

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE/PHILOSOPHY.....	1-2
PROGRAMS/SCHEDULES.....	2-3
ENROLLMENT AND PAYMENT STRUCTURE.....	3-4
REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT.....	5
CHANGE FEE AND WITHDRAWALS.....	5
POLICIES FOR PROVIDING A SAFE AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN.....	5
ATTENDANCE.....	5
CALENDAR.....	5
WEATHER.....	5
DROP-OFF.....	6
LOCKED ENTRY.....	6
PICK-UP.....	6
DISCIPLINE.....	7
CONDUCT POLICY.....	7
RESPONSIBILITY.....	7
COMMUNICATION.....	8
STAFF SCREENING.....	9
POLICIES FOR YOUR CHILD’S HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES.....	10
MEDICATIONS.....	11
ACCIDENT, INJURY, EMERGENCY & PROCEDURES.....	11
PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION PLAN.....	12
POLICIES FOR YOUR CHILD’S PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL BEING.....	12
TOYS.....	12
CLOTHING.....	12
PLAYGROUND.....	13
FIELD TRIPS.....	13
BIRTHDAY.....	13
FOOD PROCEDURES.....	13
YOUR CHILD’S FIRST DAYS.....	14
STAFF.....	14-16
HISTORICAL NOTES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION.....	17
CALENDAR.....	18

ZION LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

PURPOSE

1. To provide a Christian preschool experience for preschool children of three, four and five years of age.
2. To provide group activities for the child and to promote Christian behavior.
3. To encourage development of spirit, mind, and body and to promote free expression in the child.
4. To maintain a Christian atmosphere incorporating appropriate learning resources, including Christian songs, videos, and Bible stories.

Goals & Objectives -- see Curriculum Guide

PHILOSOPHY

The spiritual aspect of the young child's growth cannot be separated from the total growth process. In a Christian setting, each child is valued as an individual, as God's own child, saved by grace through faith. Learning about being a child of God is important to the development of proper Christian relationships.

PLAY-BASED LEARNING

The program at Zion Lutheran is "play-based". That is, the program provides a safe environment and basic structure that allows children to learn and develop by engaging their natural curiosity and their innate desire to interact with the world around them. It is developmentally appropriate for children to be allowed to learn and develop at their own pace using materials and methods suited to their age, level of development, and individual needs.

The program offers the following activities:

- **Religious Lessons** – Children learn the love of God as it is shared through Bible stories, songs, and prayers. Christian teachers reflect God's love through daily instruction.
- **Experimental Natural Science** – Experiments with plants, animals, water, and weather help children make sense of the world.
- **Large Muscle Development** – Activities are designed to develop large muscle skills and coordination. Children do this when they jump, hop, climb, throw, catch, run, and balance.
- **Fine Motor Development** – This is the ability to control one's muscles in manipulating small objects. Examples include manipulating puzzle pieces, stringing beads, lacing, cutting, working with play dough, folding paper, and coloring.
- **Rhythm, Music, and Songs** – Music allows children to express themselves and learn to distinguish between sounds. Music can be used to teach other skills, such as counting, recognizing colors, taking turns, and sharing.
- **Dramatic Play** – Through dramatic play children create an environment that often parallels their real world.
- **Visual Discrimination** – Before children begin to read, they must be able to see the similarities and differences in letters and words. Learning to distinguish colors and shapes, as well as letters and numbers, aid children in this.

- **Listening Skills** – This is a prerequisite to reading. Auditory skills developed in preschool help children distinguish between different sounds and identify and recall sounds. Story time is a daily activity.
- **Language Development** – Songs, stories, poems, finger plays, games, and free time for interaction between children help children make sense of their world.

The Role of Play

When you ask your child what they did in preschool, they may simply say, “I just played.” This is a great thing to hear! Play influences the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of children. Children play to learn!

Young children learn best through manipulation and exploration of materials with opportunities to initiate their own learning process. Children have important lessons to learn about themselves, so they begin to develop individuality. Play is learning for children. It helps them develop control of their bodies, develop problem-solving skills, acquire social skills, and learn how to learn:

- They learn that they can have comfortable, happy times away from home, and that their teachers will comfort and help them.
- They learn that their teachers will encourage them to try out new things and to do things their own way, as long as it is not harmful to others.
- They learn that toys and play materials at school are for all the children, and they can share and take turns.
- They are learning that there are new stories, new words, new songs, new friends, and dozens of new enjoyable experiences.
- They are learning to cut, paint, paste, and color independently.
- They are learning that there is satisfaction in being able to do many other things for themselves.

Dramatic play is also of great value to a child. As children act out certain roles, they are trying to discover what the grown-up world is all about. To help broaden the young child’s experiences, the preschool teacher will frequently change the dramatic play center and provide various props for the child to be a mail carrier, engineer, firefighter, service station attendant, grocery clerk, pilot, nurse, doctor, painter, baker, beautician, police officer, teacher, pastor, and more!

PROGRAM OPTIONS AND SCHEDULES: There are several program options available:

The preschool/childcare will meet at Zion Lutheran Church located at 3401 E. River Road, Mt. Pleasant, MI.

