

# Grace Lutheran School

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*Early Childhood  
Education Program*

2021/2022 Handbook

## **Welcome To Grace Lutheran School's Early Childhood Education Program**

Children are a gift from God to parents. It is first, the primary duty of the parents, to provide loving care for their children. This would include care in the physical, social, emotional, mental, and spiritual sense. To aid in this process, Grace Lutheran School and Church, has established an Early Childhood Education Program (preschool). The primary purpose would be to guide and help the parents with the child's complete well-being. The preschool offers a program of Christian love and support to children and parents in fulfilling their duty.

As part of Grace Lutheran School, children will be in a Christian environment which provides opportunities to explore, participate, and experience success. The activities will be developmentally appropriate and structured so the children have ample opportunity to interact socially in groups and through individual play.



## **The Staff of the Program**

Mrs. Hannah Mueller, Director & Teacher  
5848 Creekview  
Stevensville, 49127  
920-242-0407  
Email: muellerh@gracestjoseph.org

Sarah Beilke, Aide  
Morning only

Rev. Glenn Rosenbaum, Administrative Pastor  
404 E. Glenlord Road  
St. Joseph, MI 49085  
556-1703

Mrs. Garry (Sandy) Sempert, School Secretary

Questions and concerns about preschool may be referred to Mrs. Hannah Mueller at 920-242-0407 (home) or the school office at 269-429-4951, Email: muellerh@gracestjoseph.org

## Children Eligible for the Program

### Programs Offered

***Morning 3's and 4's Program:*** (must be 3 or 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup>)  
The children will have experiences in sharing, language development, creative expression, movement, music, and God's Word. Activities used will be at the developmental stage of each child to build on their social, emotional, and intellectual areas of growth, as well as opportunities for the development of large and fine motor skills. After completing the session, children in the four-year-old group, upon recommendation, based on readiness, could go directly into Kindergarten.

***Young Five program:*** (must be 4-1/2 years old before September 1 of the year enrolling) provides a year of more structured schooling beyond a preschool level, but less demanding than Kindergarten. The program is for the child who is of Kindergarten age, but needs a growth year. Children in this group will also be introduced to more academic learning at a developmentally appropriate level.

Educational opportunities and programs will be open to boys and girls on an equal basis. Children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin can be admitted to the program provided we can meet the needs of that child.

**Both programs are designed to prepare students for Kindergarten when they are eligible.** Through active learning, students will interact in a classroom setting to prepare themselves for Kindergarten. Grace's Early Childhood Program teaches language, literacy, and communication; social and emotional development; physical development, health, and well-being; and arts and sciences. God's Word is also taught daily and is integrated in everything we do!

**Sunday School:** Classes are held for age 3, 4, and Young 5.  
The time is 9:15 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.

## Tuition and Fees

The preschool program will operate as a self-supporting education agency of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. It will be financed by tuition receipts. The 2021/2022 school term rates are:

### 3 & 4 year old program

- 2 days a week at \$1,450 year
- 3 days a week at \$1,650 year
- 4 days a week at \$1,850 year
- 5 days a week at \$2,050 year

### Young Five program

- 5 days a week at \$2,050

A \$100.00 non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of registration to hold a place for the child. This will be refunded only if the class is not available due to the number of children enrolled.

To complete your enrollment in Procure an email will be sent to you giving you all the instructions to complete your account.

We chose Smart Procure for tuition invoicing and payment service. We chose Procure for their features, options, and overall convenience for families.

### Payment Processing methods

- You will be able to pay by check, credit card, or by debiting your checking or savings account.
- You will be able to submit payment in person to the school office.
- You will be able to set-up auto-bill options for checking/saving account.

### Online account management

- You will be able to edit your profile online, including payment options.
- You will be able to access and print monthly billing details and payment history.
- You will be able review your payment history, including when your last payment was received.

### Flexible billing and reminder options

- You will be able, with auto-bill, to choose to receive a reminder via email or text of your upcoming payment 15 days before your due date.

