

DAILY SCHEDULE

School Hours: 8:45-11:44 (Drop off starts 8:35)

ARRIVAL GUIDELINES; 8:35-8:45

Your child may be dropped off at the rear door to the fellowship hall beginning at 8:35. A Jacob's Ladder staff member or assigned parent will open the child's car door and unbuckle your child while you complete "sign-in" procedures. **PLEASE PUT YOUR TRANSMISSION IN PARK FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN AND STAFF.**

Doors to the preschool will be locked at 8:50 after drop-off. If student arrives late, parent must bring student to the door. We know that you want to make full use of the program that you have selected for your child. Prompt, regular attendance ensures that your child can benefit from both the planned activities and the social opportunities the program offers.

The daily "sign in" procedure will include indicating: **a phone number where you or a designated person can be reached in the event of an emergency that day and the name of the person picking up your child that day. (Once we are accustomed to those regularly picking up your child you will need to complete that portion of sign-in only if someone other than the normal driver is coming for your child.)**

In the event of rain during drop off, children will be received either under the covered overpass between the two buildings or at the rear of the old Fellowship Hall where there is an awning.

We try to expedite drop off as quickly as possible so that a line of traffic does not form on Nolensville Road. Please have your child ready to leave the car (appropriate outerwear, back pack on or near child, etc.) Please have your child remain in his/her child restraint as you

drive through the drop off line. We believe it poses a safety issue if children are unbuckled even during the stop/start of the drop off process. **Children must not sit on parent's lap at the steering wheel.**

If you feel it necessary to speak briefly with your child's teacher to report a specific concern for that day, or if your child arrives late, you may park and accompany your child to the classroom using the exterior stairs at the rear of the building. Please remember that the teacher needs to be attentive to all the children at this busy time.

The doors of the preschool will open at **8:35 a.m.** Although staff members are in their rooms prior to student arrival, this time is used for organization and planning so that the teachers are ready to greet your child when the doors open. For this reason, no children (with the exception of staff's children) will be allowed in the building prior to designated drop off time.

As part of our Safe Sanctuary Policy, the exterior doors will remain locked at all times. **PLEASE RING DOORBELL TO ENTER OTHER THAN AT PICK-UP TIME.** Please be aware that we may not be able to answer the doorbell immediately. Only the Director and Assistant Director may answer the doorbell as teachers do not leave their classroom to answer the doorbell. Please explain this to any person coming to the preschool on behalf of your child.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

We highly recommend that you tell your child that you are leaving and you will return. Then, depart in a resolute and positive manner so that your child sees that you feel good about his or her being at the preschool. Our staff is very experienced in this matter and will do everything they can to redirect your child and encourage involvement in the program. We assure you that for the first couple of days, your child will be given extra attention during your departure time,

encouraging him or her to trust and bond with the teacher and classmates.

A WORD ABOUT CELL PHONES

While cell phones are great to have in the event of an emergency, **we ask that you not use them during drop off and pick up.** This is an important time in your child's day and they deserve your undivided attention.

DEPARTURES

Children may be picked up between 11:40-11:44. Parents or designated drivers are required to "sign out" their child on the clip-board located in the plastic bin on the outside of classroom door. Please come up the rear exterior stairway and remain in the preschool hallway. Both the Pastor and our Administrative Assistant have offices near the front door and we appreciate your effort in not disturbing their work.

If you need to use the elevator for health reasons or because you have other little ones, please feel free to do so, keeping in mind church staff is also at work. Your child is to be picked up only by the persons listed on the application form. If there is a change in your plans, please let the teacher or the director know at least 15 minutes prior to pick-up time.

During the first week of school you may be asked for photo ID when picking up your child. If the teacher does not recognize the person who has come to pick up your child, it is our policy to ask for photo ID and then verify that they are listed on your application as "people authorized to pick up my child."

Punctual pick-up is very important. We are a non-licensed facility that must adhere to the 2 hours and 59 minutes per day guidelines as set by the State of Tennessee. We understand that emergencies may

arise delaying your arrival, but we must enforce our pick-up time. Therefore, a late pick up fee of **\$5.00 per child/per 5 minutes is charged and will be added to your next month's tuition. Children must be picked up from the Director in the activity center after 11:45.** If you are delayed, please call the school to inform the director of your anticipated arrival time. If your child must leave early, please notify the teacher so your child can be ready when you come.

ATTENTION: FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN AND FOR OUR LIABILITY, WE ARE REQUIRED TO BE CERTAIN CHILDREN ARE IN AN APPROVED CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEM.

We offer a limited "take down service" for those parents who may have difficulty with the stairs, (younger baby in infant carrier, multiple younger children, etc.). If you feel you will need this, please make arrangements with the Director.

