



**Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool**

# **Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool Parent Handbook 2017-2018 School Year**

**Bethlehem United Methodist Church**

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**Visit the Preschool facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/bethlehem.preschool>**





**Welcome to Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool.** We thank you for choosing our school for the care and education of your child. We view our role as a partnership between the home and school and consider it a privilege to have your child join our preschool family. We encourage you to be actively involved in your child's education this year.

This handbook outlines our policies and procedures. However, like all handbooks, it is impossible to cover all the questions that may arise from time to time. Therefore, we encourage you to contact us at any time with any questions you may have.

## **Staff**

The director and all teachers have a bachelor's degree in education or a related field as well as preschool experience. All assistants have a high school diploma as well as experience with preschool age children.

As per Virginia Code, all staff working with the children have undergone both a criminal background check with the Virginia State Police as well as a child abuse check from the Virginia Department of Social Services, and have Safe Sanctuary Training through our Bethlehem United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuary trainer. Additionally, staff complete CPR training.

### **Director – Montana Bays**

#### **Pre-Kindergarten**

**Teacher – Billie Jean Elmer**

**Assistant – Brittany Malicoat**

#### **Thrilling Three's**

**Teacher – Karen Smith**

**Assistant – Debbie Ferguson**

#### **Terrific Two's**

**Teacher – Terra Vaughan**

**Assistant – Melissa Gray**

### **Preschool Board of Directors**

The preschool functions as an extension of the Educational wing of the church. Through its Board, the preschool program is directly responsible to the Administrative Board of the Church and to the Pastor. The work of the preschool Director, Teachers, and Assistant Teachers is directly under the supervision of the Pastor, Staff, Parish, Relations (PSPR) Committee and Administrative Board as well as the Preschool Board.

## How to Reach Us

The church office telephone number is **(540)-297-7957** and is open Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Messages may be left at any time. Please feel free to contact your teacher or director at any time.



## History

Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool opened its doors in 1984 as an outreach ministry of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. The program is open to all members of the community and neighboring counties. Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool operates as a licensed preschool by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Religious Exempt Center and undergoes a license renewal process annually.

## Our Philosophy

Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool is an integral part of the outreach ministry of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. Bethlehem United Preschool's educational programs help children develop spiritually, mentally, physically, socially and emotionally while gaining readiness experiences to enhance their public school program. Our program encourages the children to develop self-discipline, a positive self-image, a curiosity for the world around them and an appreciation for the value of human life shown through God's love.

## Program

Our programs are designed to help our children develop spiritually, physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially. Each child receives individual attention and is directed toward reaching his or her maximum potential. The three year old and Pre-K schedules include age appropriate guided free play, circle time, reading readiness/language arts activities, math, science, social studies, music, art, snack time or lunch time and technology activities. Additionally, children participate in chapel with our pastor and children and youth ministers.

## **Goals**

Our Goals are to:

- Foster a sustaining relationship with God
- Provide a safe, nurturing and non-threatening environment for growth and development
- Provide for self-discovery learning at each child's pace
- Develop language skills
- Assist each child to play cooperatively with other children and groups.
- Develop acceptable means of expressing emotions
- Improve motor coordination through physical activity
- Encourage children to initiate, perform and complete activities
- Increase awareness of the world around them through hands-on learning centers, resource people from the community who come in to share their skills and knowledge and field trips
- Prepare for kindergarten using the Virginia Standards of Early Childhood

## **Preschool Curriculum**

### **Terrific Two's**

***The Terrific Two's program encourages ....***

- Fine motor eye-hand coordination
- Manipulative activities that enhance problem solving abilities and decision making
- Free play activities to enhance social, pretend and language development
- Performing tasks independently

***Incorporated throughout the program are ....***

- Art activities encompassing painting, use of scissors, drawing with a variety of tools, glue and use of a variety of materials
- Water play, matching and sorting activities, puzzles, eye-hand coordination activities (stacking, sorting, matching, blocks, etc.)
- Games and song activities using colors, shapes, following one and two step directions, concept building
- Sharing, turn taking, problem solving and interactive play

***Besides developmental activities suited for each child, we follow a theme-based approach using the seasons and times of year to frame our day.***

***Our monthly themes and activities will include:***

**September** – Our classroom, Apples

**October** – Shapes, Autumn Colors

**November** – Thanksgiving, Family and Friends

**December** – Christmas

**January** – Winter, Hibernation

**February** – Valentine’s Day

**March** – Easter, St. Patrick’s Day

**April** – Spring

**May** – Mother’s Day, Summer

### **Thrilling Three’s**

The curriculum supports the *Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards* for four-year-olds by preparing them for their preschool year. Our Thrilling Three’s curriculum has been adapted with age appropriate skill, social and motor development lessons.