Toddler Care

- Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Preschool

- Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Child Care

- Before School: Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. -8:30 a.m.
- After School: Monday – Friday from 11:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Children that will be here through the lunch hour will need to bring lunch from home.
- **Child Care on No School Days:** We will offer childcare on days when there is a delay or cancellation from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Preschool Schedule: *Tentative Daily Preschool Schedule*

8:30	Journal
8:45	Jesus Time (devotion, music, singing)
9:00	Free Choice/Centers
10:00	Clean-Up
10:15	Calendar
10:40	Snack/Quiet Reading
11:00	Story Time
11:15	Gross Motor
11:25	Prayer
11:30	Dismissal

Toddler Schedule:

7:30 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 8:30	Bathroom Break
8:30 – 9:15	Free Play
9:15 – 9:30	Clean Up
9:30 – 10:00	Snack (Jesus Time)
10:00 – 10:15	Bathroom Break
10:15 – 11:00	Outside
11:00 – 11:15	Bathroom Break
11:15 – 11:20	Clean Up
11:20 – 11:45	Lunch
11:45 – 12:00	Bathroom Break
12:00 – 2:00	Nap
2:00 – 2:30	Bathroom Break
2:30 – 3:00	Art
3:00 – 3:30	Snack (Story Time)
3:30 – 4:00	Music/Movement
4:00 – 4:15	Bathroom Break
4:15 – 5:00	Outside
5:00 – 5:30	Clean Up

Note: Our Toddler Care and Child Care are open most days except holidays, one week during the summer, the Friday after Thanksgiving, and the week between Christmas and New Year's.

ENROLLMENT, FEES, FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS, AND WITHDRAWAL

ENROLLMENT

Our Lutheran School's primary mission is to teach children about Jesus. Any parent desiring a quality Christian education for children may apply for admission. Applications will be considered on a first come, first serve basis after February 1.

A child must be at least sixteen months to enroll in toddler care and at least two years and nine months old (33 months) to enroll in preschool. **The child must be toilet trained and wear cloth underwear, not "Pull Ups" to be a part of the preschool program.** A registration packet can be obtained from the office. An application and the \$60.00 non-refundable registration fee must be turned in to reserve a spot for your child.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all 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, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, of its admissions policies, and any other school-administered programs.

FEE STRUCTURE FOR TODDLER CARE

Daily Rate of \$50

Weekly rate of \$240

There is a minimum cost of \$75 per week for Toddler Care

CANCELLATION/ABSENCE POLICIES FOR TODDLER CARE

All toddler care payments are due on the Wednesday following the week of care. **Any day reserved on a regular basis by a full or part-time child must be paid for even if the child is absent.** Failure to make your payments on a timely basis could result in losing your toddler care spot. Cancellations and absences must be notified daily. Failure to notify the center three times could result in your child's toddler care spot being lost.

FEE STRUCTURE FOR PRESCHOOL

The following fee schedule is charged:

\$1,116/child/year for 2 days (PS3 only)

\$1,485/child/year for 3 days

\$1,854/child/year for 4 days

\$2,232/child/year for 5 days

FEE STRUCTURE FOR CHILD CARE FOR PRESCHOOL

\$8/hour; \$38/day; \$190/week

All preschool childcare payments are due by the Wednesday following care. Any day reserved by a full, or part time child must be paid for even if the child is absent.

Since the program is totally supported by registration fees and is dependent upon a minimum number of enrollees, it is required that fees be paid promptly. In the event that fees cannot be paid at the beginning of the year, you are asked to pick one of the following payments schedules.

Payment choices are:

Annual Payment Total due on Registration Day

Semi-Annual Payments..... 1/2 of the total due of Registration Day, and ½ due December 25

Nine Equal Payments..... 1/9 of the total due each month starting on Registration Day, with
Payments due the 25th of each month until May.

If students are withdrawn from the program, a prorated refund will be given upon request.

Payment of tuition for the first month is due by May 1 and last month of the Preschool year must be paid by August 1. Thereafter, tuition payments are due in the Procure payment app or church office on or before the 30th day of each month. For example, tuition for October is due on or before the 30th of September. If tuition due is not received by the 30th day of the month, the account shall be considered "delinquent" and parents will be notified of this. "Delinquent" accounts shall be charged an additional "late fee" of \$15.00. Accounts more than one month "delinquent" will require the center to halt all childcare. Children will be unable to return to care until the complete balance is paid in cash or with a money order.

All tuition payments made by check or money order should be made payable to "Zion Lutheran Preschool". If a check is returned due to non-sufficient funds, there will be an additional \$35 fee added to the payment. This tuition payment and fee must be paid in cash or with a money order before the child is able to return to school.

The preschool is a non-profit organization under the supervision of Zion Lutheran Church and the Board of Christian Education. This board has established a financial aid fund that is available to assist in the payment of tuition. If this would help to enable you to send your child to Zion, please fill out a Financial Aid Application that is available in the office or at www.zionlutheranpreschoolecc.com and return it to the office.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

The following are required for registration; all items must be turned in before enrollment:

- A current application form completed by the parent or guardian
- A current health form completed by a doctor
- An emergency information card
- No space can be left blank per the State Licensing Department
- The registration fee
- Child must turn 3, or 4, by September 1st for preschool
- All immunizations must be up to date and attached to health form. **No waivers are accepted.**
- A signed Handbook/Licensing Notebook Form

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

There is an initial non-refundable registration fee of \$60 for Preschool/Preschool Child Care/Toddler Care. The registration fee remains the same no matter what month of the school year the child enters our program.

