



ZION
LUTHERAN
PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL 2025-2026 PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION STATEMENT:

Providing an early childhood education program that integrates faith and learning to help students succeed academically, develop socially and grow spiritually in Christ's love.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

*Children who attend a high-quality preschool are more successful (both academically and socially) than their counterparts in kindergarten and beyond.

*The need for such a preschool exists in our community, and we at Zion are grateful for the opportunity to provide this manner of outreach to families of all backgrounds and faiths.

*The early years of a child's development are critical to establishing a foundation for success. Stable, nurturing relationships and enriching experiences are necessary for a child's intellectual, emotional and spiritual development.

*Young children learn best in an environment that encourages a lifelong love for learning. Zion Preschool offers a developmentally appropriate curriculum in the form of creative, engaging and interactive lessons and activities.

*Because children are concrete thinkers and relate best to experience, it is important for them to experience Christ's love and learn about the Gospel at an early age. Children who learn about unconditional love will build a positive sense of self-worth and a strong regard for others, which they can carry with them for the rest of their lives.

ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL GOALS

Spiritual Goals

- Understand that each person is wonderfully and uniquely made and has abilities to contribute to the community
- Understand that each person is loved and accepted unconditionally
- Grow in God's Love

Social Goals

- Develop a positive self-concept
- Develop relationships with peers and adults outside of the family
- Gain independence and try new experiences
- Recognize and express feelings
- Participate in daily activities
- Expand self-help skills

Academic Goals

- Guided by Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards
- Provide meaningful experiences that engage each child's interests and abilities in the areas of literacy, math, science and social studies
- Balance practice of newly acquired skills with play
- Provide plenty of opportunities for problem solving and creative expression with movement, music and art

REGISTRATION & ADMISSION POLICY

Zion Lutheran Preschool serves children ages 2, 3, 4, & 5 years old. Children are eligible for enrollment if they are the designated age of the program by September 1st of the entering year. A Medical Information Form must be completed by the child's parent/guardian and is required by the first day of school. Enrollment for the following year will start in February. Children will be admitted into the program on a first come/first served basis. When all class spots are filled, children will be placed on a waiting list in the order their application and registration fee are received. As openings occur throughout the school year, they will be filled based on the waiting list order.

Zion Lutheran Preschool does not discriminate against prospective students based on race, color, and national or ethnic origin. If the Medical Information Form is not received **by the end of November**, then Zion Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to withdraw your child until the completed paperwork is returned.

TUITION AND PAYMENT POLICY

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 must accompany the Registration Form. There are nine prepaid tuition installments. September's tuition is due August 15th. Each month's tuition payment after September will be due by the 28th of each month, including the month of April. By September 28th, your second tuition payment should be in to cover services for October.

Tuition is always due by the 28th of each month. Payments received on the 5th of the next month will incur a \$25.00 late fee. Each subsequent day late, a late charge of \$5 per day will be added. If payment is not received, the Zion Lutheran Preschool Board reserves the right to dismiss the student from our program. In the event of extenuating financial circumstances, please contact Erin Manwiller (717) 603-0413 before the tuition becomes delinquent.

Checks should be made payable to **Zion Lutheran Preschool**. Include your child's name on the memo portion of the check. Payments can be placed in the child's communication folder or given to a teacher at pickup and drop-off. If your check is returned to us due to insufficient funds in your account, you will be charged a **\$50.00 return check fee**.

CLASSROOM 2025-2026 TUITION

2 Year Olds: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-11:30
\$175/month

3 Year Olds: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 9:30-12:00
\$225.00/ month

4 Year Olds: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday
9:30-12:15 \$275.00/month

Families with more than one child enrolled will receive a discount of 5% per monthly installment applied to the second and each subsequent child's tuition.

WITHDRAWAL

Tuition will not be adjusted for days missed due to illness, vacation or weather. Children are expected to remain for the full year except in unusual circumstances. One month prior **WRITTEN** notice must be given before withdrawing a child from Preschool. Without this notification, an additional month's tuition will be charged.

