

Parent Handbook

Messiah Lutheran Preschool

2023 - 2024



"The Fruit of The Spirit"

Messiah Lutheran Preschool

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Mission and Ministry

Messiah Lutheran Preschool was founded on the love of God in Jesus Christ and seeks to demonstrate that redeeming love through the instruction of and the care for its students. To that end, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will unconditionally love, serve, and care for each child enrolled in Messiah Lutheran Preschool.

Philosophy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool teaches God's Word reflecting a Lutheran understanding of God's Law and Gospel as written in the Scriptures. Messiah Lutheran Preschool is committed to providing a caring, nurturing, and loving environment addressing the spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of each child in the program. Students attend weekly chapel with the pastor and appropriate Bible stories and activities are a regular part of the program. All lessons reflect that Jesus is God's Son, each child's Savior and Friend. God's forgiveness for each child's sin is basic in their relationship with God, one another, their teachers, parents, and siblings.

Scripture instructs us to LOVE ONE ANOTHER (John 15: 17). Messiah Lutheran Preschool's discipline and guidance policies are managed on an individual basis with the student, teacher, and/or director and the family. Love, forgiveness, and personal responsibility are at the core of all situations when discipline is necessary.

All lessons reflect the love of God in Jesus Christ. Students and teachers strive for excellence using effective learning with teaching materials and methods and using developmentally appropriate practices for learning. Curriculum, scope, and sequence have been set by the Director to prepare each child for kindergarten and beyond. Messiah Lutheran Preschool emphasizes the importance of play. For school success, children need to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and creatively. Play is an important part of this development of the whole child.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool families and staff are to work together to strengthen the Christian home life. Families and staff are encouraged to worship weekly either at Messiah Lutheran Church or a Christian church of their choice. Families are encouraged to be involved in Messiah Lutheran Preschool activities, Vacation Bible School, and Messiah Lutheran Church's programs.

Since Jesus commissioned His followers to TEACH WHATEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU (Matthew 28:20), it is Messiah Lutheran Preschool's conviction to carry out this ministry and that it will please God as it helps children to GROW IN WISDOM AND STATURE, AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND MAN (Luke 2: 52).

Curriculum & Program Plan

Curriculum

Messiah Lutheran Preschool uses a Christian curriculum focusing on spiritual and emotional development. Messiah Lutheran Preschool includes Christian education as an integral part of each day. Monthly concepts are introduced according to seasonal, Biblical, and traditional themes and activities. Themes are extended through developmentally appropriate learning centers and activities throughout the year. Messiah Lutheran Preschool uses the *Healthy Beginnings* and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) *Supporting Every Young Learner* for age-appropriate learning skills and practices. Messiah Lutheran Preschool focuses on all domains of learning, including Personal and Social Development, the Arts, Social Studies, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Physical Development, and Health. These domains of learning are integrated daily through play, teacher-directed activities, and child-initiated activities. Biblical themes are an essential part of each day and are reinforced through daily prayers, songs, and activities.

The Messiah Lutheran Preschool curriculum supports the Messiah Lutheran Preschool philosophy by creating a safe, loving, stimulating, and Christian environment for children and families. The theme-based curriculum is aligned with the MSDE guidelines, follows the *Healthy Beginnings* and *Supporting Every Young Learner* frameworks, and includes a Christian component which is the foundation for Messiah Lutheran Preschool. Messiah Lutheran Preschool also supplements the curriculum with *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, a MSDE-approved curriculum. The curricula support learning through play and include learning opportunities in all seven domains of learning. Social and Emotional development is essential to learning and is emphasized throughout the program.

Program Plan

Play is an important part of the development of the whole child and therefore is an integral part of Messiah Lutheran Preschool's program. Children are provided with many opportunities to learn and play in all academic areas. For school success, children need to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and creatively. Weather permitting, outdoor play is provided with opportunities for individual, small, and large group activities. During inclement weather, large motor activities are done indoors. Nutritious, allergy-smart varied snacks are served daily.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool's goal is for each child to learn self-discipline and conflict resolution. Appropriate behavior is modeled and clear expectations and boundaries are set. Positive interaction is reinforced along with logical and natural consequences. Children will be allowed to express feelings and reflect on conflict situations with the help of a staff member.

Planning Process

Teachers meet monthly for collaborative planning time. Teachers use the Curriculum Overviews for specific themes and monthly objectives and to determine what activities, materials and skills are selected. Teachers use the Healthy Beginnings developmental checklists and the Montgomery County Public Schools' kindergarten readiness checklists to create

individualized goals that are developmentally appropriate. The teachers create daily lesson plans which are differentiated according to the children's needs. Anecdotal notes are maintained for assessment purposes and teachers adjust objectives with differentiated instruction and according to individual needs.

Material and resources are rotated weekly and sometimes daily to support the themes and extended activities. Books in the libraries and centers provide a wide variety of reading resources for different interests and support the seasonal and weekly themes. Items and resources in the Science, Math, and Writing Centers are changed weekly. Prop boxes, puzzles, toys and other materials are introduced from the Resource Room to keep children stimulated during center time and free play time.

Licensing

Messiah Lutheran Preschool is licensed under the Maryland Department of Education, Office of Child Care, as well as the Montgomery County Health and Human Services Licensure and Regulatory Services. Messiah Lutheran Preschool is fully accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditation (2019).