FEES AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. A child cannot be admitted without completion of a registration form and a non refundable application fee of \$100.00.
2. Checks should be made payable to "**Jacob's Ladder**". Please put your tuition check in an envelope in your child's backpack. Please do not hand checks or money to the staff while they are unloading your child from the car. **If you are paying in cash, you must pay the Director or Assistant Director in person and wait for a receipt.**
3. Monthly tuition is to be paid on or before the 1st day of each month. Account balances not paid in full by the 5th of the month will receive a \$10.00 late fee regardless of the balance due. Those accounts that are 15 days overdue must be discussed with the director and the Finance Representative of the Board of Directors.

4. Parents who experience difficulty with meeting their tuition payments are encouraged to meet with the Director as soon as possible. We will be glad to work with you.

5. Should a parent choose to withdraw their child, the balance of that month tuition will not be refunded. Two weeks written notice is requested for the withdrawal of your child. This allows us to prepare the child for saying "goodbye" to his/her friends as well as to give time to notify children on the waiting list of an opening.

6. No tuition refunds or substitution of days will be given for absences, snow days, family vacations, or planned holidays as outlined in the school calendar. We cannot hold a place for a child who will be away for an extended family travel.

7. Programs visiting the school may incur a nominal fee.

8. A complete EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION AND CHILD HEALTH RECORD FORM must be on file before a child is admitted to the preschool. This is required by the state of Tennessee. A new health record form is required at the beginning of each new school year.

9. Immunizations must be up-to-date and the report must be signed and dated by a physician.

10. All children must be "potty trained."

11. Parents must make sure that they have signed that the handbook has been received and explained.

12. In the event of a divorce, we are required to have a copy of the custody order on file.

13. A word about our tuition policy: Jacob's Ladder is a non-profit program. Our fees are based on the total cost of providing a high quality experience for the children. Your tuition has been divided into 9 equal payments even though the number of actual school days may vary month to month.

Pre-K 3 \$155.00 @ month

Pre-K 4 \$185.00 @ month

Pre-K 5 \$195.00 @ month

PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

School Year 2011/2012

August 17 6:00 Parent Information Evening
August 22, 23, 24 Meet your teacher 9:00 - Noon
August 29 First day, (4's & 5's) 8:45- 11:44
August 30 First Day, 3's
September 5 No School Labor Day
October 17/18 No school - fall break WCS
October 27 Fall Festival
November 16 Fall Family Feast 10:30-11:45
November 21-24 No school - Thanksgiving break
December 13 Christmas Program (6:30 p.m.)
December 15 Christmas Party
December 19 - 31 No school - Christmas break
January 1 - 4 No School -Christmas break
January 5 First day back at school
January 16 No school Martin Luther King
February 20 No school President's Day
April 2- 5 No School Spring Break
May 17 Spring Program 6:30
May 22 School Picnic - Last Day

SNOW DAYS

The Preschool will be closed for snow or severe weather when Williamson County schools are closed **or have any delay**. If schools close early because of the weather, the Preschool will do the same. If Williamson County closes immediately, so does the Preschool. **If Williamson County opens late, we will be closed**. Please use your best judgment in any situation. We want everyone to be safe. There will be no makeup days or refunds for snow days, as we have extra days built into our schedule. School closings for Williamson County are given on television channels 2, 4, and 5, and Fox.

CLOTHING

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that they can manage easily. This is very important for restroom breaks. Girls must wear tights or shorts under their dresses. Also keep in mind that "hands on" learning sometimes involves making a creative mess, so the clothing should be easily laundered.

Because the children go outside each day, make sure that the clothing is appropriate for the weather. If the temperature is 40 degrees we will go outside. In cold weather, please be certain that your child has gloves, cap and warm coat. **PLEASE LABEL THESE ITEMS. Rubber soled shoes are best for your child's own safety, especially outside. No sandals, flip-flops, jelly shoes, clogs, or cowboy boots. Jewelry is not appropriate as it is sometimes dangerous and may be broken.**

Your child will need a **COMPLETE** change of clothing, including socks and underwear to be left at school. Please label these items and place them in a large Ziploc bag. As the seasons change and your child grows, please make the appropriate changes in this extra set of clothing. Should your child bring home wet or soiled clothing, please

send replacements the next day. A dependable supply of extra clothing fosters independence and minimizes embarrassment in case of an “accident.”