CHANGE-OF-CONTRACT FEE

Changes made to your child's enrollment after the school year begins will be assessed a fee of \$20.

WITHDRAWAL

Parent-Initiated Withdrawal

A thirty-day notice must be given to Zion Lutheran Early Childhood. The thirty-day notice can be waived in the case of an unexpected move out of the area, or a sudden major illness developed by the child. One month's tuition is due for any child withdrawn without a thirty-day notice.

Center-Initiated Withdrawal

At times the ECC may be required to release a family:

- Failure of parents to comply with ECC policies.
- Failure to provide current health information and child information.
- Late tuition payments.

POLICIES FOR PROVIDING A SAFE AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN IN OUR PROGRAM

ATTENDANCE

It is very important to your child's emotional and social well-being to be prompt for the start of each class. Teachers will start class at the assigned time. Attendance for each session is essential for continuity of the program. A routine of attending classes help children develop concepts of space and time. For that reason, we require Preschool students to be dropped off no later than 9:00am and Toddler students no later than 9:30am. No drop offs after 10:00am allowed.

CALENDAR

The ECC follows the yearly school calendar. Toddler Care and Child Care are available year-round except for major holidays.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

The Preschool will close or delay at those times when the public schools of Mt. Pleasant are **closed or delayed due to weather conditions**, or as deemed necessary by the director. Most days toddler care and preschool childcare will remain open when preschool is closed. Extreme snow or temperatures may cause the entire center to close. Zion Lutheran ECC (entire center) will close or delay if Mid-Michigan College or Central Michigan University closes or delays due to weather conditions.

If the Mt. Pleasant Public schools have a two-hour **delay due to weather** our Preschool is cancelled. Please check local radio, television, or our Facebook Page for school information. In case of inclement weather, parents are advised to use their own discretion in either bringing their child or picking up their child early.

Temperatures below zero, including wind chill, are unsafe for children to be outside. Public schools in our area close for varying thresholds, typically between -5F and -20F or colder. Zion Lutheran ECC will follow our established protocol for closures and delays. Zion preschool will close if Mt. Pleasant Public School closes or delays. Zion Lutheran ECC (entire center) will close or be delayed if Mid-Michigan College or Central Michigan University closes or delays due to the weather. Additionally, we are committed to prioritizing the safety of our students and staff. If temperatures, including wind chill, reaches -10F or colder, we will close for the day.

The Preschool will also close when absenteeism due to disease reaches 50% of the enrollment of the class.

Understanding the importance of outdoor play, the children will go outside every day unless there is heavy rain, thunder, lightning, or ice covering the playground. The outside temperature cut off will be a real feel of 25 degrees or above. Should we experience an extended period of low temperatures, teachers may take the children outside for a shorter period with a real feel temperature of 20 degrees or above. We understand that public schools have different guidelines, however our children are younger and smaller, and we will utilize the gym for recess providing a better opportunity to exercise and for gross motor movement.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURE

You must accompany your child into the I each day. Sign your child in at the kiosk in the main hallway.

LOCKED ENTRY

Parents are an integral part of the program and are always welcome in the classroom. To provide for the safety of your child, the preschool doors will be locked approximately fifteen minutes after the start of class and reopened at the end of class, so that unknown people can't enter. You are always welcome to observe the class while it is in session. If you wish to enter preschool during the locked door times, please ring the doorbell on the outside of the building and someone will admit you. You may also enter from the main entrance of the church. You may also observe your child through the viewing window. There are opportunities for parental involvement in classroom activities. Parents may choose to be involved in fundraisers, field trips, or other activities during the school year.

USING THE I-RIDE SYSTEM

If you plan on using the I-RIDE system for transporting your child to school, please call the school when your child boards the bus. If your child does not arrive within 20 minutes, we will begin to make calls to locate your child. If your child is to go home on the bus, please have his/her destination address either on his/her coat or bag. Also have the correct change available or a punch card.

PICK-UP POLICY FOR YOUR CHILD

The Board of Christian Education and teachers have developed the following pick-up policy for your child's sense of well-being. A child who is left after the other children have been picked up may become unnecessarily worried.

If your child remains at least 10 minutes after class has ended, your child will be considered a "late pick-up". There will be a \$5.00 fine charged. For every ten minutes thereafter, an additional \$5.00 fine will be charged.

Fines will be due with next month's tuition. The fine will be waived if the parent(s) has contacted the school (989-772-1516) prior to the end of the class period. This will keep the teacher from starting the calling procedure, which is not only time-consuming but sometimes results in two people coming to pick up the child. Upon the second late pick-up, the fines will double.

Upon the third late pick-up, the parent(s) will be required to appear before the Board of Christian Education to discuss the problems that result in the late pick-ups. The Board along with the parent(s) will come up with an acceptable solution to this problem for both the parent(s) and the school.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is setting limits and correcting misbehavior. Positive discipline involves establishing rules. It is important that children have a clear understanding of the rules. Rules and discipline need to be consistent. As they grow older, discipline helps children develop an increasing degree of responsibility and maturity.