***The Thrilling Three’s program encourages ....***

- Listening and communication skills
- Fine and gross motor skill development
- Development of social skills
- Music and art appreciation
- Colors, shapes, numbers and letter recognition
- Name recognition

***Incorporated throughout the program are ....***

- Music and art activities
- Sensory activities
- Science exploration
- Colors, math concepts including shapes, numbers and letters
- Chapel time as well as a daily Bible story

## **Pre-K**

The curriculum supports and is aligned with *the Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four- Year -Olds*.

The curriculum incorporates the following monthly themes for a focused integration of skill development of oral/written language, science, math, art, music and dramatic play. These skills are taught at an age appropriate fundamental level throughout the year.

### ***Incorporated throughout the program are ....***

- Fine and gross motor skill development
- Chapel and worship time as well as daily Bible story
- Field trips and community exploration
- Guided/focused facilitated play
- Development of social skills
- Development of personal independence and responsibility
- Music appreciation and development

### ***Our monthly themes and activities for our three-year-old and Pre-K classes will include:***

**September** – Getting to know self, family, classmates

**October** – Seasons, Halloween, Columbus Day, The Five Senses

**November** – Pilgrims, Native Americans, Thanksgiving, Food

**December** – Birth of Jesus, Cultural Celebrations, Houses

**January** – Weather, Hibernation, Martin Luther King Day

**February** – Valentine's Day, President's Day, Dental Health, Animals

**March** – Easter, St. Patrick's Day, Community Helpers

**April** – Spring, Transportation

**May** – Mother's Day, Water, Growing Things

## Evaluations

Children are formally evaluated two times throughout the school year; once in fall and once in spring. At these times, a conference will be scheduled for you with your child's teachers to discuss their progress and goals for learning. Teachers informally assess children on a daily basis through observations and student products. If you have concerns or questions about your child's progress, please feel free to contact his/her teacher to arrange a time to meet.

## Daily Routines

### *A Typical Day for our Terrific Two's*

- Arrival – Free choice of activities such as:  
Easel painting, dramatic play, blocks, housekeeping, arts and crafts, books, puzzles
- Circle – Welcome song, discuss theme, songs, finger plays
- Snack – Blessing, story, discussion
- Play outside or in “big room”
- Story time
- Group activity – games, action songs, rhythm instruments
- Dismissal

**Note:** Books read by the teacher or by your child, Bible stories, finger plays, singing, playing musical instruments, games, etc. will occur throughout the day.

### *A Typical Day for our Thrilling Three's and Pre-K*

- Arrival – Themed activity or free exploration of activities such as:  
Blocks, Legos, puzzles, books, games, dramatic play, housekeeping, transportation, music, play dough, arts and crafts
- Circle – Welcome song, calendar, weather, story pertaining to theme of month, introduction or review of skill (s)
- Centers – Writing, math, science, computer, art
- Music – Singing, dancing, creative expression
- Snack/Lunch – Blessing, Bible story, discussion
- Play outside or in “big room”
- Wrap up – Discuss day, show & tell
- Dismissal

**Note:** The flow of the day for the Three's and Pre-K may look the same but, of course, while the topics are the same, the material is very different.

Books read by the teacher or by your child, Bible stories, finger plays, singing, playing musical instruments, games, etc. will occur throughout the day.

The Two's and Three's classes visit with our Children and Youth Minister in the Chapel once a month. The Pre-K class also spends time with Pastor Lord each month.

## **Admissions**

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool is committed to admitting and welcoming students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin. No employee or student shall undertake, participate in or support any action, verbal or otherwise, which is intended to harm, injure or insult any other student on the grounds of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin.

### **Age Requirements**

Children must be 2, 3 or 4 (depending on the class assignment) by September 30 of the year in which the child is enrolled.

### **Readiness for Preschool**

Toilet training: Children in the three and four year old classes must be completely toilet trained by the beginning of the school year. Pull-ups may be used, if necessary.

### **Enrollment Procedures**

The following items are necessary for enrollment in Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool:

1. Registration forms may be picked up from the church secretary during regular office hours or mailed upon request. Please contact the church office at 297-7957 or [www.bumcmoneta@gmail.com](mailto:www.bumcmoneta@gmail.com) with any questions you may have.
2. Photocopy of child's state birth certificate.
3. Certification of Immunization (form may be obtained from our church office) or a copy of record from a physician or medical office.
4. Registration fee of \$100 (non-refundable). Please make check payable to Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool.
5. Return completed information to the church office with the registration fee or mail to Bethlehem Preschool, P.O. Box 458, Moneta, VA 24121.

### **Health and Immunization Requirements**

Copies of the child's physical examination form and a copy of the child's birth certificate are required to be on file in the Preschool office before a student may begin school.