The tuition is non-refundable upon a child's withdrawal from school. No tuition rebate will be granted for a temporary withdrawal. The parent or guardian agrees to notify the school of a child's withdrawal from the school before the first of any month in question or is responsible for the full month's tuition.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

In order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from our program, please observe the opening and closing times. Outside doors are locked for safety and will only open at 9:15am by a teacher to greet children. No entrance is allowed without a teacher. In the event of an unavoidable delay in picking up your child, please call us so that we may reassure your child that you are on your way. If you are consistently late picking up your child, a fee will be charged after the third instance. (Refer to page 10) We **MUST** have written or verbal authorization for changes regarding the pick-up of a child or we will not release the child.

Children will only be released to any person authorized by parents/guardians on the emergency form. (Relatives and friends of the family will be asked to show a current photo ID, if not known by the staff.) **Please inform the staff by written note when someone else will be picking up your child.** The note should include the date and name (as seen on ID) of the person picking up the child. An Emergency Form will be kept in the preschool office for each student. Please keep the office informed of any changes to this information throughout the school year.

SAFE ARRIVAL AT PRESCHOOL

- Drive slowly when entering the church area.
- Be mindful that children are walking through the parking lot and may not see you.
- Always hold your child's hand when going and coming from an automobile.
- Never leave young children unattended in the car when escorting preschoolers to the door.
- Always turn your car off; cars may not be left running.
- For the safety of the child, parents and authorized persons are required to accompany the child to the door.
- Only a teacher is allowed to open the door and allow children access to the building or release them.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

You and your child's safety are important to us. Parking is available behind the church in the parking lot. You must use the doors at the rear of the church off the parking lot to bring your child to preschool. During preschool hours the outside doors and our classroom doors will remain locked.

Arrival: Arrival for all students is 9:15am with school starting at 9:30am. This time allows children to unpack their belongings and get ready for the day. Doors will not be opened until 9:15am. No entrance is allowed before 9:15am without prior approval from staff. If doors are unlocked for an event in the church, admittance is still prohibited until a teacher opens the door. Parents are to drop-off at the door and not enter classroom. Some leniency is allowed in the first weeks of the school year for the 2-year-old class, but then all drop-offs are at the outside door.

Dismissal: At dismissal parents will wait outside by the back steps or in their cars. Each student will be released when their pickup person has been verified. If the pickup person is not the normal individual, staff will ask for ID. After 10 minutes from class dismissal time, a babysitting fee of \$10 will be charged to your next tuition payment. The fee will continue to accrue in 5 minute increments.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Emergency telephone numbers, poison control numbers and emergency procedures are posted by each telephone. If a serious accident occurs, the staff will immediately apply emergency first aid, call 911, and then call the parent/guardian. Families are responsible for all emergency transportation charges and all other charges not covered by insurance.

Minor accidents will be handled according to accepted first aid procedure. Parents/legal guardians may be notified by telephone if the Director or teacher feels it is warranted.

Weapons of any kind are **not** permitted on the property or in the building.

Each staff member has completed an application and interview, written and/or verbal references; has clear State Police and Child Abuse Clearances, and annual training. We are mandated by the state to report any suspicion of child abuse to the Child Line and Abuse Registry and subsequently to the Child Protection Service unit.

BATHROOM/SELF HELP SKILLS

Children should show increasing self-reliance in self-care activities. Staff will give support when needed but will ask and encourage children to be independent. We do realize “accidents happen,” therefore will help a child to clean up and change into clean clothes if necessary. We require all children to have a complete change of clothes in their school bag daily. (Please be mindful of season changes)

HEALTH

Please keep us informed of any special medical or dietary needs your child may have and notify staff if your child will not be in school, via email, text or call.