## Admission And Withdrawal Policy

The Early Childhood Education Program is open to children ages 3-5 of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin. Parents interested in a Christ-centered education may enroll their child/children on a first-come, first-served basis. A child must be 3 years of age on or before September 1 and must be toilet trained and able to attend to their own personal needs.

Registration for the fall program will be accepted after March 1 of each year. Students will be accepted during the year as vacancies occur. Withdrawal from the program should be made by notifying the Director two weeks in advance. **Withdrawal will also occur, as directed by the program, if proper payment has not been made.** (See Tuition & Fees)

## Care Taken in the Program

### Abuse and Neglect Policy

1. Any person who suspects abuse or neglect must report the suspected abuse to the DHS immediately and file a written report within 72 hours.
2. Volunteer will report suspected abuse or neglect to DHS and then to the director.
3. The Director will report cases of abuse or neglect to the proper legal authorities.
4. A follow-up written report will be made within 72 hours of the original report to the DHS in the county where the child resides. Form DHS-3200 will be used for this written report.
5. The Director will inform the licensee of the case of abuse or neglect.
6. The Director will inform the Pastor and Board of Education of reported case of abuse or neglect.

Contact numbers for reporting cases of abuse or neglect:

Children's Protective Services – Abuse and Neglect – 24 hours  
934-2000

Department of Human Services/Berrien County  
934-2000  
Berrien County Sheriffs Department  
983-7141

Department of Human Services statewide  
1-855-444-3911

## Care Taken in the Program, cont'd:

### Health And Safety Policy

Health appraisal forms, front and back, signed by a licensed physician, and up-to-date immunization records will be required at the beginning of the school year. No medications will be administered by school personnel unless it is under a doctor's prescription and written authorization and instructions are presented to the teacher.

### You may NOT bring your child to school:

1. A fever within 72 hours. (3 days' fever free)
2. Intestinal disturbances accompanied with diarrhea or vomiting.
3. A chronic cough.
4. A communicable disease.
5. Any undiagnosed rash.
6. Sore or discharging eyes and or ears.
7. Profuse colored nasal discharge.

Parents will be encouraged to keep the child at home when signs of illness appear, this will avoid exposing the group to illness.

Parents are asked to notify the school office in the AM of that day's session in case of illness or absence.

In case of an emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parent or authorized guardian for whatever measures are necessary.

A staff member may NOT be at work if:

1. A fever within 72 hours (3 days' fever free)
2. Intestinal disturbances accompanied with diarrhea or vomiting.
3. A chronic cough.
4. A communicable disease.
5. Any undiagnosed rash.
6. Sore or discharging eyes and or ears.
7. Profuse colored nasal

All staff will be encouraged to stay at home when signs of illness appear to avoid exposure to the group.

Recording and reporting accidents:

Unfortunately, accidents are a part of life, especially for young children playing hard. However, all staff at Grace Lutheran Preschool respond quickly to accidents, administer the appropriate first aid, and record any and all accidents that occur on our property. For small injuries (i.e. a scratch, bruise), staff will wash the affected area with soap and water, apply a bandage and / or ice pack as needed. The staff will take measures to prevent the accident from happening again. An accident/injury form will be completed and a copy will stay at school and a copy will be sent home with the child. All staff are CPR and First Aid trained and certified.

Natural or Man-Made Disasters –

It may become necessary in the case of an emergency, and/or to protect the students, staff and visitors, to evacuate the school building during a crisis. If this occurs there are two out-buildings that the students. Staff and visitors will be directed to.

There may also be times when emergency response personnel may order an evacuation of the school building because of emergencies related to or in close proximity to the area of the school. The following will be the designated evacuation sites to be used for gathering students and school personnel if an evacuation is ordered:

- **Site #1 – EP Clarke, 515 East Glenlord Road, St. Joseph, MI – (269)-926-3600.**
- **Site #2 – Michigan Lutheran High School, 615 E. Marquette Woods Road, St. Joseph, MI – (269)-429-7861**

Parents will be notified through Grace Lutheran Schools Procure Alert Message System.

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are welcome. All volunteers will be supervised by the classroom teacher/director at all times.

