



ST. MARK PRESCHOOL

Handbook

2021 – 2022

St. Mark Preschool
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Welcome to St. Mark Preschool

We are happy that you are sharing your child with us, and hope that his or her preschool experience will be an enjoyable and meaningful one. Working together we can help your child develop his or her full potential.

St. Mark has a long history of preschool education for young children dating back to the late 1940s. It started as a Kindergarten, then a nursery school, and now a preschool. We renewed our commitment with a new beginning in September 2003 with the opening of a preschool for three and four-year-old children.

St. Mark Preschool admits students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

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Mission Statement

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information concerning the program(s) in which your child will be participating. Throughout our programs for children ages 3-5 years, we hope to provide you with an experience that will leave you and your child with happy memories as well as provide a basis for future education.

Our purpose is to introduce your child to a friendly, safe, and non-competitive learning environment where each child can become self-confident and enjoy learning. We also stress the nurture of beginning relationships away from the family structure. While providing a learning experience, we plan to give your child opportunities to associate socially with other children and to learn to relate to adults other than his or her own parents.

This preschool is a non-denominational program provided for the benefit of any eligible child. It is a ministry of the people of St. Mark Lutheran Church and is administered by an ad hoc committee (Preschool Committee) of the Christian Education Committee. The school is operated on a non-profit basis and supported solely by registration, monthly tuition fees, fundraisers, and the generosity of the people of St. Mark.

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Preschool Staff

- Allison Wentz** – Co-Director and Teacher 3-Year-Old Classes
- Idonia Klunk** – Co-Director and Teacher 4-Year-Old Classes
- Stef Reid** – Teacher’s Assistant 3-Year-Old Classes
- Mandy Wasserman** – Teacher’s Assistant 4-Year-Old Classes
- Karen Amoss** – Teacher’s Aide 3-Year-Old Tues./Thurs. Class
- Abbi Martin** – Teacher’s Aide 4-Year-Old AM Class
- Rev. Kirk Griffin** – Pastor
- Alison Peterson** – Treasurer

3-Year-Old Class

(3/4-Year-Old Program)

Who is eligible? Children who have reached the age of at least 3 years old by September 1st of the current program year are invited to join this program. Children must be toilet trained.

When does the class meet? There are two class sessions One class meets on Monday and Wednesday mornings and the other class meets on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Each class begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 11:15 a.m. The school year begins in September and ends in May.

How large are the classes? Each class is limited to a maximum of 12 children. If there are 10-12 children, there will be a qualified teacher, a teacher assistant, and a teacher aide for the class. If there are less than 10 children, there will be a qualified teacher and a teacher assistant.

What are the costs?

Registration Fee: There is a \$35.00 registration fee. This registration fee is non-refundable and is due at the time you register your child in the preschool. This fee will hold a place in the class for your child for the school year. The fee is used for purchasing supplies, materials, equipment, and to cover other start-up costs prior to the September opening.

Monthly Tuition Fee: There will be nine non-refundable monthly tuition payments of \$82 or \$738 per year. The first payment is due **August 1st**. The eight remaining payments will be due by the first class of each month thereafter. The last tuition payment is due the first class of April. We accept cash or checks. Please make checks payable to St. Mark Preschool.

Late Payments: Since the smooth operation of the preschool is financed primarily through tuition, it is **IMPORTANT** that the payment is made on time. **If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, a late fee of \$10 may be added to the tuition fee.** The late fee amounts paid will be added to our Scholarship Fund.

4-Year-Old Class

(4/5-Year-Old Program – Pre-Kindergarten)

Who is eligible? Children who have reached the age of at least 4 years old by September 1st of the current program year are invited to join this program. The curriculum of this class is geared to children who will enter kindergarten the following school year. Children must be toilet trained.

When does the class meet? This class is held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. There are two sessions. The AM Class begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 11:45 a.m. The PM Class begins at 12:30 p.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. The school year begins in September and ends in May.

How large is the class? Class size is limited to a maximum of 17 children. If there are 12-17 children, there will be a qualified teacher, a teacher assistant, and a teacher aide for the class. If there are 11 children or less, there will be a qualified teacher and a teacher assistant.