SHOW AND TELL/SHARE

When requested by the teacher, show and tell items will be allowed in the classroom based on the theme for that week. We will keep all the “Show and Tell” items in the child’s backpack until sharing time. Please do not allow your child to bring **TOY WEAPONS, OFFENSIVE ITEMS, MONEY, EDIBLE ITEMS, OR FRAGILE JEWELRY WHICH MIGHT BE BROKEN. Remembering to bring a show and tell item is your child’s responsibility.** We suggest you help your child pack all items to be brought to school, including library books, the night before. We do not allow children to bring toys from home into the classroom at any other time. For the younger child, learning to play cooperatively and to share is a major accomplishment. However, undue concern over protecting a personal item can distract a child from important social achievements. Therefore, if a teacher determines that the item your child brings is causing problems, the item will be removed from the room until you collect it at the end of the day.

SNACKS

Parents will be assigned responsibility for snacks for their child’s class on a rotation. We encourage healthy snacks that are low in sugar. Snacks are to be brought for the entire week. We will provide water in all classrooms as the beverage. Jacob’s Ladder teaches the children about recycling and conservation of our environment. We provide cups/glasses which are reusable for daily snack time. Please advise your teacher as well as the director of any food allergies. Teachers will provide a list of snack suggestions as well as a list of allergies in the class. As there are several students with nut allergies, we will be a peanut free environment.

While we cannot prohibit all foods that are manufactured in a plant that processes nuts, we ask that no peanuts or peanut butter cookies be brought to the school.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays may be celebrated at the discretion of the parent on or close to the child's birthday. Summer birthdays will be celebrated in May. We would like to suggest that fancy cookies or miniature cupcakes be brought in for the entire class, with a few extra. Parents with "birthday children" are asked to coordinate with the classroom teacher so we do not duplicate snack for that day. **Please do not send sweets with excessive icing!**

We request that if your child has a celebration outside of class which includes only a part of the class that you take care of distributing invitations rather than asking the teacher to do so. Because of their limited social experience, young children do not understand legitimate adult reasons for inviting only some of the class.

HEALTH PRACTICES

Jacob's Ladder Cooperative Christian Preschool requires a health report for every child. This report, signed by your doctor, must include a physical exam. All health forms are required before the first day of your child's attendance. In addition, the Preschool requires all children to provide immunization records prior to admission to the program. Immunizations are to be up-to-date at all times.

Children should not be brought to Preschool if they have severe colds, undetermined rash or spots, fever of 100 or above, severe headache, upset stomach, diarrhea or discharge of the eyes or ears. **Please inform the director if your child has come down with any contagious disease.** We can then alert other parents to watch for symptoms in their child. Parents should exercise caution and keep their child home

should other unusual symptoms occur. Parents will be notified to pick up children immediately if signs of illness occur during the day. Please use the following guide to determine when your child may return to Preschool.

Chicken Pox 7 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have crusted

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) When child has been under treatment for 24 hours and there is no sign of discharge

Impetigo 48 hours after beginning therapy

Measles 4 days after onset of rash

Mumps 9 days after swelling is gone

Strep 24 hours after starting antibiotics and child is fever free for 24 hours **without fever reducers**

Fever 24 hours free of fever **without medication**

Diarrhea 24 hours free of diarrhea **without medication**

Vomiting 24 hours free of vomiting **without medication**

The Preschool reserves the right to request a written doctor's report when question of a contagious disease exists or if child has had surgery, been hospitalized, or had extended medical absence. **Also, no provisions can be made for a parent requesting a child's restraint from outside play.**

MEDICATIONS

If the qualifications above are met for a well child, but medication is still prescribed by your doctor, we will be pleased to assist you.

Procedures for administering medications, as outlined by the Department of Human Services are as follows:

1. The medicine **MUST** be in the original container with the child's name written on it.
2. The parent **MUST** provide a spoon, dropper, etc. so the child will receive the accurate dose.
3. A form that includes the child's name, date and time, name of medicine, and dosage is required before you leave the medicine with us.

4. NO OVER THE COUNTER MEDICINE WILL BE GIVEN. For example, Tylenol, cough syrup, herbs, etc. cannot be distributed by staff, nor kept by your child in clothing or backpack.

5. If your child has asthma or an allergy requiring the use of an inhaler or epi-pen, we recommend you leave the required medication at the school at all times.

Please be sure to collect your medicine at the end of the day.

DISCIPLINE

Consistency is an important part of our school day. For that reason, we have implemented an "Assertive Discipline" program school wide. This program consists of lots of positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior, and a consistent list of consequences for unacceptable behavior. Positive reinforcement will be in the form of encouraging words, special privileges, notes to child, notes home, stickers, etc.

We have two basic rules in our school:

1. Follow instructions.

2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.