Registration

Registration

Registration for the 2023-2024 school year began in February 2023. Please check the Messiah Lutheran Preschool website for registration updates. Priority registration for enrollment began on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 for currently enrolled students and their siblings, members of Messiah Lutheran Church, and formerly enrolled students and their siblings. Registration for all others began on Tuesday, February 14, 2023.

The registration fee for new students is \$100 and the registration fee for returning students is \$75. The registration fee is non-refundable.

All forms for registration and enrollment (except for those requiring a doctor's signature) are due at the time of registration. All remaining forms must be received at Messiah Lutheran Preschool **NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1**. A child may not attend school if the required forms and immunization records are not completed and returned to Messiah Lutheran Preschool.

Children should be potty-trained before starting school. Messiah Lutheran Preschool is not licensed for diapering or assisting in the toileting of children. This means that the staff is **NOT** licensed to assist with wiping or cleaning of children's bottoms after toileting. Children should be able to independently use the restroom.

Children may have special needs or educational plans such as:

- Food allergies
- Asthma
- Medical
- Speech

- Social
- Sensory
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Parents of children with special needs must discuss the child's needs with the Director before enrolling in the program. Messiah Lutheran Preschool attempts to include children with special needs and/or medical conditions and will support the child with reasonable accommodations. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will work to meet the goals and accommodations of the provisions of an IEP/IFSP. Children who require medication at school are required to have additional forms completed (see Medication Administration Policy).

Immunization Policy

All children who are enrolled in Messiah Lutheran Preschool are required to provide proof of immunizations prior to the beginning of the school year. ***No child will be allowed to attend Messiah Lutheran Preschool without proof of immunizations.*** All children must comply with current Health Department Immunization Schedules before they can attend school. Current Maryland State Immunization Requirements are found in Appendix A.

Class Placement

Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Fees, tuition rates, class sizes, and schedules are subject to change.

Students entering Messiah Lutheran Preschool are placed in classes according to age. Children progress individually and differently through the various developmentally appropriate practices and stages of learning.

Exceptions to this policy can be made when a teacher and/or parent feels that the age-appropriate class is not suitable for the child. In these situations, the Director, Teacher, and parent will meet to discuss and work out a viable solution. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Director will be responsible for the final decision.

In rare cases, parents of a child who is having challenges may be asked to cover the additional expense of a Teacher Assistant to aid the child's adjustment to the program. The Director of Messiah Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to decide if a child is ready to enter a program or if a child should continue at Messiah Lutheran Preschool.

Class Size

The maximum class size for three-year-old classes is twelve students. The maximum class size for four-year-old classes is fifteen students. All classes have two adults working with the children, one Teacher and one Teacher Assistant or Co-Teacher.

Family and Student Policies

Communication Policy

Communication between home and school is critical for the health and well-being of the children. Preschool is a child's first school experience and good relationships among parents, teachers, and children can make it a positive experience for learning and growth.

Please check email accounts frequently for updates and other important information.

Newsletters will be sent electronically each month. A calendar of classroom themes and activities will be included. Emails, letters, and notes will be sent to communicate information as needed. Please read and respond to important information. Please also check Messiah Lutheran Preschool's website for announcements and updates at www.messiahlutherangermantown.org/preschool. Your awareness and your involvement help your child to be prepared for the school day.

Lending libraries are available to families. Books for parents and children may be loaned as needed or desired.

A written Child Evaluation will be given to parents three times a year (fall, winter, and spring).

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled for all students in the winter. Additional conferences will be scheduled as necessary or if requested by a parent or teacher.

Problems and concerns will be addressed with the parent at the time of occurrence. Please address your questions and concerns to your child's teacher or the Director (see Biblical Code of Conduct section).

Messiah Lutheran Preschool is governed by a Preschool Board which helps to set and approve policies for the preschool and provide guidance on issues and grievance resolution. The Preschool Board meets regularly with the Director. Parents and staff who would like to attend a meeting should contact the Director. It is expected that any parent with an issue should first try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the child's teacher and/or the Director (see Biblical Code of Conduct section).

Biblical Code of Conduct

We value and encourage communication between parents and our school staff and leadership. We ask parents to speak praise and affirmation in public, and words of concern in private. We ask that parents speak with us directly about all concerns rather than venting them in the community. This allows us to continually improve the school while maintaining a healthy spirit of mutual support.

For all ideas and concerns pertaining to the curriculum classroom instruction, and classroom management and/or a child's progress:

1. Parents are encouraged to speak directly with the teacher first.
2. If the parent feels their concern was not satisfactorily addressed by the teacher, the parent should schedule a meeting with the Director.
3. After meeting with the Director, if the matter is still not handled to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may request to speak to the Preschool Board.

For all ideas and concerns pertaining to tuition, schedules, facilities, or other administrative or school-wide issues:

1. Parents should schedule a time to meet with the Director.
2. After meeting with the Director, if the matter is not handled to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may request to speak to the Preschool Board.

Parent Handbook Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool updates the Parent Handbook annually. Because of the importance of this document in communicating the policies and practices at Messiah Lutheran Preschool, each family will receive an electronic copy of this document. It will also be available online at the Messiah Lutheran Preschool Parent Information Page.

Families are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the policies in the Parent Handbook. A signed receipt acknowledging the receipt of, reading, understanding, and abiding by the Parent Handbook is required prior to the child's first day of school.