Our purpose is to maintain an atmosphere of love and growth for the total child within a larger family in Christ, beyond the home. Zion Lutheran Preschool Goals: To help the child develop self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, consideration for others, respect of property, sharing, the ability to solve disagreements, to cooperate, follow directions, and obey the teacher. Some discipline techniques that will be used by Zion are redirection, positive reinforcement, encouraging, teaching, and modeling appropriate behavior, involving children in solving the problem, natural consequences, and time outs. Behavior can be redirected by talking to the child. Positive reinforcement is a chance to encourage, recognize and praise the child for proper behavior. A natural consequence is one that is directly connected with the action. Time outs are a chance for the child to think about his/her actions and regain control of their emotions and behavior.

The following action is taken if rules are broken:

1. Approach the child/children calmly.
2. Acknowledge the child's/children's feelings.
3. Gather information and explain the infraction.
4. Ask for ideas for solutions, suggest alternate behavior.
5. Have the child give an apology if appropriate.
6. Give follow-up support to the child.
7. Talk to parents about the behavior problem if it persists and inform the parents about the school's expectations for the child.

The program is designed so that the daily activities will hold a child's interest. Because of this, there are few incidences of improper behavior. The staff will use positive methods of discipline on a regular basis. We will look for and encourage positive words, actions, and cooperation. Praise a child and watch them grow!

CONDUCT POLICY

We strive to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for students. Our conduct policy for staff and children reflects this.

- Respect for self and others.
- Respect for one's own property and/or property of others.
- Respect for one's own body and/or another person's body.
- Responsibility for cleaning up and caring for classroom.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent Responsibilities

The responsibilities of parents of students enrolled in Zion Lutheran EC include the following:

- Complying with the guidelines listed in this handbook.
- Paying all fees when due.
- Notifying the school office when a child is absent.
- Notifying the school office of all communicable diseases.
- Checking the monthly newsletter/calendar and your child's homework folder for information about the program.
- Participating in various activities throughout the year (parties, conferences, etc.).

Teacher Responsibilities

Teacher responsibilities include:

- Communicating with parents on a weekly basis as well as individually regarding any concerns that arise.
- Arranging times to meet with parents as needed.
- Keeping the classroom orderly, nicely decorated, and child appropriate.
- Evaluating toys and other materials used in the classroom for safety, cleanliness and good repair.
- Planning and executing a weekly lesson plan, keeping program goals and developmental guidelines in mind.
- Working to create a quality ECC program, with Christ as our guide.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR IN CHILDREN (Includes non-developmentally appropriate biting)

On occasion, children may behave in ways that are “normal but unacceptable” (extended tantrums, biting, physically hurting others), sometimes children show persistent, challenging behavior that is not easily addressed within the classroom setting. In such situations, staff (including classroom teachers and the director) will work with the child and their family in the following ways:

- Staff will document the child's behavior, noting the circumstances in which the behavior occurs, and noting what may have precipitated the behavior.
- Staff will work with the child using positive reinforcement, encouraging positive behavior, and whenever possible helping the child prevent behaving in unacceptable ways.
- Staff and parents will meet to discuss the child's behavior and will explore possible causes of the behavior (such as lack of communication skills, frustration in handling transitions, etc.).
- Staff and parents will discuss and develop a plan to help the child replace challenging behaviors with more effective behaviors. When necessary, staff and parents will consult with professionals, such as the child's physician, special education consultants, therapists, and others, both to determine the causes of the child's behavior, and effective and compassionate methods to address the behavior.
- Staff and parents will work together with the child to help the child understand their own temperament, skills, and capabilities, and will help the child use effective strategies to moderate responses and to plan behavior.
- Staff will continue to document the child's behavior and to respond appropriately when challenging behavior may reoccur, and to note the child's progress.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

ZLECC reserves the right to release any child with behavioral problems, or any other difficulty, which does not resolve after working with the director and staff. If such a release is deemed necessary, a one-week notice will be given to the parents in writing.

COMMUNICATIONS,

If you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns about what is happening at school, how your child is getting along, etc., please contact the teacher and/or director. If you need to leave an immediate message, please call the office at 989-772-1516. If you have something that can be addressed after school, you may either call or e-mail at zionlutheranpreschool48858@gmail.com

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES FOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for the Spring. Conferences will be used to discuss progress, development, and kindergarten readiness. Parents are welcome to schedule a time to meet with the preschool teacher any time throughout the school year. Strong parent interest and participation are essential to the success of your child's educational program.

EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEERS SCREENING POLICY

Your child's safety is top priority with our caregivers. All employees must be of good, moral character. Employees must have a check for a history of substantiated abuse and neglect through a Comprehensive Childcare Background Check and Public Sex Offender Registry. Employees are familiar with the Child Protection Law as it relates to child abuse and neglect.

All employees must have CPR and First Aid certifications renewed annually; there will be at least one employee with certification on duty at all times. All employees must complete a course on blood-borne pathogens. Employees must have a current TB test. Employees are required to attend staff orientations.