We believe that children learn by making choices. If a child has made a "poor choice" of behavior, he/she will be offered the choice of redirecting the behavior or accepting a natural consequence of the poor choice.

Natural consequences might be

1st time . . . Five minutes away from the activity

2nd time . . . Time-out in thinking chair

3rd time . . . Director's office

4th time . . . Parent conference is called

Learning sometimes requires being allowed to make a mistake. We feel that most problems can be prevented by the use of positive reinforcement and praise for the children. Any behavior difficulties can usually be dealt with in the classroom. We do however, ask that you support the teachers in this discipline program and reinforce it at home. We always keep the children's best interest in mind. We will do

everything we can to work with you and your child, but if a child becomes harmful to him/herself or to the other children, we will have to permanently dismiss the child.

Dismissal Policy

In the event that a student is unable to exercise sufficient maturity to remain at Jacob's Ladder, it may become necessary to dismiss the child. Examples of indications of insufficient maturity are:

1. Consistent lack of control of urinary/bowel habits
2. Inability to control impulse to hit, bite, push, or injure self or others
3. Consistent exhibition of stress relative to separation anxiety

Staff will consult with parents and work with child to overcome the signs of immaturity or stress. If the child continues to show persistent signs of stress, a conference will be held with the teacher, parents, and director to determine child's ability to remain in the program. If it is agreed that the child may benefit from a professional evaluation, we will be glad to recommend a list of qualified professionals. Sufficient time will be given for child to make recognizable and acceptable changes in behavior. A second conference will be held to determine child's progress, and a recommendation may be made for the child to be withdrawn. In no case, will a child be retained as a student who is a danger to him/herself, staff, or other children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE: Fire drills will be conducted monthly and documented. In the event of an actual fire the following procedure will be followed:

Children and staff will immediately evacuate the building following the exit chart located in each classroom.

Children and staff will initially gather in the picnic shelter. If picnic shelter is in threat of igniting, children and staff will gather in the north east corner of the playground.

Role will be taken and parents will be contacted to pick up children from the gathering place.

TORNADO: Tornado drills will be conducted twice per school year and documented. In the event of a tornado, children and staff will gather in the bathrooms located at the extreme front of the new fellowship hall. The Chairperson of the JL Board of Directors will be the initial emergency contact person if phone service to the church is interrupted. This number will be provided in a notice the first week of school.

LOCKDOWN: In the event of a threat in the community, all doors of the church will remain locked. Children and staff will remain in their assigned classrooms if possible. If it is apparent that children need to be located together, the activity center will be the central location. Local law enforcement agency will be notified immediately of any situation specific to Jacob's Ladder or NFUMC. Parents will be contacted to advise them as to when children may be safely released.

SPECIAL HELPER

Jacob's Ladder is a "cooperative preschool", which means that we ask for parent participation. The "special helper" program requires that each family provide an adult representative at the school to help four days during the school year. Our goal is to maintain a consistent adult/student ratio of 1:6/7, which is better than that which is required by state codes.

The "special helper" will assist with activities such as; receiving children at arrival time, set-up and take-down of activity center, play ground monitoring, classroom aid for special projects, party assistance, cutting and laminating materials for use in the classrooms, and assisting with any emergencies.

We recognize that not all families will be able to comply with this requirement. **Those families unable to assist with the "special helper" program will be charged a fee of \$140.00 @ school year or \$35.00 @ each day they do not sign up to help or arrange for a substitute.** This money will be used to pay a teacher's aide for days we do not have a "special helper." Please sign up for days that are convenient for your family so that we do not need to make random assignments. . **If you cannot be there on your assigned day, please arrange to switch with another parent and notify the director of your exchange.**

"SAFE SANCTUARY"

In the past families worked under a blanket of "faith" that anyone working within a church as a paid employee or volunteer could have their trust with the children. That is no longer the case in today's society. The United Methodist Church is moving toward establishing "Safe Sanctuary" programs throughout all our ministries. Therefore, we will be requesting that volunteers at Jacob's Ladder agree to have a background check. We hope that you understand the need to comply with this mandate. Our children are precious and we need to know that they are in the safest possible environment. All Jacob's Ladder staff members have been through a thorough background check. Background checks for staff and volunteers are processed by Kroll. A Volunteer background check costs \$11.00 and we ask that you cover this cost if at all possible. Please complete the forms that have been provided in your packet. One form gives permission to Kroll to do a background check and the other is your acknowledgement that you have read the parent handbook and are aware of our "special helper policy." It also provides helpful information to staff about particular skills or interests you may have that could be used at the school. Please keep this handbook for future reference. If all participating families follow the same guidelines, we will be able to offer consistent programming and avoid miscommunication.