Visitation and Volunteers Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to observe the class and staff at any time but should coordinate visits with the Teacher or Director. Parents must arrange for offsite childcare for non-enrolled siblings.

Volunteers are welcome. There is both take-home and in-class work for those who are interested. **A Volunteer Release Form (OCC 1272) must be completed and notarized each year in order to volunteer at school or in the classroom.** This form is available from the Messiah Lutheran Preschool office and website. All parents who volunteer in the classroom must also attend a brief Volunteer Orientation with the Director.

Arrival / Pick Up Policy

To encourage smooth transitioning from home to school and to minimize disruption of class and staff activities, Messiah Lutheran Preschool asks for your punctuality.

- For morning classes, children need to arrive at 9:00 am and be picked up promptly at 12 noon.
- For afternoon classes, children need to arrive at 12:30 pm and be picked up promptly at 3:30 pm.

A parent or designated caregiver must sign his/her child in each class day; children may NOT sign themselves in or out. This is a regulation mandated by the state.

If a parent is late in picking up his/her child, one warning will be given and then a late fee of \$3.00 per minute will be charged for every minute past 10 minutes late.

If a child has not been picked up within 10 minutes of dismissal time, the child's parent/guardian will be called. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school will leave a voicemail and the emergency contact will be called. After 30 minutes and in extenuating circumstances, if no one can be reached, Child Protective Services may be contacted.

Please let Messiah Lutheran Preschool know if someone new will be picking up your child. Your child will not be released without proper authorization.

Field Trip Policy

At least two field trips are planned for the children during the school year. Field trips are typically planned in the fall and in the spring. **Each child needs to be accompanied by an adult.** A signed permission slip is required for each child for each field trip.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool does not provide transportation to the field trips. Each child must be transported in an approved child safety seat. All child safety criteria must be met.

There may be an additional cost for the field trips.

Birthday Policy

Birthdays are special days for children. If desired, children may bring a special book to share with the class on their birthday. To help celebrate a birthday, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will provide a sweet birthday treat (Welch's Fruit Snacks or Oreos) for all children in the class at snack time. Please do not send cupcakes, cake, or other sweet treats as we cannot serve these due to food and other allergies.

Children may distribute birthday party invitations at Messiah Lutheran Preschool if they have invitations for all class members.

Special Events Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool has several special events throughout the school year. Families may sign up to provide help for these special days. Some of these special days are for the children only and others are for families and children.

The September Family Social is a time for families to make connections among each other and to enjoying playing together.

The October Harvest Treat Day is a celebration of autumn bounty and is for preschool children only. Please, no costumes.

The November Thanksgiving Celebration is a celebration of Thanksgiving for preschool children only.

The December Christmas Program is for preschool children and families. The children will present a short Christmas program for their families.

The January Multicultural Night is for preschool children and friends and families. This is an opportunity to experience the many cultures of our families by sharing songs, food, dress, and other cultural items.

The February Valentine Treat Day celebrates the love of friends and is for preschool children only. Children will be asked to bring in a Valentine card for each classmate. Please, no sweets, candy, or toys.

The April Teddy Bear Picnic is a special celebration for the Three-Year-Old Classes and their special grownups. No siblings, please.

The April Preschool Recognition Sunday is a day when the Preschool and the Church come together for worship and fellowship.

The May Mothers' Day Tea is a special celebration for the Four-Year-Old Classes and their mothers only. No siblings, please.

The End-of-Year Celebrations are for preschool children and their families. The children will present a short program and a time for refreshments and fellowship for all will follow.

Tuition Policies

Tuition Payment Schedules

Registration obligates you to pay tuition for the entire school year. Messiah Lutheran Preschool's budget is planned around children's attendance for the **full nine months of the school year**. Payments cannot be skipped or refunded for a child's illness, family vacation, overseas trips, or other school absences.

Tuition may be paid annually or monthly. If paying annually, the total amount for the nine months of school is due on August 1. If paying monthly, tuition payments are due on the first of the month, beginning August 1 and ending on April 1. Each payment is for the next month (e.g. the August 1 payment applies to the month of September, the September 1 payment applies to the month of October, etc.).

There is a late fee of \$25.00 if tuition is more than five days late. Additional late fees and/or student exclusion from school may apply for continuing non-payment.

If there are extenuating circumstances preventing on-time tuition payment, please contact the Director as soon as possible to arrange an alternate plan.

Payment Methods

Payments can be made online at <https://secure.myvanco.com/YHZG/home>. Online payments are made directly from a bank account; credit and debit cards are not accepted.

Payments can also be made via cash or check in the Messiah Lutheran Preschool office.

Receipts

Receipts for cash payments are available at the time of payment.

Additionally, cumulative receipts for year-end, employee tuition programs, and tax purposes are available upon request. Request a receipt by emailing MLPSoffice@gmail.com; please allow at least one week before receiving your receipt.

Tuition Discounts and Tuition Assistance

When two siblings are attending the same school year, a sibling discount of 10% is given to the lesser amount of tuition. When three siblings are attending the same school year, a third sibling discount of 30% is given when the two older siblings pay full tuition.

A discount is given to children of Messiah Lutheran Preschool staff.

Tuition Assistance is available on a limited basis based upon donations to the Tuition Assistance Fund. Please contact the Director for a Tuition Assistance Request form. Tuition Assistance determinations will be made by the Director and are confidential; the Director and the Office Assistant are the only staff members who know which families receive Tuition Assistance. Tuition Assistance is applicable for one school year only; a new Tuition Assistance Request must be made each school year.