If your child becomes sick during school hours, we will make every attempt to reach you to pick up your child. If you are not available, we will use your emergency numbers. You should keep your child home if any of the following illnesses have occurred within the **past 24 hours**:

Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fever of 100 degrees or higher, a heavy nasal discharge, a constant cough, or symptoms of possible communicable diseases (such as pink eye, head lice, chicken pox, COVID 19 etc.).

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If your child has any communicable disease, he or she may **not** attend Preschool. We ask that you obtain a note from the doctor to indicate that your child is no longer contagious and can return to Preschool. This note will inform the staff about the illness your child had and what treatment plan was taken.

To prevent exposing other children in our care to communicable diseases, it is requested that you notify the Director and/or your child's teacher if your child develops symptoms of a communicable disease. This information can be anonymously posted so other parents will be informed and take necessary preventative measures. This would be particularly important if your child attended school during the incubation period for the communicable disease.

Communicable Diseases (Continued)

Many common communicable diseases have an incubation period, during which little indication of the disease is evident. For your information, some of the more commonly found diseases, and their incubation periods and requirements for return to school are as follows:

- **Conjunctivitis** ("Pink Eye") - 24 to 72 hour incubation. Child may return after 24 hours with medication.
- **Impetigo** - 4 to 10 day incubation. Child may return after 24 hours with medication.
- **Tinea Corpus** ("Ring Worm") - 4 to 14 day incubation. Child may return after 24 hours with medication.
- **Chicken Pox** - Two weeks incubation. Child may return after there is no evidence of vesicle weeping.
- **Strep Throat** – 2 to 5 days incubation. Child may return 24 hours and taking an antibiotic.
- **Head Lice** - No incubation. Child may return when free of nits accompanied by a statement from a Physician or State Health Nurse.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Zion Lutheran Preschool believes in loving discipline to foster a child's sense of self-confidence, self-control, and security. Teachers will use positive guidance, redirection and offer clear limits to help a child become self-disciplined. Teachers will encourage each child to respect other people and property, to be kind and fair, and to be responsible for their own actions. Teachers will use consistent and clear discipline, reflecting the love of Jesus. Techniques used to help children make good choices:

- *Praise and encourage good behavior*
- *Model positive interactions*
- *Set developmentally appropriate limits or expectations*
- *Give positive suggestions and helpful directions*
- *Focus on child's actions, not personality*
- *Use a kind voice and words to help a child feel reassured and loved*

If a child's negative behavior is not responsive to correction by the teachers, the child may be asked to step away to take a break. After a short time away, the child will be welcomed back into the classroom activities.

Physical and verbal aggression toward teachers and other children is unacceptable. Teachers will intervene immediately if a child becomes aggressive by removing the child from the group while saying "I cannot let you hurt our friends". The teacher will help the child gain control of his/her emotions and invite the child to return when ready. **Teachers always offer affection & forgiveness.**

COMMUNICATION

You will receive a programming calendar informing you of our current and upcoming activities. We ask that you read the calendar, as details of field trips will be listed, as well as themes, and special activities. We use the Remind app as our main form of communication. Each parent must sign up for notifications.

The teachers will be happy to discuss your child's progress at any time. Arrival time can be so exciting for all the children entering the class, it may be best to let the teacher know you would like to speak with her at the end of the day. Parents are also welcome to have teachers call them outside of class time. Conferences will be held at least once a year.

CONFIDENTIALITY/COMMUNICATION

All information regarding children, parents or staff is highly confidential. Revealing confidential knowledge to anyone other than the child's parent is prohibited. Information provided by parents on their child's application is confidential.

Any information concerning a child's behavior will be reported to the child's parent or guardian upon pickup by the teacher. The information will be shared privately and confidentially.

Issues, concerns, or questions should first be addressed to the child's teacher at an appropriate time that does not interfere with the teacher's supervision of the children.

