

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Pierce Chapel Preschool is to nurture the whole child by encouraging the child's physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual growth in a loving, Christian environment. A ministry of Pierce Chapel United Methodist Church, the Preschool serves children ages 1-4 and their families. Through providing a safe and nurturing place for children, our goal is to help all of our children reach their potential and feel secure in the knowledge that God loves them.

II. OUR LEARNING/TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

We believe that young children learn by doing. They learn about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. Children do not need to be forced to learn; they are naturally motivated to learn by their own desire to make sense of their world. Therefore, we believe that as teachers, our role is not to lecture or force rote memorization of facts but to serve as facilitators and guides. For example, in our classrooms, you won't find us drilling children on their numbers or ABCs, but you might very well find us counting members of a teddy bear family, observing the color "green" by romping through the grass, or eating apples to help us learn the "a" sound! It is our job to prepare the learning environment well so that it provides stimulating, challenging materials and activities for children. In a well-prepared environment that fosters hands-on, interactive learning, children learn through discovery in their play experiences. Best of all, they have so much fun that they don't even realize how much they're learning in the process!

The Preschool uses teaching strategies which are both age-appropriate and individually appropriate; that is, our program is appropriate for the age group served and will be implemented with attention to the needs and differences of each individual child. Thus, our program is designed to support and encourage each child's individual development. Bible stories, Chapel Time, music, learning centers, and "themes of the month" are key parts of our program. We provide a balanced focus on a variety of readiness skills such as reading and writing readiness, beginning math concepts, socialization, and self-help skills. Finally, we look upon each child as a part of our Pierce Chapel UMC family. Each child and family can in turn look to us to be a part of his or her extended family.

III. ADMISSION PROCEDURE

Pierce Chapel Preschool is open to children regardless of their race or religious preference. All children are required to be of appropriate age for their class by

September 1st. Pierce Chapel Preschool requires all children to be current on their immunizations and to provide a record of immunization.

Parents have the option to request a specific teacher for the upcoming school year. All teacher requests must be submitted in writing to the Director during registration. Parent requests are only one of the factors considered in making class assignments; therefore, parent requests do not guarantee placement in the requested class. After all factors are considered, all class assignments are made by the Director.

All required forms must be completed and returned to the director along with the registration fee on or before the child's first day. Forms include:

- A. Emergency/Medical Release
- B. Authorized pick up
- C. External Preps / Signed Handbook Acknowledgement
- D. Immunization Record (Form 3231, the GA DHR certificate of immunization)

IV. TUITION

We prefer tuition be paid by Tuition Express, using your bank or credit card (\$5 monthly fee for credit cards) information. If not using TE-Please make tuition (by check if possible) payable to Pierce Chapel UMC Preschool and send to school **in your child's folder**. Please add to your tuition the payment for Lunch Bunch if you want your child to be able to stay for that month. *Tuition is due on the **first** of the month and late on the **5th***. A \$10.00 late fee should be added to payments received after 12:00 on the 5th of the month. A \$10 fee will be added for any declined payments processed with Tuition Express.

Each year the August and May tuition payment will be due by June 1 to confirm your spot for the upcoming year. Tuition for the remaining school months is due on the **first** of each month and will be considered late after the **5th** of each month. A \$10.00 late charge is due if your tuition payment is late. No reduction in fees will be made for absences or holidays. Failure to pay tuition for two consecutive months may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the Preschool. A \$32.00 charge is assessed on any returned check which is charged and collected by our bank. The bank will run the check through again. If a subsequent check is returned, another \$32.00 charge is assessed and all payments thereafter must be paid in cash.

The non-refundable annual registration/supply fee is \$100. A \$90 registration fee is due for the second child in the same family.

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| Tuition rates: 2-day class | \$150.00 per month |
| 3-day class | \$160.00 per month |
| 4-day class | \$200.00 per month |
| 5-day class | \$220.00 per month |
| Lunch Bunch | \$ 12.00 per month |

Children may only attend the class/days they are registered for. For example-children enrolled in the M/W class may only attend M/W. Classes may not be combined. Classes for 12-24-month olds may not combine with other classes and vice versa.