Tuition Refunds

Payments may not be skipped, and there will be no refunds for a child's illness, family vacation, overseas trips, or other school absences.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal requires thirty days' notice. Under extenuating circumstances and at the Director's discretion, the thirty days' notice may be waived.

Tuition already paid will not be refunded upon withdrawal except in extenuating circumstances and at the Director's discretion.

General Policies

Attendance

Children must be signed in by an adult in the attendance folder located in the entrance area. Children must be signed out by a parent or an adult that has permission to pick up the child. Messiah Lutheran Preschool asks that a family phones or emails if a child will be absent or if a parent will be late in picking up a child. Please also see the "Arrival / Pickup Policy" on page 8.

Calendar

Messiah Lutheran Preschool sets its own calendar (see Appendix B). Effort is made to coordinate with the Montgomery County Public School calendar when possible, but the MLPS calendar is **NOT** identical to the MCPS calendar. This calendar is posted on the Messiah Lutheran Preschool website and in the entrance area of the preschool. Paper copies are available from the office and are provided to each family prior to the start of school.

Child Abuse Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool follows the Montgomery County and the Maryland state policy. Any staff member must report suspected child abuse or neglect of children to Child Protective Services at 240-777-4417.

Discipline Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool's discipline and guidance policies are managed on an individual basis with the student, Teacher, and/or Director and the family. Love, forgiveness, and personal responsibility are at the core of all situations when discipline is necessary.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool's goal is for each child to learn self-control and conflict resolution. Appropriate behavior is modeled, and clear expectations and boundaries are set. Positive interaction is reinforced along with logical and natural consequences. Children will be allowed to express feelings and to reflect on conflict situations with the help of an adult.

Inclusion/ Exclusion Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool is proud of its history of working with the individual needs of our children and will work with the families of children who may need additional support. When applicable, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will make referrals to outside support services including, but not limited to, early intervention services (such as Child Find and ChildLink) as well as pediatricians for developmental concerns. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will participate in IEP meetings as appropriate to best meet the needs of individual children.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool will make reasonable accommodations to its policies, practices, and procedures as appropriate and in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Messiah Lutheran Preschool is not required by law to fundamentally alter or change the services provided for a child displaying dangerous/inappropriate behavior, developmental delays, and/or disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool will allow outside resources/therapists into the program to work with any child as needed, provided those services are communicated in advance, the provider of the services has the appropriate clearance to be in the building, the behavioral/therapeutic plan is shared with the Director, and the resource/therapist works cooperatively with Messiah Lutheran Preschool staff to meet the needs of the child. The presence of the resource/therapist must mitigate any and all safety risks the child presents to him/herself and to others and must be collaborative and complimentary to the program. Should the resource/therapist be disruptive to the program or not have the authority or ability to mitigate, through appropriate therapeutic methods, the child's dangerous behaviors, the child may be excluded from the program.

No behavior that compromises the safety of other children or prohibits the learning of other children will be allowed. Parents will be notified if the behavior is consistently observed, and they will be asked to work with the staff in taking action appropriate for resolving the problem. Any child who is a safety threat to him/herself or to others will be removed from the group or will be provided options for another activity, then guided to the desired activity. Temporary suspension from Messiah Lutheran Preschool may be necessary for the safety of the child or others while any necessary evaluations are completed and/or while securing the appropriate support services. If the dangerous behavior cannot be eliminated through reasonable accommodations provided under applicable federal and state laws and regulations, the child will be subject to suspension, exclusion, and/or disenrollment.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool will provide written documentation to the parents of a child who is referred for outside support services for any behavior, developmental delay, or disability. Through formal and informal conferences with the Teachers and Director and written reports, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will communicate with parents of children exhibiting behaviors that are dangerous to themselves or others or that are detrimental to the learning of other children, the steps taken to accommodate the child, and notification that the child will not be able to return to the program until support services are in place.

Language Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool serves a very diverse community which represents many different languages, customs, and traditions. The children are exposed to many types of media, toys, books, and songs in different languages which help to teach and promote learning about different communities that Messiah Lutheran Preschool serves. While English is the primary language used at Messiah Lutheran Preschool, the children will also be exposed to other languages.

Media Policy

Children enrolled at Messiah Lutheran Preschool are limited to media time of no more than thirty minutes a week and for the purpose of educational or physical activities only. Media times should correlate with the current month's curriculum themes, or relate to a physical activity (for example: yoga, dance, and movement). All media must be reviewed, evaluated, and approved by the Director.

No media shall be allowed during snack time at Messiah Lutheran Preschool.

Computer use should be limited to no more than fifteen-minute increments. Screen media used shall be free of advertising and brand placement.

Parking Lot Policy

The parking lot at Messiah Lutheran Preschool is painted with directional arrows to aid the flow of traffic. Cars should travel right upon entering the parking lot (lower lot). Parking is available in all three lots (lower, middle, and upper). Please see Appendix C for a map of the traffic flow in the parking lot. Please follow **ALL** directional arrows painted on the parking lot.

Families should park in a designated parking space and walk in children using the sidewalks and/or the marked crosswalk. **There is NO stopping, standing, or parking at the curb.** Please do not allow children to play on the retaining walls in or near the parking lot, as these structures are not meant for safe play.