1. All adults working or volunteering in the program, who are in attendance more than four (4) hours per week for more than two (2) consecutive weeks, are free from communicable tuberculosis that is verified within one year before employment or volunteering.
2. All staff employed in the childcare program will be recognized as mandated reporters of abuse and neglect, and must, by law, report incidents that they witness that they judge are harmful to the well-being of a child. A signed child abuse and neglect statement must be in the employee's file.
3. Protective services, CCBC (Comprehensive Childcare Background Check), Public Sex Offender Registry clearance and completed MIregistry.org training course 1 and 2 (8hrs) have been conducted by all caregivers before being employed by Zion Lutheran Preschool. Any individual listed on the PSOR is prohibited from having any contact in our care.
4. In the event of an unauthorized person entering to pick up a child, the child will not be released without prior arrangement with the parent/guardian. A phone call, followed by a written notice including the adult's name and description of physical features, will be expected from the parent/guardian. Picture identification will be requested if the staff are not familiar with the adult.
5. In the event of a child not being picked up at the scheduled time, the child will remain in care until the end of the session or day, and staff will call those people listed as emergency contacts. In the event no one can be reached, the staff will contact proper authorities to care for the child.
6. Persons entering the premises to pick up a child who may be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be discouraged from picking up the child and someone else on the emergency contact sheet will be notified to care for the child. If this becomes a problem, the offending person may be removed from the list of adults on the emergency sheet allowed to pick up the child. They would then have no right to enter the premises.

The State of Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs licenses Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center. We adhere to all state and community rules regarding fire, safety, health, and staffing requirements. **Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center is required to maintain a Licensing Binder. Parents have access to the binder whenever the center is open; please ask the director about its location.**

HEALTH APPRAISAL FORMS

We require that a Health Appraisal for each child be on file in the office. It must verify immunizations and that the child has had a recent physical examination. Health Appraisals are valid for one calendar year. No student can start school without a completed health form. The penalty for not enforcing these requirements is loss of our preschool license. If you have any questions concerning the above, contact the director.

POLICIES FOR YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES

HAND WASHING PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be used for hand washing:

1. Have a disposable paper or single serve towel available.
2. Turn on the water to a comfortable temperature between 60-120 degrees.
3. Moisten hands with water and apply soap.
4. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 10 seconds. Rub areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails and jewelry, and backs of hands.
5. Rinse hands under running water until free of soap and dirt. Leave water running while drying hands.
6. Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper or single service cloth. Turn off tap with disposable paper or single service towel.

HAND WASHING

Hand sanitizers, water basins, and pre-moistened cleansing wipes are not approved substitutes for soap and running water. Hands will be washed after preparing food, using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet, touching an animal or its dishes, blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing into your hands, helping a child blow his or her nose, treating wounds or giving medicine, touching a sick or injured person, or after handling garbage, a cleaning cloth, soiled shoes, or something that could be contaminated; they should be also washed whenever they look or feel dirty.

Hand-washing posters are positioned by each sink to remind students and caregivers to wash their hands. Our health care resource is Central Michigan Health Department.

HANDLING BODILY FLUIDS

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center uses precautions when handling bodily fluids, as instructed in the blood borne pathogen training. The following steps are to be followed for cleaning and sanitizing:

1. Wash area/surface with warm water and soap/detergent.
2. Rinse area/surface with clean water.
3. Spray, submerge, or wipe the article/surface with bleach water.
4. Let the area/surface air dry.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

It is our goal to maintain a healthy classroom. Children who are ill should not come to school. If your child exhibits symptoms of, or is diagnosed with a contagious disease, please report this to the director or school office at once. Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center is required by law to report all contagious illnesses and diseases to the Central Michigan Health Department. The preschool director will notify parents so they may

watch for symptoms or keep them home if they so desire. Your confidentiality will be respected. For the protection of all children, your child will not be permitted to attend the center if they have any of the following symptoms: **fever (over 100.7 degrees), diarrhea, vomiting, discharges of the eyes or ears, heavy nasal discharges, persistent cough, strep throat, flu, conjunctivitis (pink eye), chicken pox, a rash, head lice, or other communicable disease.** If such a condition presents itself while your child is at the center, you will be called, and your child will be sent home. All symptoms are assessed at the direction of the director. It is necessary that you make arrangements so that your child can be picked up from school within thirty minutes if your child is ill.

FEVER

A child with a fever of 100 degrees or higher will be sent home. Fever is not contagious, but whatever is causing the fever usually is. **Therefore, the child must be fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) 24 hours before returning to school.**

If a physician has treated the child, a note must accompany the child's return to the center from the physician. The note should state that the child is no longer contagious and may return to the center and participate in the normal activity level without restrictions. If your child has a chronic cough or running nose due to an allergy, provide a statement from your physician to the center director to keep in your child's file.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

- No over the counter or prescription medication is to be given to a child unless the parent fills out the proper medication form (this includes sunscreen and diaper cream). If a parent fails to fill out a form, he/she must return to the center to do so. Verbal permission is not legally acceptable.
- Medication may be given or applied only with prior written permission from the parent. Prescription medication must be in the original container, stored according to the instructions, and clearly labeled for the specific child. The pharmacy label must also indicate the physician's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication, and potential side effects.
- On the medication form, employees should record the time medication was given and who administered the medication. The caregiver shall keep the medication out of the reach of children and shall return the medication to the parent.
- For safety reasons, children are not allowed to have cough drops.

ACCIDENT, INJURY, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of accidental injury to a child while at school, the parent will be contacted and/or a written report will be provided. There will be a copy of the report for the parent to sign and a copy for Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center files. The staff is trained in CPR and first aid. The director and/or teacher will make decisions about the care of the child. The Child Information card, signed by the parent(s), permits the school to authorize medical treatment. In the case of serious injury and emergency transportation is necessary, immediate action will be taken. Parents will be contacted, and a written report will be made.