Special Events Fee: \$ 15.00 per year

FEI # 58-1537693 (For tax purposes)

V. LUNCH BUNCH-We are an allergy friendly school.

Wednesdays are Lunch Bunch days! Lunch Bunch is completely optional. However, tuition payments must be up to date in order for a child to participate in Lunch Bunch. For \$12 per month, Lunch Bunch allows parents to send a sack lunch, including drink, with their child and leave their child at Preschool until 12:50p. During that extra time, children will eat lunch and have supervised play and social time. Nut products are not permitted.

Lunch Bunch will not begin until the second Wednesday in September in order to allow children time to adjust to attending Preschool. Payment for Lunch Bunch must be included with the **on time** tuition payment for that month. Please indicate on the signup sheet that will be sent home monthly and include the Lunch Bunch Fee (\$12.00 per month.) Remember that you must sign up for Lunch Bunch (per month) at the beginning of each month so that we can staff the Lunch Bunch time adequately. Lunch Bunch money is not refundable or transferable.

VI. WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

A full calendar months' notice (with payment) is necessary to withdraw your child from the Preschool.

Example #1: If you give notice on February 1 that you will be moving on March 1, then you owe only February's full tuition.

Example #2: If you give notice on February 15 that you will be moving on March 1, then the full March payment is due, even though your child will not attend the Preschool at all during the month of March.

VII. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

We use a drop-off/pick-up system for the preschool children. From 8:50 to 9:00 a.m., your child will need to be dropped off in the carpool line to an awaiting Preschool staff member. Please have your child finish all food before drop off. (A map will be provided to show you how the carpool line will operate.) Please do not talk on your cell phone while coming through the car line. At 9:00 a.m. all doors to the building will be locked, and parents must park their car in the East parking lot, ring the doorbell by the door under the Porte-Cochere. For parents wishing to walk their child to the building during carpool-please see the map for the appropriate door. Please do not enter or exit through the carpool doors while teachers are loading or unloading!

In the event of severe weather during arrival/departure time and we feel it is unsafe for the children to be brought in or out, we will wait for the weather to pass before unloading/loading the children. In this instance we will hang a yellow piece of paper on the handle of the outside door so that you will be aware of what is going on inside. You may pull under the Porte Cochere and bring your child to a waiting teacher inside in the morning. In the afternoon, we will begin bringing the children outside as soon as the severe weather passes. Know that at any time, you may come get your child.

Children will need to be picked up in the carpool line between 12:00 and 12:10 p.m. (pick up on Lunch Bunch days is 12:45-12:50) **For pick-up past 12:10 (12:50 on Lunch Bunch days) p.m., a \$25.00 late fee will be charged for 1-10 minutes and then \$1.00 per minute until pickup.** There will be no exceptions regarding this fee. If picking up a child late, parents will need to go to the Directors' office to pick up their child. Late fees will be due at the time of pick-up. Please understand that this is necessary so our staff can complete their clean-up/preparation responsibilities and leave the Preschool at a reasonable time.

Children will be released only to properly identified persons who have been listed on the release form filled out at registration. The names of persons who may pick up a child **MUST** be kept current by the parents. If a person other than the parent is picking up a child, please be aware that they will be required to show

identification, even though they are on the list. The Preschool staff will only load children into appropriate child safety seats, as mandated by GA law.

VIII. HOURS OF OPERATION AND HOLIDAYS

The Preschool operates Monday through Friday from 8:50 a.m. to 12:10pm (lunch bunch is 12-12:50p on Wednesdays). The Preschool will follow the holiday schedule of the Muscogee County School System. Full fees will be due for the months in which holidays occur. In the event of severe weather, the Preschool will close when Muscogee County Schools close. If the severe weather occurs during school hours we do have an alert radio and are prepared to move the children to a safe hallway until all is clear to return to the classrooms.