All national, state and local motor vehicle laws should be obeyed, including, but not limited to: safety belts, child safety seats, cell phone prohibitions, and unattended children. Please drive slowly in the parking lot and make an extra effort to be aware of pedestrians and other traffic.

DO NOT leave children in a car unattended. If you need assistance, please call the Messiah Lutheran Preschool office for assistance.

Staff

Messiah Lutheran Preschool's staff is a very dedicated group of Christian professionals. All teachers meet or exceed the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care requirements. All employees have completed a state and federal criminal background check and are First Aid and CPR certified. All staff members also complete pertinent continuing education classes annually.

Health, Safety and Emergency Policies

Illness Policy

All contagious diseases must be reported to the school. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms of illness, he/she must be kept home:

- fever*
- persistent cough/breathing problems
- yellowish skin or eyes/pink eye
- sore throat or trouble swallowing
- unusual spots or rashes
- infected sores
- diarrhea
- gray or white stool
- unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- vomiting

** Fever is indicated by a temperature of 100 °F or higher axillary (under the arm) or 101 °F or higher orally (by mouth) before fever-reducing medication is given.*

If a child develops any of the listed symptoms while at school, parents will be called to pick up their child. Sick children will be separated from the classroom group.

A child should be free of a fever for a minimum of 24 hours *without medication* before being able to return to school.

Following an illness of three or more days, a written statement from the parent or health care provider must be given to the school. The statement must indicate that the child is able to return to a regular schedule.

Medication Administration Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool is required to have a Medication Administration Policy. Children who are required to have medication administered at school or who have a medical condition including allergies or asthma or any other medical conditions, are required to have a Medication Administration Plan. If a child has asthma and/or allergies, an Asthma Action Plan and/or a Food Allergy Action Plan must be completed by parents and signed by authorized medical personnel. Please see the Director to obtain required forms.

Nutrition and Snack Policy

This snack policy encourages the building of a connection between home and school. Snack time should be considered more than a time to feed the children; it is an opportunity for them

to experience flavors, colors, and textures and also to learn about good nutrition to promote healthy living.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool offers a healthy and nutritional snack each day. In order to accommodate children with food allergies, Messiah Lutheran Preschool does not serve snacks that contain peanuts or tree nuts as listed ingredients. All snacks on the Messiah Lutheran Preschool Snack List are products that state that they come from a factory that does not process peanuts or tree nuts. Messiah Lutheran Preschool takes preventive measures to be an Allergy Smart School.

If a child has been diagnosed with food allergies, a Food Allergy Action Plan needs to be completed and requires a doctor's signature. The child's parents need to provide appropriate snacks each class day for the child OR written permission may be given for the child with food allergies to eat the snack items on the Messiah Lutheran Preschool Snack List. This applies to all children with diagnosed food allergies.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool asks that each family provide two snack items a few times during the year. Information regarding snacks will be given in the monthly newsletter and a snack menu is posted monthly. Please provide snack items from this approved Snack List only. The Snack List is available at the Messiah Lutheran Preschool website on the Parent Page and is posted in the entrance area to the preschool.

Snacks should be nutritious and healthy. Juices should be 100% from juice. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will regularly provide 1% milk; water is available to children at all times. Fresh fruits and vegetables will be served at least two times per week and special treat days will include nutritional food choices.

Messiah Lutheran Preschool will provide Welch's Fruit Snacks or Oreos for birthday snacks. Please refer to the Birthday Policy on page 9.

Asthma Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled in the preschool. It will also provide an environment in which all children with asthma can participate to their full potential. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will provide a clear set of guidelines and procedures to be followed with regard to the management of asthma for each affected child.

For those children who have been diagnosed with asthma, the Messiah Lutheran Preschool will provide the following forms to ensure the safety and well-being for each child at the time of enrollment:

- Asthma Action Plan – This form is signed by a medical practitioner and a parent.
- Medication Administration Authorization Form – This form is signed by a medical practitioner and a parent and by staff upon receipt of medicine.

All medications shall be in the original unopened package, include a pharmacy prescription and label, not be expired, and be updated annually.

The Messiah Lutheran Preschool Staff is required to be certified in CPR and First Aid training which includes Emergency Asthma Management training. Staff will be informed of the children with asthma and be familiar with the Asthma Action plans and procedures for Asthma First Aid, for both children with a diagnosis of asthma and those with no known diagnosis of asthma (first attack).

Messiah Lutheran Preschool Staff will follow the written Asthma Action Plan and will require that each child has an inhaler, a spacer device, and concise written instructions on individualized Asthma Action Plans. The Asthma Action Plans and medications will accompany the child to all activities including the playground, other locations in the building, and on field trips.

Families will promptly communicate to the Messiah Lutheran Preschool Staff all relevant information and concerns as the need arises including the most recent administration of medication and if asthma symptoms were present during the night. Teachers will also communicate to families any concerns that may occur that may limit a child's ability to participate fully in activities. Communication between home and school is critical for the health and well-being of the child.

Head Lice

If head lice are detected on a child at home, it should be reported to Messiah Lutheran Preschool as soon as possible. If head lice are detected on a child at school, the child will be separated from the class in order to prevent spreading lice to other students and a parent will be notified for the child to be picked up to receive a treatment with a pediculicide. No home remedies are accepted as an approved treatment.