What are the costs?

Registration Fee: There is a \$35.00 registration fee. This registration fee is non-refundable and is due at the time you register your child in the preschool. This fee will hold a place in the class for your child for the school year. The fee is used for purchasing supplies, materials, equipment, and to cover other start-up costs prior to the September opening.

Monthly Tuition Fee: There will be nine non-refundable monthly tuition payments of \$145 or \$1,305 per year. The first payment is due **August 1st**. The eight remaining payments will be due by the first class of each month thereafter. The last tuition payment is due the first class of April. **All tuition payments must be paid in full by May 15th in order for your child to participate in graduation.** We accept cash or checks. Please make checks payable to St. Mark Preschool.

Late Payments: Since the smooth operation of the preschool is financed primarily through tuition, it is **IMPORTANT** that the payment is made on time. **If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, a late fee of \$10 may be added to the tuition fee.** The late fee amounts paid will be added to our Scholarship Fund.

Scholarships

A limited amount of money to aid tuition costs is available on a first come, first served basis according to need. An application may be picked up at the church office or you can download one at www.stmarkpreschoolhanover.weebly.com. Applications must be returned to the church office Attn: Idonia Klunk by July 15th. The amount awarded will be based on need and the amount of money available. Late applications may be considered if money is still available.

General Information

Orientation: A Parent-Child Orientation Session will be held for each class during the week before school begins.

School Calendar: A calendar of events for the entire school year will be handed out at the orientation session.

Curriculum: Each preschool program has separate and specific units of study appropriate to that age group. During the year, the units of study include the following:

1. Daily organized lessons on the units planned for each class
2. Crafts and artwork
3. Free play
4. Organized play
5. Storytime
6. Musical activities and finger plays
7. Educational games
8. Activities for small and large motor skills
9. Parties and special programs for the various holidays

Show and Tell: Show and Tell Days will be assigned to each child. Children should bring in one item to share with the class. Suggested items are things from nature, pictures from a place the child has visited, collections, something the child has made, a favorite book, or items about colors, shapes or numbers.

Field Trips: Due to COVID-19, there will be no Field Trips. If restrictions lessen and Field Trips are permissible, the 4-Year-Old Classes utilize field trips as part of their curriculum. In order for a child to attend a field trip, an adult must be present. These dates will be announced ahead of time in order for you to make arrangements to be present.

Clothing: The children should be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Please provide adequate outerwear to keep your child warm during outside playtime. If the wind chill temperature is above 32° and the grass/mulch is dry, we may be going outside for playtime. **For your child’s safety, totally closed shoes with rubber soles are highly recommended.** We encourage you to dress your child in clothing that is easy for the child to manage in the bathroom. **Please, no bodysuits, leotards, bib overalls, or other clothing that is difficult for children to handle alone.**

Masks: Due to COVID-19, all St. Mark Preschool Staff will be required to wear masks or face shields. Students will wear masks at parents’ discretion. At Orientation, each family will be required to sign a form indicating their wishes for their child with regards to their child wearing a mask or shield. If a mask or shield is needed, parents must provide their child’s mask or shield. We will have spare masks available if one is forgotten. **Parents or guardians entering the building are asked to maintain social distance and wear a mask if unvaccinated.**

Discipline: Our program is based on a Positive Reinforcement and Behavior Modification model. Positive Reinforcement is finding and verbally praising actions and skills the child is doing right. In other words, by catching the child behaving correctly and praising the “right” actions and skills, the child will know what is expected of him/her. When other children hear the praise for correct performance, children will modify their own behavior to reach the goal. Therefore, good behavior is acknowledged, and a positive atmosphere is built.

Arrival/Dismissal of Students

At Arrival:

- Staff will assist children in entering the building at the appropriate drop off location. We will open the car door to assist the child out of the car.
- All children’s temperatures will be checked upon entering the facility. If your child’s temperature is 100 or higher, you will be immediately called so the child can return home.
- **Children may not receive any fever reducing medication prior to their arrival to St. Mark Preschool.** This policy is necessary to be able to detect any sign of illness that may be masked by the medication. If your child is receiving fever reducing medication (ie. Tylenol, Motrin, Ibuprofen, etc.) for teething, ear pain, etc, they must be monitored at home.
- At this time, you will not be required to turn in a COVID Daily Check List, but if you answer yes to any of the following questions, your child should stay home from school.