IX. CLOTHING

Children should wear comfortable clothes and shoes (sneakers with good soles are ideal) suitable for indoor and outdoor wear. **Sandals and crocks are not allowed** and other shoes with slick hard surfaces slip very easily and we ask that they not be worn! Please be aware that children will be playing outside and will be engaging in art activities that can be messy, so clothes do get dirty! Girls wearing skirts and dresses should wear shorts underneath. During the winter, be sure to send a coat with your child because we continue to play outdoors daily, weather permitting. Coats, sweaters, hats and mittens should all be marked with the child's name.

Each child must have a complete change of clothing (including underwear and socks) at the Preschool to be used for emergencies. All clothing must be marked with the child's name. Be sure to change this clothing as season or size changes.

X. PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All materials necessary for a happy Preschool experience are provided by the program. **Personal toys, books and other items** should **not** be brought to school unless requested by the teacher. Guns, sharp objects, and small pocket toys that might be a choking hazard must **NEVER** be brought to the Preschool, including inside their bag. The Preschool is not responsible for lost or broken items. No gum, candy, or food should be brought to the Preschool without the permission of the teacher. Pets are not allowed in the building.

XI. SNACK/BIRTHDAYS-We are allergy friendly

Snacks are provided by the Preschool. Water is served to drink. If you are interested in donating snacks, they must be purchased so we can verify ingredients, please check with your child's teacher, as we may have an allergy in the classroom that require us to monitor what is provided.

Pierce Chapel Preschool is Allergy Friendly. Following is some information to explain how to choose snacks that adhere to this policy.

*****Peanut and Tree Nut Free:***

When choosing a peanut free snack for your child's class, it is important to ALWAYS check the label on the package to make sure it is free of peanuts and nuts of all kinds and not processed in a facility that process or may process nuts. Manufacturers may have changed their equipment or product line and method since you last purchased an item so please read the label each time you purchase a product.

READING LABELS: Some manufacturers clearly state if a product has peanut or nuts in it while others, it is almost hidden. PLEASE READ THE LABELS each time you purchase. Do not purchase or send in items with the allergy and ingredient alert such as:

***“May contain Peanut or Tree Nuts
“Processed on shared equipment with Peanuts or Tree Nuts”
“Manufactured in a plant with Peanut or Tree Nuts”
“Contains Peanut or Tree Nut Ingredients”***

Healthy refreshments are an awesome choice e.g. cheese and crackers, fresh veggies, yogurt, mandarin orange cups, pear or peach cups. Again, all should be purchased and labels should be checked.

We appreciate your help with keeping ALL our students safe. Thank you for your cooperation!

Each child's birthday will be celebrated at the Preschool. If parents wish to bring cupcakes, cookies or muffins; they must be purchased and brought in their original packaging to ensure no nuts; and party napkins, arrangements should be made with the child's teacher in advance. Red juice, purple juice, and nuts of any type are not permitted. Birthdays will be celebrated during the scheduled snack time only. **NO candles or latex balloons** in the Preschool. Mylar balloons do not pose a choking hazard and are permitted but discouraged. We will be happy to pass out birthday invitations to children in your child's classroom provided all

children in the class are receiving one. If you choose to invite only a few children or children from another class, you may request addresses from your teacher.

XII. COMMUNICATIONS

The Director must approve all written material (letters to parents, email, advertisements, etc.) before distribution to parents and children.

Due to privacy concerns-please do not post photos of children other than your own on any social media or website!

XIII. DONATIONS

We appreciate donations of snacks, drinks, toys, cleaning supplies and other items, but all donations must be approved in advance by the Director.