A student is considered to have infestation with head lice if live lice and/or viable nits (those that are closer than ½ inch from the scalp) are observed. Every effort will be made to minimize time away from school and to expedite treatment for students who are excluded due to head lice infestation.

When a case of head lice has been reported to Messiah Lutheran Preschool, the school will work with the health department and health consultant to determine a plan for prevention of infestation. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will launder all clothing items in the classroom, bag stuffed animals for 48 hours and clean and shampoo the rugs.

Exclusion or readmission will be determined by Messiah Lutheran preschool administration on a case-by-case basis.

Appropriate Dress Policy

Children should wear "play" clothes. They will be using paints, chalk, glitter, water, glue, and a variety of other potentially messy materials; they will also be climbing, jumping, and playing outside. Appropriate play clothes are comfortable and allow for a range of motion. They are free of strings or loops that might get caught on playground equipment.

Please consider the safety of your child's shoes. Closed-toe sneakers appropriate for preschool play are strongly encouraged for footwear. Sandals, Crocs, and flip-flop shoes should be avoided as they are a safety hazard.

If possible, please avoid suspenders, buckles, belts, one-piece outfits, and tights. ***Messiah Lutheran Preschool encourages the children to be self-sufficient in using the bathroom independently*** and these items of clothing make it more challenging for them.

Please provide a complete change of clothing for your child in a sealed plastic bag in case a change is needed during the school day. Since your child is growing and the seasons change, please check these extra clothes regularly for fit and suitability for the weather.

Children should come to school properly dressed for the weather. Unless it is extremely cold, windy, raining, or snowing, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will plan to go outdoors. Please label your child's clothing (hat, jacket, sweater, mittens, etc.).

Snow / Inclement Weather Policy

Messiah Lutheran Preschool follows Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) decisions for closings, delayed openings, and early dismissal due to inclement weather.

- If MCPS is closed due to inclement weather, Messiah Lutheran Preschool will be closed.
- If MCPS delays opening two hours due to inclement weather, morning classes at Messiah Lutheran Preschool will start one hour late and afternoon classes will meet at the regular time.

Local radio and television stations provide school closing and delay information. Families and staff can also sign up to receive the MCPS alert system notifications directly.

Make up days will be considered if more than one week of classes are cancelled due to weather. Messiah Lutheran Preschool will make up no more than five days and has the discretion to waive days according to MCPS policies.

Emergency Evacuation Plan and Drills

Messiah Lutheran Preschool has an approved emergency evacuation plan which will be shared with families prior to the start of school.

In the event of an emergency that requires the evacuation of the students and staff of Messiah Lutheran Preschool to an alternate location, we will walk across the Messiah Lutheran Church property to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints property or cross Kingsview Road at the Bronco Street crosswalk to Kingsview Middle School or Germantown Recreational Center.

Emergency Evacuation Drills will be held twice a year as required by the State of Maryland. These drills involve walking to an approved offsite location with the Emergency Ready-to-Go Kits.

Additional indoor drills are practiced. These are "shelter-in-place" drills for hazardous weather or other threatening situations.

Fire Drills

All classes will practice monthly fire drills beginning in September and ending in May. Everyone in the classroom must move to the nearest exit and then wait in the designated waiting area until the all-clear signal is given.

Building Security

The exterior doors of the Preschool, as well as the interior entrance from the Church, are kept locked at all times. Only authorized staff members of the Church and Preschool have access to the Preschool. Outside vendors, contractors, and inspectors who need to be in the Preschool space during school hours will be supervised by an authorized staff member at all times.

Security Cameras are installed on the exterior of the Messiah Lutheran Church building as a safety precaution and deterrent.

Appendix A

Maryland State Immunization Requirements



Vaccine Requirements For Children
Enrolled in Preschool Programs and in Schools — Per DHMH COMAR 10.06.04.03
Maryland School Year 2023 - 2024 (Valid 9/1/23 - 8/31/24)

Required cumulative number of doses for each vaccine for PRESCHOOL aged children enrolled in educational programs							
Vaccine Child's Current Age	DTaP/DTP/DT ¹	Polio ²	Hib ³	Measles, ^{2,4} Mumps, Rubella	Varicella ^{2,4,5} (Chickenpox)	Hepatitis B ²	PCV ³ (Prevnar™)
Less than 2 months	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2 - 3 months	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
4 - 5 months	2	2	2	0	0	2	2
6 - 11 months	3	3	2	0	0	3	2
12 - 14 months	3	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	2
15 - 23 months	4	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	2
24—59 months	4	3	At least 1 dose given after 12 months of age	1	1	3	1
60 - 71 months	4	3	0	2	1	3	0

Required cumulative number of doses for each vaccine for children enrolled in KINDERGARTEN - 12 th grade							
Grade Level Grade (Ungraded)	DTaP/DTP/Tdap/ DT/Td ^{1,6}	Tdap ⁶	Polio ²	Measles, ^{2,4} Mumps, Rubella	Varicella ^{2,4,5} (Chickenpox)	Hepatitis B ²	Meningococcal (MCV4)
Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3, 4 5 & 6	(5 -11 yrs) 3 or 4	0	3	2	2	3	0
Grades 7, 8 & 9	(11 -13 yrs) 3 or 4	1	3	2	2	3	1
Grades 10, 11 & 12	(13 - 18yrs) 3 or 4	1	3	2	1 or 2	3	1

* See footnotes on back for 2023-24 school immunization requirements.