### Transportation

The Board of Christian Education cannot assume responsibility for the transportation of students. This responsibility must rest with individual parents with the understanding that the school will be of whatever assistance is possible within parameters of this policy.

### Field Trips

Field trips will be taken where applicable to units of study. Parents will be notified with specific information prior to each field trip. Field trip permission slips must be signed by the parent and on file with the preschool director.

Transportation arrangements, for all preschool children, to and from field trips will be made privately by the parent/guardian of each child.

### Integrated Pest Management Policy

Steps that will be taken when pesticide/insecticide applications are made on school property.

1. Notices will be posted on the entrance door to the school classroom.
2. A call will be made through the school instant alert system.
3. All parents/guardians will receive a letter containing information about the pesticide, which will include the targeted pest or purpose, location of treatment, contact information of the center and a toll-free number for a national pesticide center. This letter will be post-marked at least three days prior to any application.
4. All parents will be notified in September of each year – in advance – of any and all pesticides being used.

### Arrival And Departure

Children are not to arrive more than ten minutes before school is to begin. Parents are to be prompt in picking children up at the end of the session, unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher.

Children are to be brought to the classroom door at the beginning of the session, and picked up at the classroom door at the end of the session by a parent or authorized guardian. **Parent's are required to sign their child in each day using Procure. A sign in station will be located outside the classroom or use the Procure app.**

It is in the child's best interest for the parent to leave promptly to allow the child and teacher to become acclimated to the day.

## **PARKING LOT RULES**

Cooperation in following the rules below will save time, and possibly save the children or others needless injury:

**PLEASE DO NOT STOP YOUR CAR, STAND, OR PARK YOUR VEHICLE BY THE SCHOOL/CHURCH SIDEWALK WHEN DROPPING OFF YOUR CHILDREN.** Use the east driveway (in front of the parsonage and park in the east lot by the church. Do not park in the spaces by the north parsonage grass area.

During the school day, if you are coming in for a period of time, or when bringing your preschooler(s) into school, please park in the east lot by the church.

### *Discipline Policy*

The procedure for discipline will follow that of Christ, our Savior's example. Positive methods which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation will be used by the staff. The classroom rules will be clear and concise, and the children will be expected to follow them. When the situation demands, the following procedures will be used:

1. Non-verbal disapproval of child's actions.
2. Positive verbal reminders of rules
3. Removal from the group to a time-out chair or corner of the room followed by or connected with a discussion with the teacher.
4. Persistent behavior, resulting in removal from the room to the program director or principal for discussion and parental contact.
5. Exhausting of step 4 could result in contacting the parent to come and remove the child from school for the day.

All disciplinary action will be on the basis of God's Word and commandments, leading the child to God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ. The teacher will convey to the child the disapproval of his/her actions, not the child himself.

## **Materials Used in the Program**

### *Supplies*

A tote bag with the school logo will be provided at the beginning of the school year. Please label your child's bag. All other materials will be provided by the school unless specified throughout the year by the teacher.

### Child's Attire

Dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes that you are comfortable getting dirty. Please keep a full set of extra clothes including underwear, in a labeled ziplock bag to be kept at school. Label all articles of clothing, including boots and mittens, in the winter.

### Snacks

A nutritious snack will be furnished by the parents each day. A monthly snack schedule will be distributed. Each child will be assigned a day to provide the snack. Consideration will be given to birthdays or other special occasions. We encourage nutritional eating habits and ask parents to consider items with low sugar content.

Please notify the teacher if there are any specific allergies that your child may have.

### Sharing Time

Each child will have opportunities when they may bring something to share with the class. These times will be indicated by the teachers. This is the only time, with few exceptions; children are encouraged to bring their treasures from home. The purpose is to develop language skills and build self-confidence.

Most items are acceptable, including stuffed animals, cars, trucks, books and handmade items.

Transformers, guns, war toys, Pokemon & Digemon and TV interactive toys are not allowed, since one of the purposes of the program is to provide a happy and safe environment where the children can have fun.