In case of a dental emergency, we will follow the same procedure as indicated on the emergency card.

FIRE PROCEDURE

1. Fire signal is a continuous ringing of fire buzzer and an announcement to evacuate the building over our security system.
2. Children exit the room following the aide or volunteer.
3. Exit room, turn right to the nearest exit.
4. Teacher checks restrooms, turns off lights, takes class list and follows the class.
5. Children walk to the pavilion where roll call is taken.

STORM PROCEDURE

1. The warning is an announcement from the church office through our intercom system to seek immediate shelter.
2. Children exit the room, following aide or volunteer to the women's bathroom in the church narthex. Children will move to the far wall in the bathroom.
3. The teacher checks restrooms, turns off lights, and takes class list.
4. Everyone is to kneel, head down, facing wall.
5. Roll call is taken.
6. Stay in kneeling position until "All Clear" is given.
7. Follow the instructions on the emergency escape maps posted next to doors in classrooms.

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center does have a plan for a "shelter in place" event in case of an emergency which is not a fire or a storm.

PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION PLAN

Zion Lutheran Preschool is required to publish notice of pesticide application prior to any applications made on the building or grounds. If pesticides are to be applied, a notice will be posted next to the office door and a copy of the notice will be sent home with your child. If you would like more information on pesticides, you may call the Department of Agriculture at 1-800-292-3939 or search online at www.michigan.gov/mda

POLICIES FOR YOUR CHILD'S PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

TOYS

Please do not send toys to school with your child except for "show and share". We have a variety of educational toys for your child to play with during school time. Please no guns, knives, or other threatening toys with a violent theme. The preschool provides alternate outlets for hostility and aggression which are non-threatening. Balls, games, play dough, role playing, painting, and many large motor activities supply healthy expression of a child's feelings and emotions. **Because balloons are potentially dangerous toys, we ask that balloons not be brought to school.**

CLOTHING

Children should wear clothes that give them freedom to move and play without the fear of getting dirty. Clothing must be in good repair. For safety, shoes must have at least a strap across the back. No open-toed shoes are allowed. Shoes must be appropriate for indoor and outdoor play. Pebbles/wood chips from the playground are painful when wearing sandals or Crocs. Outdoor play occurs regularly. Label all clothing, shoes, boots, etc. **All children must have a complete change of season-appropriate clothes at school. This includes a shirt, a pair of pants or shorts, a pair of underwear, and a pair of socks. Label all spare clothing with child's name. Send the change of clothes to school in a Ziploc bag.**

Dress your child in comfortable play clothes and suitable outdoor clothing (coats, snow pants, hats, mittens, etc.). Children should have snow boots if they want to **play** in the snow. Children should have snow pants if they want to **lay** in the snow. When there is mud or snow outside, children must have a pair of shoes or boots to wear outside and a pair to wear inside the classroom. **Extra shoes may be left at school.** Due to health issues, slippers are not allowed.

LEADER DAY

Several times a year each child will have an opportunity to be the leader of the day. These days will be shown on our monthly calendar with your child's name listed. This is an important day for your child. The child will bring in a snack for the class and have various other jobs to do on that day. The 4-year-old child will bring an item from home to "show and share" with their classmates. **No violent themes, please!**

PLAYGROUND

The playgrounds have been inspected and are age-appropriate for children 2-12 years old with adult supervision. Outdoor play occurs regularly. There is a designated toddler play area.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents will be notified in advance before each field trip. The 4-year-old preschool class will take between 4 or 5 fieldtrips per year. The 3-year-old preschool class does not take field trips during the school year.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are an important time for a child, and we wish to share the occasion at school. Parents may send a treat for snack time. Treats should be simple and as nutritious as possible. We will recognize your child's birthday as close to their special day as possible. These days will be marked on the snack calendar.

FOOD PROCEDURES

SNACK IN TODDLER ROOM

Snacks from home will be offered in the AM and PM. Snack will be served daily with milk, or water.

SNACK IN PRESCHOOL ROOMS

Each morning the children will be served a small but nutritious snack brought in by a classmate. You will receive a snack calendar every month. One child will be the snack provider for the day. Please send in enough food for each child in class, teachers, and assistants.

Drink: Teachers ask that parents send a water bottle each day with their child. Teachers will encourage the children to use their water bottles during snack time in place of other drinks.

Snack: To assure that there is variety and healthy snacks, the calendar will list the food group your child's snack should come from for that day. Please have the snack as prepared as possible – popcorn in individual bags, oranges peeled, etc. A refrigerator and freezer are both available.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER IS AWARE OF ANY FOOD ALLERGIES.

We will follow the snack calendar exactly, so if for some reason school does not meet on your assigned day, you will NOT be responsible for the snack and drink the next time the class meets. If your child is sick, you are NOT responsible for the snacks that day.

Forgotten Snacks: If you forget to send in the snack, we have emergency back-ups. In order to keep the emergency supply filled, we will ask you to send non-perishable shelf items (graham crackers, granola bars, etc.).

