, but they should make your separation calmer. However, if you find your child is clinging to your leg and crying, please know that our teachers are experienced, caring, and prepared to help. When you have completed your goodbye routine, they will be happy to step in and help your child. It is through this help that your child will bond with their teacher and trust them as someone they can turn to “when Mommy isn’t near”.



You're Family

Our preschool family is growing!
This year we have 40+ new families joining our preschool - how exciting!

We want to use this opportunity to welcome each and every family in our preschool and to let you know that as part of our preschool family - you are also part of our church family.

We welcome you to worship, Wednesday Night Live, Sunday School and any special event our church may have.

Worship:

8:20am - Traditional

9:40am - Contemporary

11:00am - Traditional

**Childcare for young children
7:45am to 12:30pm.*

Sunday School - all ages

9:40am

11:00am

Wednesday Night Live

Mid week dinner and programming beginning September 8th.

As "family," we'd like to get to know you better. Please plan on visiting us more than just at preschool!

POTTY TRAINING

Since we do not have changing tables in our older classrooms, we require all 3 and 4 year old students (who are not potty trained) to wear diapers that have tabs. This allows us to remove the wet diaper without having to remove their outer garment.



August 22 – A Day of Blessings and Fun

All of our preschool families are invited to attend our special day of blessings and fun on August 22nd.

Blessing of the Backpacks

(during the 8:20am Traditional, 9:40am Contemporary, 11:00am Traditional worship services)

During worship all children will be asked to come up front for Children's Time to have their backpacks blessed. Following Children's Time, your child can either return to sit with you, or you can meet our Nursery Attendants and a member of our preschool staff at the back of the sanctuary. There you will be given a pager (should we need to reach you) and our staff will take your child over to the Preschool building to play while you remain in worship.

Puppet Show

We have special programming during our Sunday School times (9:40 and 11am) on August 22. There will be a puppet show, a family activity, and refreshments. Many of our LTUMC puppets will be featured along with lots of fun music and a great message on how to KNOW and GROW.

Please plan on attending both the Worship and Sunday School time of your choice. If you have any questions, please call the preschool office at 512-266-2250.



Meet Your Teacher Night

August 30 at 6:30PM

(For Parents Only)

We hope you will place August 30th on your calendar and plan on attending "Meet Your Teacher Night" (at the specific time listed below). Also, if this is your 1st year with our school, we encourage you to plan on attending our "New Parent Orientation" meeting the same night from 6:30PM to 7PM. The schedule for the evening is as follows:

6:00 to 6:30PM

Meet your Teachers (the following teachers will be in their classes)

3's TTh

3's TThF

2's MF

2's MW (both classes)

6:30 to 7:00PM

New Parent Orientation Meeting
in Fellowship Hall

7:00 to 7:30PM

Meet your Teachers (the following teachers will be in their classrooms)

4's MTWThF

4's MTWTh

4's TWTh (both classes)

3's MWF (both classes)

2's TTh

Toddlers TTh



Student Orientation Day Tuesday, August 31

This is a special morning we set aside for our students to visit their classroom and meet their teachers. Since your classroom may be used by other classes throughout the morning, it is important that you arrive and depart during the times listed below. We recommend you don't stay the full allotted time. Based on our experience, the best time to leave is when your child becomes interested in the classroom. If he is involved in playing in the room and has to leave, he should be anxious to return to play on his first day of school. Please plan on coming sometime during the following times.

9-9:45am

Threes TTh
Threes TThF
Twos MF
Twos MW - both classes

10:00-10:30am

Enrichment/Extend a Day
Registration

10:30-11:15am

Fours MTWThF
Fours MTWTh
Fours TWTh - both classes
Threes MWF - both classes
Twos TTh
Toddlers TTh

Enrichment / Extend a Day

Our year end Parent Survey indicated parent interest in having the option to purchase an additional extended hour. We listened. This year we are introducing a new Extend a Day program on Monday and Tuesday. In addition, Sportball will be returning this year for Enrichment classes on Thursday and Friday. Both programs are from 1-2pm and open only to

students in our 3's and 4's. Registration will take place August 31st during Student Orientation Day. We will be sending more information to all 3's and 4's parents via email on or before August 25th.



TUITION PAYMENTS

Your child's tuition has been established by the number of days his/her class is in session. This annual tuition has then been divided into nine equal payments; last May (2010) and then September 1, October 1, November 1, December 1, January 1, February 1, March 1, and April 1.

All payments are due on or before the 1st of the month and considered late if not received by 2pm on the 10th of each month. If the 10th of the month falls on a weekend, the payment is due by 2pm on the Friday preceding the 10th of each month. All payments made after the deadline, will automatically be charged a \$10.00 late fee by our Accounting Office. **Mark your calendars now, your next tuition payment is due on or before September 1 and will be considered late if received after 2pm September 10th.**

Sibling Discount for Tuition - \$10.00 (Oldest Child) per month

Classes

Toddlers TTh	\$200.00/Mo
Twos MW	\$190.00/Mo
Twos MF	\$185.00/Mo
Twos TTh	\$200.00/Mo
Threes TTh	\$200.00/Mo
Threes TThF	\$235.00/Mo
Threes MWF	\$230.00/Mo
Fours TWTh	\$235.00/Mo
Fours MTWTh	\$285.00/Mo
Fours MTWThF	\$330.00/Mo

- *Many parents avoid late fees by having automatic direct payments sent to our preschool or by paying the whole year in advance. Please let our preschool office know if you will*

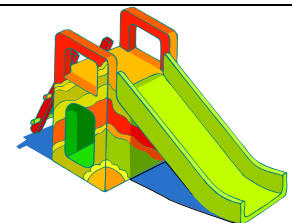
be sending direct payments. The office needs prior notification to set up your account.