**Vaccine Requirements For Children
Enrolled in Preschool Programs and in Schools
Maryland School Year 2023 – 2024 (Valid 9/1/23 - 8/31/24)**

FOOTNOTES

Requirements for the 2023-24 school year are:

- 2 doses of Varicella vaccine for entry into Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th AND 9th grades

Instructions: On the chart locate the student's age or grade and read from left to right on the chart to determine the NUMBER of required vaccinations by age or grade. Dosing or spacing intervals should not be considered when determining if the requirement is met, only count the number of doses needed. MMR and Varicella vaccination dates should be evaluated (See footnote #4).

1. If DT vaccine is given in place of DTP or DTaP, a physician documented medical contraindication is required.
2. Proof of immunity by positive blood test is acceptable in lieu of vaccine history for hepatitis B, polio and measles, mumps, rubella and varicella, **but revaccination may be more expedient.**
3. Hib and PCV (PevnarTM) are not required for children older than 59 months (5 years) of age.
4. All doses of measles, mumps, rubella and varicella vaccines should be given on or after the first birthday. However, upon record review for students in preschool through 12th grade, a preschool or school may count as valid vaccine doses administered less than or equal to four (4) days before the first birthday.
5. Two doses of varicella vaccine are required for students entering Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades and for previously unvaccinated students 13 years of age or older. Medical diagnosis of varicella disease is acceptable in lieu of vaccination. Medical diagnosis is documented history of disease provided by a health care provider. Documentation must include month and year.
6. Four (4) doses of DTP/DTaP are required for children less than 7 years old. Three (3) doses of tetanus and diphtheria containing vaccine (any combination of the following — DTP, DTaP, Tdap, DT or Td) are required for children 7 years of age and older. One dose of Tdap vaccine received prior to entering 7th grade is acceptable and should be counted as a dose that fulfills the Tdap requirement.
7. Polio vaccine is not required for persons 18 years of age and older.

Appendix B
Messiah Lutheran Preschool 2023-24 Calendar



Messiah Lutheran Preschool
2023 – 2024 Calendar

**AUGUST 2023**

August 1	Tuesday	Due: Tuition Payment Due. Health Forms, Extended Day Registration
August 25	Friday	Family/Teacher Meet & Greet for 4's classes 9:30-10:00am
August 29	Tuesday	New Parent Orientation (virtual) 7:30pm*
August 30	Wednesday	New Parent Orientation (virtual) 7:30pm*
August 31	Thursday	Family/Teacher Meet & Greet for 3's classes**

*One parent/guardian from each new family is required to attend a New Parent Orientation. New families may choose to attend either session.
**Tuesday/Thursday morning 3's come from 9:30-10:00am. Monday/Wednesday/Friday morning 3's come from 10:00-10:30am.

SEPTEMBER 2023

September 1	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students (Staff Professional Day); Tuition Payment Due
September 4	Monday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Labor Day)
September 5	Tuesday	First Day of School for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class*
September 5	Tuesday	First Day of School for Monday-Friday 4's class
September 6	Wednesday	First Day of School for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class*
September 6	Wednesday	First Day of School for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 4's class
September 29	Friday	Family Social 5:30pm

*In the 3's classes, the first day of school is only for one hour to ease the students' transition to school. The teacher will schedule the exact time.

OCTOBER 2023

October 2	Monday	Tuition Payment Due
October 9	Monday	NO SCHOOL for students (Staff Professional Day)
October 13	Friday	(Rain Date for Family Social 5:30pm)

NOVEMBER 2023

November 1	Wednesday	Tuition Payment Due
November 22	Wednesday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Thanksgiving Break)
November 23	Thursday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Thanksgiving Break)
November 24	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Thanksgiving Break)

DECEMBER 2023

December 1	Friday	Tuition Payment Due
December 20	Wednesday	Christmas Program for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class and BOTH 4's classes*
December 21	Thursday	Christmas Program for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class*, NO SCHOOL for 4's classes
December 22-29	Friday-Friday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Christmas Break)

*Children will arrive to school at the normal time. Parents/guests will come back later for the Christmas Program. Children will be dismissed for Christmas Break at the conclusion of their Christmas Program.

JANUARY 2024

January 1-2	Monday-Tuesday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Christmas Break)
January 3	Wednesday	Classes Resume for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class and BOTH 4's classes
January 4	Thursday	Classes Resume for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class
January 5	Friday	Tuition Payment Due
January 15	Monday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
January 26	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students (Staff Professional Day); Multicultural Night 5:30pm

FEBRUARY 2024

February 1	Thursday	Tuition Payments Due
February 9	Friday	(Snow Date for Staff Professional Day & Multicultural Night)
February 15	Thursday	NO SCHOOL for students (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
February 16	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
February 19	Monday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Presidents' Day)
February 21	Wednesday	Priority Registration begins for 2024-2025 9:00am
February 28	Wednesday	General Registration begins for 2024-2025 9:00am

MARCH 2024

March 1	Friday	Tuition Payment Due
March 7	Thursday	Picture Day for Tuesday/Friday 3's class
March 8	Friday	Picture Day for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class and BOTH 4's classes
March 22	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students (Staff Professional Day)
March 25-29	Monday-Friday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Easter Break)

APRIL 2024

April 1	Monday	NO SCHOOL for students and staff (Easter Break)
April 2	Tuesday	Classes resume for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class and Monday-Friday 4's class
April 3	Wednesday	Classes Resume for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class and Monday/Wednesday/Friday 4's class
April 5	Friday	Tuition Payment Due
April 11	Thursday	Teddy Bear Picnic for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class*
April 12	Friday	Teddy Bear Picnic for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class*
April 14	Sunday	Preschool Recognition Sunday at Messiah Lutheran Church

*Children will arrive to school at the normal time. A parent or adult special guest will come back later for the Teddy Bear Picnic. Please arrange for childcare for siblings, if applicable.