LUNCH

For children who stay all day, parents will provide for their daily lunches and afternoon snacks. Please make sure to label your child's lunch box and anything that belongs inside. **TODDLER CARE:** Please send in a developmentally appropriate cup or water bottle with your child's name on it to be used daily.

POSSIBLE SNACK IDEAS**DAIRY**

yogurt
mozzarella cheese sticks
cheese cubes
pudding

GRAIN

graham crackers
saltine crackers
snack crackers
fruit breads- banana, pumpkin
rice krispie squares
pretzel sticks
granola bars
rice chex mix
animal crackers
popcorn

VEGETABLE

carrot sticks
celery sticks
cucumber slices
cauliflower pieces
broccoli pieces
green pepper slices

FRUIT

orange sections
apple slices
grapes
1/2 banana
pears
pineapple chunks
applesauce
cherries
raisins
blueberries

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAYS

The first few days of care may bring mixed emotions even to seemingly independent children. They are being separated, perhaps for the first time, from their primary caregivers on whom they have depended until now. There are many ways you can help your child adjust to preschool. Here are some hints:

- Be sure to say goodbye to your child when you leave. Slipping away will only add to the feeling of desertion. The teachers are willing to help both child and parent learn that separation is okay.
- Be sure to return for your child at the promised time.
- Do not make the child feel that preschool/care is something to “get them out of the way,” especially if there is a younger sibling to be cared for at home.
- Be sure to ask all about their day!
- Prepare your child for starting preschool/care but be careful not to overdo it. Too many glowing terms may lead to disappointment and a letdown feeling later.
- Discuss any concerns about your child with the teacher privately, not in front of them.

OUR STAFF

CHRISTINA ROE

Center Director

Christina is the Center Director. Christina comes to Early Childhood as a second career after spending over fifteen years in the travel industry. She holds an associate degree in early childhood education from Mid-Michigan College and continues taking Continuing Education Classes in Early Childhood Education. She spent nine years as Director and Lead Teacher at Good Shepherd Early Childhood Center in Alma, Michigan until its closure in May 2016. Christina joined the staff at Zion in July 2016 and has thoroughly enjoyed the last nine years of teaching these little people.

Christina has been married to Chadwick for 26 years and they have three children, Isabel (23), Eliot (21), and Ian (19). The Roe family are active members here at Zion Lutheran Church.

Christina is overjoyed at the opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with your children and help them grow spiritually and academically. She prays for another successful year and is excited to continue her work in this important ministry.

ELLYN DECKER

Lead Teacher – 4-year-old class

Hello, my name is Ellyn Decker but you can call me Ms. Elly. I have been a preschool teacher for almost 5 years. I love teaching children academics as well as Christ's love for us! In my free time, I enjoy reading, traveling up north, riding motorcycles with my husband of 8 years and spending time in nature. I joined the Zion team in June of 2025.

MEGAN SKORNA

Lead Teacher – 3-year old class

Megan has a degree in Early Childhood Education and has been a teacher and member of Zion since 2021. I am originally from the Mt Pleasant area and feel grateful to be a part of a community that values faith, learning, and growth. Working with young children is my passion and I am committed to creating a safe, joyful, and nurturing classroom where every child can thrive.

SHERYL BIRSCHING

Lead Teacher – Toddler Class

Sherly Birsching joined the team at Zion in October of 2024. She is originally from Benton Harbor but recently moved back to Clare after living 33 years in Tacoma, WA. Sheryl comes from a long family history of pastors and teachers. She graduated from Dr. Martin Luther College with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She started a one-room Lutheran elementary school, homeschooled her children, started one Lutheran preschool and licensed another, and spent 25 years in classrooms teaching children from age 1 to grade 8.

Sheryl has been married to her pastor husband for 37 years. They have six children, four grandchildren and another grandchild due this summer. In her free time, Sheryl enjoys baking, reading, writing, traveling, scrapbooking, sports, puzzles, and playing cards and board games. Her favorite thing about teaching is building relationships with the children and families and connecting them to Jesus!

MONICA BROWN

Teaching Assistant – Three-Year-Old Class

My name is Monica Brown. I am originally from Kansas City, Missouri. I have lived in Mount Pleasant since 1991. I have been married to my husband Darwin for 40 years. We have three children Jarod (Tiana) 32, Dara 29, and Reyna 24 who all attended Zion's preschool. We have been members of Zion Lutheran Church since 1992 and enjoy living in Mount Pleasant.

JAMIE GRAHAM

Teaching Assistant – Four-Year-Old Class

I am a 32-year-old, wife, and mother of 2. My daughter Mackenzie is 6, and Mikayla is 2. I am a Central Michigan University alumnus, where I hold a Bachelor of Recreation & Event Management with a concentration in commercial recreation. I have completed my Masters in Recreation and Parks Administration. I love being outdoors, reading, spending time with my family, and fitness.

CINDY HODGE

Teaching Assistant – Toddler Class

My name is Cindy Hodge and I grew up in northern Michigan, lived in Branson, Mo and moved to Mount Pleasant in 2014. I am married and have a 15 yr. old son.

I have always shared a love for children volunteering in our church preschool at a young age. As my passion grew, I opened my own childcare playschool for 3 years, worked as a kindergarten paraprofessional and was asked to be a personal nanny for a wonderful family for 4 years. I am so excited to be a part of Zion Lutheran Preschool. I love seeing all their smiling faces and seeing the joy and excitement when learning of God's joy.