XIV. PARENT-TEACHER COOPERATION

We at the Preschool value your input and suggestions and seek to foster an open line of communication with all parents. Teachers will be happy to talk with you about your child's adjustment and progress and will schedule parent-teacher conferences as needed. Please always feel free to express concerns and ask questions regarding your child's Preschool experience. Any classroom concern or issue should first be addressed with your child's teacher. If you need additional assistance or if an issue cannot be resolved at that level, you may contact these persons in the following order:

Preschool Director – Mary Peters, 706-327-9807 ext. 6 or ext. 224
Preschool Board Chairperson – Denise Rhinehart, 706-569-8543

We also encourage you to use our Parent Response Form (found on the website) to let us know how we are doing, to express concerns if you wish, and to offer program suggestions. We welcome you to return this form to a Preschool staff member at any time during the year when you wish to offer feedback. Thank you for partnering with us to give your child the best possible Preschool experience!

XV. DISCIPLINE

Our goal is to help children learn appropriate behaviors and eventually develop the ability to control themselves and act responsibly. The Preschool staff wants to work cooperatively with parents to deal with any behavior problems that

occur at the Preschool. No corporal methods of punishment will be used at any time in seeking to correct behavior issues. Initially, one of several methods will be used to bring about changes in behavior:

- a. rewards for good behavior
- b. redirection
- c. loss of privilege
- d. time out
- e. phone call to parents to pick up child for the day

You will be notified of any serious behavior problems and will be involved in a collaborative effort between parents, teacher, and child to find solutions.

While we value every child as unique and deserving of our love and attention, we are not equipped to serve every child in the way that is best for that child or the overall classroom. If in time we discover that your child requires continual one on one attention because of developmental or behavioral issues, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child and seek a learning environment that can provide the appropriate level of supervision

XVI. HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

All children are required to be current on their immunizations prior to enrollment. A record of immunizations (Form 3231, the GA DHR certificate of immunization) must be provided by the parent prior to the first day of school. Parents are responsible for keeping immunizations current and providing updated records to the Preschool when your child receives an immunization.

Children will not be allowed into the Preschool or allowed to remain at the Preschool if they have any contagious symptoms, including but not limited to:

- fever of 100 degrees or higher (taken under the arm)
- vomiting and/or diarrhea within 24 hours-without medication
- severe cold symptoms-cough, sneezing, runny nose
- undetermined rash or spots
- sore throat
- symptoms of eye infection (e.g. blood-shot eye color, drainage, etc.)
- lice-re-admission per Muscogee County School policy
- any symptom of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, German measles, chicken pox, whooping cough, or mumps

Parents will be notified to pick up children immediately if signs of illness occur during the day.

Readmission following an illness:

Children may not return to the Preschool after a communicable disease without a doctor's written release or until the following conditions have been met:

Fever-has been absent for 24 hours without medication

Vomiting and/or Diarrhea-have been absent for 24 hours-without medication

Strep Throat or other Bacterial Infections-on an antibiotic for a 24-hour period

Chicken Pox-all lesions crusted over

Lice-after medicated shampoo has been used and no signs of lice remain

Conjunctivitis-no drainage or redness

In the event of a life-threatening accident or illness, the staff will call 911 and secure emergency medical care. The child will be transported to the hospital of the parent's choice if possible (indicated on the medical release form). Every effort will be made by the director to contact the parents immediately to inform them of the situation and the location of their child. If an injury occurs while at school an "ouch report" will be sent home to make you aware of what happened. If you have any questions, please feel free to call.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to notify the DIRECTOR in WRITING of any change of address, phone numbers, doctor, schedule or emergency contacts.

PRESCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The Preschool Advisory Board provides the framework for the operation of the Pierce Chapel Preschool. Members of the Board include the Chairperson, Preschool Director, Minister of Discipleship, church members-at-large, and a parent representative from each age group; i.e. 1-year-olds, 2-year-olds, 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. We stipulate that the group of parent representatives must include at least two parents who are not members of Pierce Chapel. The Preschool Board meets bi-monthly to oversee the program; to set policy and make modifications as necessary; to address any concerns presented by the Director on behalf of staff or parents; and to give overall guidance and support to the program.