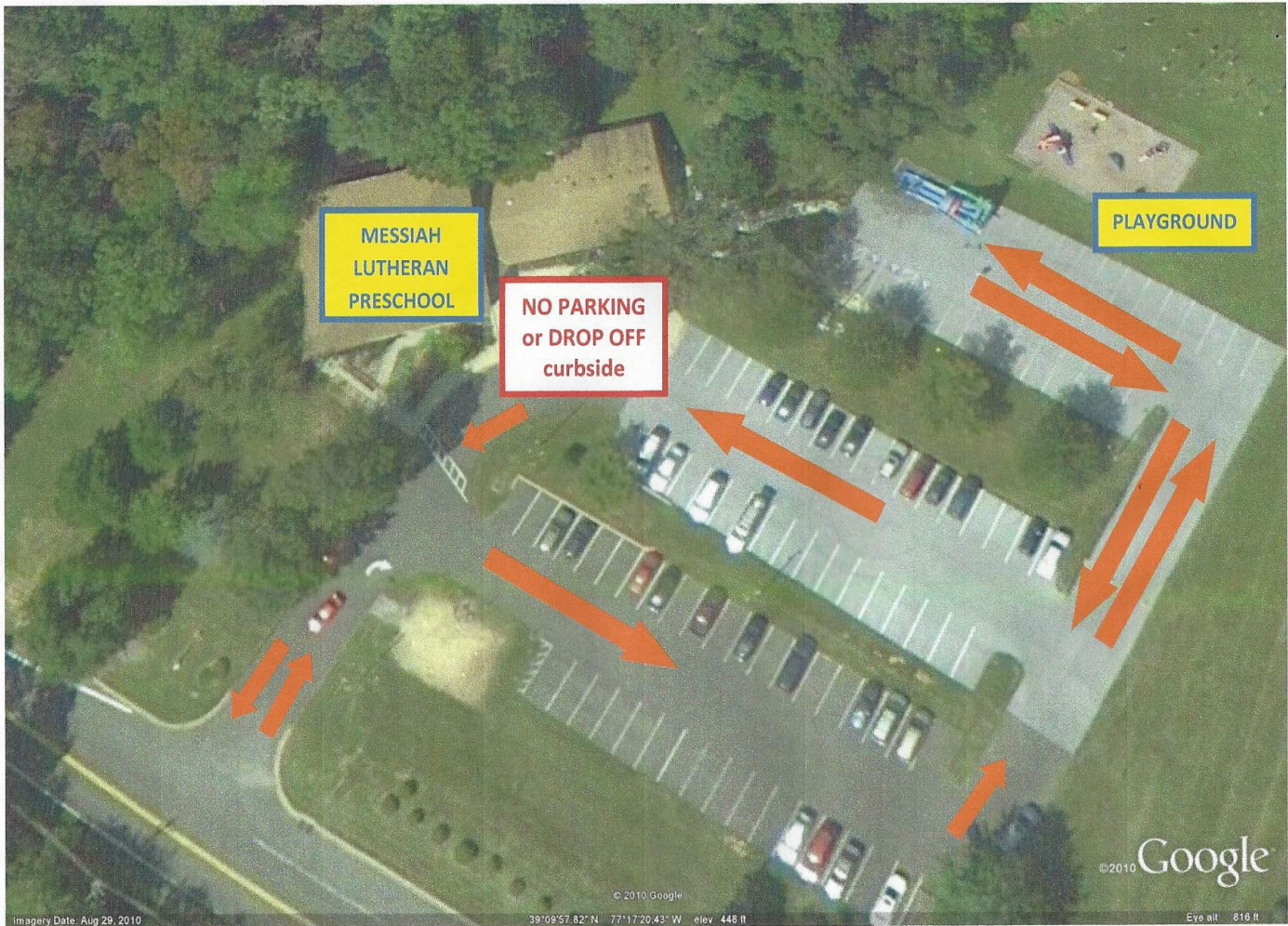
MAY 2024

May 10	Friday	Mother's Day Teas for BOTH 4's classes*
May 22	Wednesday	Last Day of School for Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3's class and BOTH 4's classes**
May 23	Thursday	Last Day of School for Tuesday/Thursday 3's class**
May 24	Friday	NO SCHOOL for students (Staff Professional Day)

*Children will arrive to school at the normal time. Mothers/special guests will come back later for the Mother's Day Tea. Please arrange for childcare for siblings, if applicable.

**Children will arrive to school at the normal time. Parents/guests will come back later for the End-of-Year Celebration. Children will be dismissed for the summer at the conclusion of the End-of-Year Celebration.

Appendix C Parking Lot Traffic Flow



Please travel **ONLY** in the directions of the arrows.

Please use the **crosswalk** to get from the lower parking lot to the preschool.

Please use the **sidewalk** to get from the upper parking lots to the preschool.