JASMINE COFFELL

Teaching Assistant – Four-Year Old Class

Hello, my name is Jasmine Coffell. I live out by Shepherd but went to Mount Pleasant Public Schools. I just turned 24 years old and have been working with kids for 5 years. I have always loved growing connections with kids and watching how they grow and learn.

I spend most of my time with my family and friends! I love nature, reading, being creative, among other things. I am hopeful for a wonderful year here at Zion Lutheran Church!

ERICA NARR

Teaching Assistant -Four-Year-Old Class

My name is Erica Narr and I graduated from Mount Pleasant High School in 2023, and I am a junior at Central Michigan University. I am majoring in marketing. I am a member of Zion Lutheran Church. I have been working at Zion Lutheran Preschool primarily during Summer Camp for the past couple of years and love being around the kids. I am excited to work in the four-year-old room this school year.

TABATHA MILLS

Teaching Assistant – Toddler Class

Tabatha joined the team at Zion in June of 2025. After holding positions in childcare centers in the Mt. Pleasant area for nearly 4 years, she joined the toddler room and loves sharing the Gospel with these little people. She is a member of Thrive Church of Mt Pleasant. In her free time, she enjoys nature, reading, music, dancing, and traveling to see family.

HISTORICAL NOTES

In 1970, a group of people who were members of Zion Lutheran Church became interested in starting a Christian preschool. A constitution was drawn up in October of that year, a two-teacher staff selected, and the nursery school began operating in January 1971. Since then, we have expanded from a single Monday, Wednesday, and Friday session for the four-year-old class to the present two sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the four-year-old and one session of the Tuesday and Thursday three-year-old class. Many children have passed through the doors of Zion Lutheran Preschool. With the Lord's blessing, many will pass in the future. Zion Lutheran Preschool has served the children of the Mt. Pleasant community for over 40 years. Most of those years were blessed with capacity enrollment. In 2006 the name was changed from Zion Lutheran Nursery School to Zion Lutheran Preschool

In 2008 the preschool and church moved to a new building at 3401 E. River Road. Zion Lutheran Preschool is for preschool children of Zion Lutheran Church and residents of the community to promote satisfactory group behavior, to encourage development of spirit, mind and body within a Christian atmosphere.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Address:

Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Center
3401 E. River Road
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Email: zionlutheranpreschool48858@gmail.com or croe@zionmpmi.org

Website: www.zionlutheranpreschoolecc.com

Facebook: Zion Lutheran Preschool – Mt. Pleasant

State Of Michigan Licensing Website: www.michigan.gov/lara

Phone Numbers:

Zion Lutheran Church and Preschool	(989)772-1516
Christina Roe, Director	(989) 948-0133 - cell Email: croe@zionmpmi.org
Ellie Decker, Four-Year-Old Teacher	(989) 772-1516 Email: edecker@zionmpmi.org
Megan Skorna, Three-Year-Old Teacher	(989) 772-1516 Email: mskorna@zionmpmi.org
Sheryl Birsching, Toddler Teacher	(989)772-1516 Email: sbirsching@zionmpmi.org
Pastor Jesse Greenhagen	(989)772-1516
Tim Narr, Church/Preschool Secretary	(989)772-1516

2025-2026 Early Childcare Center Calendar

TBD	First Day/Welcome Back
Friday, August 29	Center Closed/Labor Day Weekend
Monday, September 1	Center Closed/Labor Day Weekend
Wed-Fri, November 26-28	Center Closed/Thanksgiving
Mon-Fri, December 22– January 2	No Preschool/Christmas Break
Mon-Fri, December 22 – January 2	Center Closed/Christmas & New Years
Monday, January 5	School Resumes
Monday, February 9	Center Closed/Professional Development
Thursday, March 5	No Preschool/Parent Teacher Conference (Child Care Open)
Friday, March 6	No Preschool/Parent Teacher Conference (Child Care Open)
Mon-Thu, March 30-April 2	No Preschool/Spring Break (Child Care/Toddler Care Open)
Friday, April 3	Center Closed/Good Friday
Monday, April 6	School Resume
Friday, May 22	Center Closed/Memorial Weekend
Monday, May 25	Center Closed/Memorial Weekend
Wed-Thu, May 27 & 28	Last Day of Preschool/Closing Service
Fri-Fri, May 30 – June 6	Toddler Care Open/ No Preschool or Preschool Child Care
Monday, June 8	Summer Camp Begins
Mon-Fri, June 29 – July 3	Center Closed/July 4 th Holiday
Friday, August 14	Summer Camp Ends
Mon-Fri, August 17-21	Center Closed/End of Year Reset

The Preschool will close or delay at those times when the public schools of Mt. Pleasant are closed or delayed **due to weather conditions**, or as deemed necessary by the director.

Child Care/Toddler Care is available all school year long on weekdays with these exceptions:

- *No Child Care/Toddler Care on Holidays.
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care Wednesday before and Friday after Thanksgiving.
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care December 22 – January 4
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care February 9 – Professional Development Day
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care on Good Friday – April 3
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care May 22 & 25
- *No Child Care May 29-June 5
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care June 29 – July 3 for Holiday Closing
- *No Child Care/Toddler Care August 17-21