FAMILY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We love our parents and their willingness to help and volunteer. Unfortunately, with changes resulting from COVID 19 and the requirement of clearances, opportunities are not as commonplace and abundant. However, if you have all of your State and Federal Child Abuse clearances, there may be occasions where parent volunteers are needed or can be of help. Teachers will inform parents as necessary.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Parents who are working as volunteers should always conduct themselves in a professional manner, regardless of where they are at school or outside the school environment. Parent volunteers are asked to follow the confidentiality guidelines.

DRESS

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes as we will be playing on the floor, outside, and with art supplies. The clothing should allow your child to use the bathroom independently. Accidents do happen at play, snack, and in the bathroom, remember to pack a change of clothes in your child's backpack. Your child's shoes should be appropriate for running, jumping and playing. PLEASE NO FLIP FLOPS OR CLOGS, all shoes should have a strap behind the heel. Always be prepared for outside play time. Sneakers must be worn on field trips.

POSSESSIONS FROM HOME

Our classrooms are full of many age-appropriate toys and supplies, so please remember to have your child leave their toys at home or in the car. We may have "Show and Tell" days and other special days related to our themes where the children can bring in a special item from home. Play guns, weapons, and other toys that encourage aggressive play are **NOT** welcome in our classroom.

SNACKS

You will be responsible for sending a small snack and water bottle each day with your child. Children will be given 10 minutes to relax at the table to eat the snack you provided. Food allergies are a great concern, please remind your child not to share snacks from home.

It is not appropriate for children to bring unfinished food and/or drink items from home. Please have your child finish eating any food before entering the building.

BIRTHDAYS

Each child has a special day for their birthday, and we would like to honor them on their special day. If your child wishes to give party invitations to a few friends, please do so outside of school so the feelings of others will not be hurt. If all the children in the class are invited to attend, invitations may be distributed within the classroom. Parents are welcome to send in a special treat to celebrate with the class.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Parents are encouraged to use their own judgment when deciding whether to keep their children at home or pick them up early if road conditions appear hazardous. Zion Lutheran Preschool follows Lower Dauphin School District closing and delay decisions. A Remind text will be sent out, as well as postings on our social media pages.

IF LOWER DAUPHIN SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS:

Two Hour delay- ZLP will be CLOSED

School closings - ZLP will be CLOSED

Snow make-up days will be listed on the calendar and posted as necessary. If two or more days of school are cancelled due to inclement weather, then snow make-up days will be scheduled as available. Snow days are not refundable.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be scheduled up to four (4) times a year. They will be an extension of our classroom experiences. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation to and from a field trip location. In the event that your child will need transported to/from the field trip the parent is responsible for informing the staff, in writing, who will be transporting the child. Each person and child are responsible for any costs incurred for the field trip. Permission slips will be sent home prior to the date and will need to be signed for each field trip.

We request each child have a walking field trip permission slip signed and returned to Zion Lutheran Preschool at the start of the school year. We include walking field trips in Hummelstown as a part of the learning experience for our students. Walking trips may include but are not limited to walking to the Hummelstown Scarecrows, Springtime and nature walks, and visiting the Borough Park.

FUNDRAISING

As a non-profit preschool, not subsidized by any other organization, we are completely self-supporting. Tuition does not cover all our expenses. We ask that you help by saving items that are used every day or by donating items, such as cleaning supplies, tissues and Ziplock bags. Throughout the year we will have fundraising opportunities, including a food item fundraiser, flowers and plants, et al. We thank you for your support in raising funds for the children and our preschool.

2025-2026 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Chair – Bonnie Rudi M. Ed.

Secretary – Lydia Klinger

Curriculum - Kim Elicker

Member at Large – Rita Smith

Fundraising – Richard Ammon

Member – Shannon Bastian

Council Representative - Carol Keyes

Website & Communication – Anita Housman

Preschool Administrator – Erin Manwiller

CONTACT INFORMATION

Zion Lutheran Preschool

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(717) 603-0413

Zion Lutheran Preschool

*A Place Where...Learning and Faith come together to
help your child succeed in Christ's Love.*