Within the past 48 hours, has your child experienced any of the following?	
1. Persistent cough	Yes / No
2. Shortness of breath	Yes / No
3. Difficulty breathing	Yes / No
4. Sore throat	Yes / No
5. Fever greater than 100	Yes / No
6. Have you given fever reducing medicine for a fever within the last 48 hours?	Yes / No
Within the past 24 hours, has your child experienced any of the following?	
7. Nausea and/or vomiting	Yes / No
8. Diarrhea	Yes / No
9. Within the past 10 days, has your child had close contact* with a known or suspected COVID-19 patient? (*Close contact = spending longer than 15 minutes less than 6 feet away from the person in question.)	Yes / No

Illness

- When a child is sick with a fever, they must stay home. Children must be kept home for a minimum of 48 hours fever free without fever reducing medication before they may return to class.
- If a child has thrown up or has diarrhea within 24 hours of a class session, the child must stay home.
- Should a child becomes ill while in school, parents will be required to pick up the child immediately. The child will be isolated from the other children until the parent arrives.
- In case of an emergency where no one can be reached, the child will be taken to the Hanover Hospital, with all expenses the responsibility of the parents. **A completed Emergency Authorization form with two signatures is required and can be returned no later than the Orientation Session.**

The following is a list of specific diseases and the time the child must remain out of school.

COVID-19 – If your child or anyone in your household develops COVID-19 symptoms, and a COVID test is given, the child must remain home until the diagnosis is confirmed.

- Parents must **immediately** notify St. Mark Preschool if their child or anyone in your household tests positive for COVID-19. Please call or text your child’s teacher immediately using the number provided at orientation.
- If a child or anyone in your household tests positive for COVID-19, you must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.
- If your child has been in close contact* with a known or suspected COVID-19 patient within the past 10 days, then your child should quarantine (stay home). *Close contact = spending longer than 15 minutes less than 6 feet away from the person in question.
- Staff members who are vaccinated will follow the same guidelines as those listed above with one exception. Staff members who are vaccinated do not need to quarantine after contact with someone who has COVID -19 unless they have symptoms.

- If a child or staff member tests positive for Coronavirus, families will be notified via text. The affected classroom will be shut down and all parents will be asked to pick up their child immediately. St. Mark Preschool/St. Mark Lutheran Church will contact the PA Department of Health immediately and follow the procedures they recommend for reopening.
- If your child is required to be out due to sickness or for quarantine purposes, tuition will still be due as normal.
- If St. Mark Preschool must close the preschool due to a confirmed Covid-19 Case or due to a government shutdown, you will not be required to pay tuition for those missed days. St. Mark Staff will direct you as to whether the tuition will be reimbursed, or if a future tuition payment will be adjusted.

Chicken Pox – 6 days after the appearance of the last crop of vesicles (6 days from the last pox occurring).

Strep Infection and/or Tonsillitis – You must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.

Head Lice – You must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.

Pink Eye – 24 hours after institution of appropriate therapy. You must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.

Skin Infections – Impetigo (crusty sores), Scabies (itch), Ringworm – You must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.

Whooping Cough – 4 weeks from onset or 7 days from the institution of appropriate therapy. You must provide written documentation from a doctor clearing them to return to school.





Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, your child's teacher will text you about closings or delays.

3-YEAR-OLD CLASS SNOW POLICY

- If we delay classes due to weather, the 3-Year-Old classes will start at 10:30 a.m. and end at 12:15 p.m.

4-YEAR-OLD AM CLASS SNOW POLICY

- If we delay classes due to weather, the 4-Year-Old AM class will start at 10:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m.
- If we delay classes due to weather, the 4-Year-Old PM class will start at 1:15 p.m. and end at 3:15 p.m.

Parent Cooperation

- The successful operation of St. Mark Preschool will depend on open communication with the families and staff.
- All procedures and protocols are designed to help maintain the safety of our families, children, and staff.
- We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we move through this time. All updates and changes to our policies will be sent out via email or text.