- *Also, if at any time you are having difficulty making a payment or you need to know your balance, please contact Lisa Keathley at lkeatley@itumc.org.*
- *Our accounting office will email a tuition "Courtesy reminder" around the 25th of each month.*



Do's for Pre-School

- **Do bring a healthy lunch** that doesn't have to be heated and is in easy to open containers. (Finger foods are always good for young children)
- **Do bring a full change of clothes** in a zip lock bag with your child's name on it.
- **Do wear sneakers** or closed toed shoes for the playground. (no sandals or crocks) Our playground has loose mulch and sand.
- **Do keep personal toys, jewelry and other play things at home.** It's hard to share personal toys with other children.
- **Do wear play clothes.** We play hard and enjoy messy art projects so wear things that can get dirty.



Exciting Playground News!

We will be moving our Toddlers/2's playground in the near future from the left hand side of our older 3's and 4's playground to the right hand side of it. While the younger playground configuration will be almost identical to what it is currently, its new location should place it in a slightly shadier area that will be closer and more visible to our school. When the younger

playground is relocated, the walkway to our playgrounds will also get a new "facelift".

While our 3's and 4's playground will remain in its current location, we wanted to give our older students something to look forward to as well. We are in conversation with the company that originally designed our 3's and 4's playground and are planning on purchasing some new creative play equipment for it in the next couple months.

We are excited about the upcoming changes – and are certain our students will love the results!

Class Assignments

Since we have two MWF 3's and TWTH 4's, parents often ask which class their child and his/her friends are in. Since we want to take into account any last minute enrollment changes, we do not assign students to classes until mid to late August.

Class assignments are based on the following criteria:

- Number of boys and girls
- Ages of the students in each class
- We try to give each student a classmate from the previous year (we can not necessarily match up friends)
- Recommendations from our teachers

Classroom and teacher assignments will be handed out at Meet Your Teacher and New Parent's Orientation.



Albert Einstein and Questions?

One thing that helps a company, product, service....and even a preschool....to be great, is to constantly question "What really matters and how are we doing?."

Last spring we asked parents in our preschool to complete a survey that

asked those very same questions. We had multiple choice questions and open ended questions where parents could share whatever they wanted. Our questions ranged from "Do you think our Registration process is fair?" to "Is there anything you feel we can improve on?" We received a large number of surveys back and in almost all cases those responding took the time to share heart warming praises and valuable suggestions! Thank you!

In addition, as we neared the end of the school year, we sent out a follow up email survey to some individuals on our Parent Committee asking a few very specific questions pertaining to how we communicate, our hours, and even the pictures we have taken every year.

And then over the summer we surveyed our staff for their input on the various events we had last year and whether they felt the events were age appropriate, meaningful and if we were doing our very best.

We have gathered a considerable amount of important information - for which we are thankful. We have begun to share this information and have already implemented some of the suggestions. Over the next few months of school you may begin to see some of your very own comments and words take shape in what we do.

Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, "The important thing is not to stop questioning." We've spent some time over the last few months "questioning" and we have received valuable information from our parents and our staff. "THANK YOU."



PARENT COMMITTEE NEWS

As a parent with a child enrolled in our school, you are automatically a part of our Parent Committee (PC). Welcome!

The Parent Committee is a great opportunity to meet other preschool parents and be involved in your child's early education.

The Parent Committee:

- Helps coordinate various school events throughout the year
- Supports the teachers with email lists, classroom parents, and class photographers
- Raises funds to purchase new materials and equipment for the preschool and support our scholarship program

The various special events our preschool holds each year would not be possible without the support of the Parent Committee. The students truly enjoy sharing these special days and events with their classmates. If you have been present during one of these events, you have certainly been witness to their excitement!

Parent Committee Brochures

At Back to School Night and during the first weeks of school, you will have the opportunity to complete a Parent Committee Brochure. By providing us with your contact information in this pamphlet, we will be better able to keep in touch with you throughout the year and inform you of various special events at the school. You will also have the opportunity to volunteer for particular events. Please don't be scared to volunteer! We will be there to guide you with any responsibilities associated with the events. Even if you are unable to volunteer at this time, please fill out the contact information on the Parent Committee Brochure so we are able to communicate with you throughout the year and keep you posted.

T-Shirt Sales

The Parent Committee will be selling t-shirts during Back to School Night, student orientation day, and the first week of school. These shirts are a great way for your child to show his school spirit, especially at our special events throughout the year.

Volunteers

We currently need 6 volunteers to work as Puppeteers at our first event, Surprise Days, in September. Don't worry – there's no experience necessary! We are also in need of one co-chair for our No Bake Noel Fundraiser in December and our Fall Festival in October. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please complete and turn in the Parent Committee Brochure at Back to School Night or contact the Parent Committee Co-chairs, Melissa Anderson at MelissaA@austin.rr.com or Megan Okruhlik at mokruhlik@gmail.com.