## **Parents Involvement in the Program**

### Conferences

Keeping open communication between parents and teacher is necessary. Formal Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in late fall as indicated on the school calendar. These are highly encouraged for those students in 4's and Young 5's. Conferences are optional for those in the 3's group, unless indicated by the teacher. Another optional opportunity to meet will be in the spring as indicated on the school calendar. Any time you do have concerns,

about your child, please feel free to talk with the teacher. It is best, however, to arrange a time other than the beginning of the session.

Fours and Young Five's ready for Kindergarten will be scheduled for screening following a Parent Information Meeting in the spring.

Visits

An Open House will be scheduled before school begins.

Communication

A newsletter pertaining to each classroom will also be sent home and emailed on a regular basis. This will alert you to upcoming events and schedules which involve your child.

Parent Programs

Parents are welcome to join in the activities of the school and church. School events will be listed on the calendar. Bible and Information classes, church and Sunday School are available to anyone who desires them. Your involvement in these activities will not only keep you informed, but also show your child how important their total well-being is to you.

Church Services      Sundays at 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
*10:30 service offers a children service during the sermon*  
Midweek Advent Services at 3:30 & 7:00 p.m.  
*(November to Christmas)*  
Lenten Services at 3:30 & 7:00 p.m.  
*(February to Easter)*

*Other Special Services according to Church Calendar – will be noted in the Titan Times.*

Sunday School      Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

Bible Classes      Sundays at 9:15 a.m.  
Mondays at 6:00 p.m. (Women's)  
Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. (Women's)  
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

### **School Closings**

In times of inclement weather, we will follow the policy of Grace Lutheran School. An announcement will always be made on the local radio stations in regard to such closings. Listen for “***Grace Lutheran School of St. Joseph***”.

If school must be closed because of bad weather or for any other reason, please listen to your radio - WHFB-FM 99.9 , WSJM-AM 1400 , WCSY-FM 98.3, WYTZ-FM 97.5, WZTY-FM 103.7, WYKL-FM 94.9, WGMY-AM 940, WIRX-FM 107.1, or the local TV stations: WNDU/16, WSBT/22, or WSJV/28. **Listen for “Grace Lutheran School of St. Joseph”.** They will usually have it in time for their 6:30 or 7:00 a.m. news broadcast. Please do not call the teachers or the pastors to double check. If our school is not mentioned, we will be having school.

A Procure text will be made to all preschool parents letting them know of school closings. Your main phone number will be used for this program unless the school is notified otherwise.

### **Preschool Security Policy**

#### **Dropping off Preschoolers**

Monday – Friday Mornings

- Doors will be locked at all times.
- The Director will greet children at the door.
- Anyone entering the school building after 8:15 a.m. will then have to use the call center button to enter.

Monday – Friday Afternoons

- Doors will be locked at all times.
- The Director will greet children at the door.
- Anyone entering the school building after 12:15 will then have to use the call center button to enter.

#### **Picking up Preschoolers**

Monday – Friday Mornings & Afternoons

- Preschool teacher will take the preschool children to their parents who will be waiting in the school entrance way or outside for them.
- Doors will be locked at all times.

### **Morning Classes**

- Enter the driveway in front of the parsonage.
- Loop around the parking lot and park alongside the walk curb
- Your child will be brought to their car
- Exit out the driveway you entered closest to the church.

### **Young Fives**

- Enter the driveway in front of the parsonage.
- Park your car in the east parking lot closest to the church.
- Come out of your vehicle to meet your child in the school entrance or just outside the doors.
- Exit out the driveway closest to the church.
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### **Additional Procedures**

All preschoolers will sign in and out daily at the preschool room. When there are any preschool activities (parties, parent volunteers, song days, etc.) The doors will be unlocked ten minutes before the activity is to begin and then locked when the activities begin.

### **Preschool Calendar – 2021/2022**

Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Program follows the same academic calendar as Grace Lutheran School. On days when a half day is indicated, please note there will be no Young Fives that day.

August 24 – First Day – Morning class – Those signed up for Tuesdays.

August 25 – First Day - Morning Class – Those signed up for Wednesdays  
First Day - Young Fives

May 26 – Last Day – Young Fives

May 27 – Last Day – Morning Class

Revised – 08/06/2021

# NOTES