### **Illness and Medication**

Children with signs of illness within 24 hours of their preschool class such as fever, nausea, diarrhea or cloudy nasal discharge should not be brought to school. Parents of children who become ill while at school will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached those listed on the child's information sheet (emergency card) will be contacted so the child may be picked up. Please keep this information up-to-date.

Please contact the school **(540-297-7957)** and report to the director any **communicable disease** that your child may have contracted so the school can take extra precautions to insure it does not spread. (For example, head lice, flu, etc.) All information will be held in the strictest confidence.

Please notify your child's teacher if your child has a medical condition of which we should be aware.

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool **will not** administer any medication – prescription or non-prescription medication (non-prescription medications include, but are not limited to Tylenol, cough syrup, diaper ointment, sunscreen, and topical insect repellants).

### **Financial Information**

A non-refundable registration/supply fee of \$100 for each school year is required as part of your child's enrollment. Your child is enrolled for the entire nine-month school year.

Tuition may be paid in advance or monthly, and is due the **first week** of each month. Checks are preferred and should be made payable to Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool. You may mail them to Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool, P.O. Box 458, Moneta, VA 24121, or, you may give them to the director. On Tuesday and Thursday's the church office will receive tuition from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. If you choose to pay cash, please place it in the provided envelope and you will receive a receipt in your child's take home folder their next school day.

*Teachers are not authorized to receive tuition and fees of any kind.*

### **Monthly Tuition:**

Terrific Two's	\$85
Thrilling Three's	\$85
Pre-K	\$140

Reduced Registration and Monthly Tuition for second child (and subsequent children) enrolled in the preschool reduced by 50% and tuition for second child (or subsequent children) enrolled reduced by 10%.

## **Schedules**

All classes meet September through May. Our preschool follows the same schedule as Bedford County Public Schools for holiday closing and hazardous weather conditions. The exception will be Election Day, November 7, 2017, and all Teacher Workdays.

**Preschool will be open on Election Day and Teacher Workdays.**

## **School Hours**

Pre-K children meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Thrilling Three's meet Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Terrific Two's meet Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Please do not bring children early and please be prompt for pick-up.

## **Weather Contingencies**

***...If Bedford County schools open one or two hours late,***

The two-year-olds will come at 10:00 a.m. and dismiss at 12:30 p.m.

The three-year-olds and Pre-K will come at 10:00 a.m. and dismiss at 1:00 p.m.

***...If Bedford County schools are closed, preschool will be closed.***

Bedford County closings and delays can be heard on local radio and television stations.

## **Newsletters**

Frequent communication between home and school is important to us and to your child's success. Parents will receive a class newsletter/calendar of activities typically covering a period of one to two weeks. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep parents informed about what their child will be doing so that parents may support the child's learning at home, and, secondly to share other pertinent information that may arise from time to time. Look for them in your child's backpack.

## **Communication**

The school agrees to keep you informed of your child's progress in all areas. We will contact you promptly if your son/daughter is having educational or behavioral difficulties. In addition to parent conferences held twice a year, the school welcomes informal communications between teachers and parents. Feel free to call or to e-mail for updates at any time.

We seek a partnership with parents. Parents who understand that teachers are trained professionals who understand children's developmental needs find that mutual respect leads to positive results for their children. Bethlehem United Methodist Preschool is committed to treating parents with respect recognizing that they are their child's first teacher. Together, we have the same mission; the nurturance and development of the whole child.

## **School Code of Conduct**

To be a member of our school community is to accept and abide by the following expectations in the school parent partnership, it is expected that all school parents will:

- Seek, in selecting a school, an optimal match between the needs of their child, their own expectations and philosophy and programs of the school.
- Recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.
- Respect the school's responsibility to do what is best for the entire community, while recognizing the needs of their individual child.
- Familiarize themselves with and support the school's policies and procedures.
- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits that are consistent with those of the school.
- Involve themselves in the life of the school, through volunteerism and other means, to promote the best interests of their child.
- Share with the school any cultural, medical or personal information that the school may need to best serve their child and the school community.
- Seek to resolve problems and secure information through appropriate channels (i.e., teacher, director, Preschool Board – in that order).
- Treat everyone with respect and maintain an educational, rather than adversarial tone, in face of the inevitable conflicts and challenges.

## **General Information**

### **First Day of School**

The first time in a new environment may be difficult or uncomfortable for a child as well as a parent. Whether your child seems to be having difficulty or not, we ask that you bring your child into the classroom, assure him/her you will be back soon, say a quick good-bye and leave. Your child may try to draw out the process, but we have found if these steps are followed from the beginning, the unhappiness, if any, usually lasts only a few minutes.

On the first day of school, you will be given a sheet of paper with your child's name on it. Please place it in the window of your car. This will help us in the beginning of the year to speed up the process of bringing your child to you.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

When you arrive, please bring your child into the classroom and sign in so we can be sure of their arrival and greet you.

Two's – Please drive around the left side of the church toward the back and park near the first entrance by the walkway closest to the classroom. At dismissal we will bring your child to you in the same location.

Three's and Pre-K – Please drive around the left side of the church toward the back and park near the playground when you arrive. At dismissal, please form a line and the teacher will bring your child to you.

You will also be asked to sign your child out each day. If someone else will be picking up your child, please let us know ahead of time. If we do not know the person picking up your child, we will ask for their identification to make sure this is the correct person.

PLEASE keep the school updated on any phone number, address changes, e-mail changes or changes in those listed as having permission to pick up your child.

### **Hand Washing**

Children and teachers wash their hands at the beginning of the school day, after using the bathroom, after outdoor play and before and after eating.

### **Labels in Clothing**

Please put your child's name on all belongings that come to school such as coats, sweaters, hats, book bags and lunch boxes.

### **Extra Change of Clothing**

Please put a complete change of clothing in a zip lock bag with your child's name on it. It will be kept at school to be used if needed. As the seasons change and/or your child grows, don't forget to exchange these.

### **Snacks for Two's and Three's**

Children are to bring their own snack. We are trying to encourage healthy snacks and, remember, it is only a snack. The teachers will provide water.

### **Lunch for Pre-K**

Pack a healthy lunch as we will not snack, but enjoy lunch together. The teachers will provide water.

### **Volunteers**

As the year progresses teachers may request parent volunteers to assist in classrooms for special parties and lesson activities.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Snacks for birthdays, un-birthdays (for those with summer birthdays) or other special occasions may be provided by parents. Please talk to your teacher ahead of time so scheduling conflicts and issues of food allergies will not arise.

### **Field Trips**

Parents or another adult designated by the parent are expected to provide transportation and supervision for their child on all field trips. Admission fees, etc., where applicable, are payable by the parent.

### **Toys**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other belongings to school unless asked to do so. There will be times when he or she may bring items for show-n-tell days, color days, etc. These items will be put on a special shelf until the appropriate time during class.

We are also aware that there may be days when your child is going to someone's home after school and wants to bring something special with him or her. That is fine, but their treasure must stay in the school bag.

## Party and Field Trip Calendar

2017 - 2018 School Year

*Party and Field Trip Calendar is subject to change.*

### Terrific Two's

October 30	Halloween Party w/Pre-K
November 20	Thanksgiving Party w/Pre-K
December 18	Santa Party w/Pre-K
February 14	Valentine's Party w/Pre-K
March 14	St. Patrick's Day Celebration
March 28	Easter Egg Hunt
May 23	End of-the-Year Party

### Thrilling Three's

October 5	Apple Orchard
October 31	Halloween Parade/Party
November 21	Thanksgiving Party
December 19	Santa Party
February 6	Field trip to Moneta Post Office
February 14	Valentine's Party
March 6 or 8	Field trip to Downtown Pizza
March 15	Saint Patrick's Day Celebration
March 29	Easter Egg Hunt
May 10	Mother's Day Tea Celebration
May 24	End of-the-Year Party

### Pre-K

October 6	Field Trip to Apple Orchard
October 30	Halloween Party w/ 2's
November 20	Thanksgiving Party w/2's
December 18	Santa Party w/2's
December 20	Christmas Play
January 12	Field trip to Moneta Library
February 7	Field Trip to Moneta Post Office
February 14	Valentine's Party w/2's
March 2	Dr. Seuss Day
March 16	St. Patrick's Day Celebration
March 30	Easter Egg Hunt
April 23	Field trip to airport hanger and meet pilot
May 14	Field trip to Booker T. Washington National Park
May 24	Graduation

**School Year Calendar  
2017 – 2018 School Year**

*School Year Calendar is subject to change.*

August 29	Back to School Night
September 5	School Begins for Thrilling Three's
September 6	School Begins for Terrific Two's and Pre-K
November 1	Parent-Teacher Conferences for Two's and Pre-K
November 7-9	Parent-Teacher Conferences for Three's
November 7	Election Day – School is <b>open</b>
November 8	Lion's Club Eye Screening for Two's and Pre-K
November 9	Lion's Club Eye Screening for Three's
November 22-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec. 21 – Jan. 3	Christmas Vacation
January 15	Martin Luther King Day – School is <b>closed</b>
March 2	Dr. Seuss Day
March 10	Spring Open House
April 2-6	Spring Break
May 1-3	Parent–Teacher Conferences for Three's
May 2	Parent–Teacher Conferences for Two's and Pre-K
May 23	Last Day of School for Terrific Two's
May 24	Last Day of School for Thrilling Three's
May 24	Pre-K Graduation
May 25	Last Day of School for Pre-K