

Mission Statement

Founded in September 1977, the Mt. Zion United Methodist Co-operative Preschool seeks to create an educational atmosphere for children to learn, and at the same time, come away with a positive feeling about themselves and the world around them. The preschool grew out of a desire by the church to develop what was described at the time as a “nursery” school to fulfill the need of a young, growing family.

The mission of the Mt. Zion United Methodist Co-op Preschool shall be to create a loving environment where each child can grow and be nurtured in the following ways:

Spiritually – instilling in each child a biblical belief in God: recognizing Jesus as his friend, helper and Savior.

Socially – refining the skills of sharing; responsibility; consideration of others, while encouraging parents to be actively involved in their child’s preschool experience.

Physically – providing safe opportunities for large and small motor development in a happy and clean preschool.

Creatively – to provide an environment in which each child can explore his own creativity by exploring God’s creation through songs, play and the arts.

Academics – introducing kindergarten readiness skills in an encouraging environment using positive reinforcements.

Licensing Statement

The Mt. Zion United Methodist Cooperative Preschool has been granted “exempt” status from the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This standing was given to the school based on the fact that we are a church affiliated school, the number of students enrolled and the number of hours spent in the classroom. We maintain all DCFS rules and regulations regarding the health and safety of our students. A copy of the exemption letter is available should you wish to view it.

Insurance Coverage

The Mt. Zion United Methodist Co-operative Preschool carries liability insurance. This coverage extends from the classrooms to the remainder of the church property, including the parking lot, outside play areas and sidewalks. All visitors are covered when on church property. The preschool teacher, volunteers, students and guests are covered when on field trips off the church property. The Co-op also carries accidental medical insurance coverage for its students and volunteers, which further covers them on and off church property.

Release of Information

All personal information pertaining to enrolled children and their families is confidential. The one exception is evidence of child abuse that by law we are required to report.

Release of any other personal information will be considered only if requested in writing and then approved by written consent of the child’s parent.

Occasionally, we may release pictures and articles pertaining to our preschool to the newspaper for publication. Only first names of children will be used. No advance notice will be given to parents concerning news articles.

Age Requirements of Our Students

Children must be three years of age by September 1 of the school year.

Registration Forms and Fees

- Admittance is open to those who have completed applications and paid a non-refundable fee.
- Early registration is open to members of the Mt. Zion United Methodist Church and current and previous members of the preschool beginning in February. Registration is open to the public in March.
- New students must have a physical examination completed no earlier than a year (365 days) prior to the start of attendance and turn in state health forms as proof no later than four weeks from the start of school. In accordance with our by-laws, it is necessary for a child to have immunizations against poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus, a TB test, lead screening and a doctor's signature. **Failure to do so by October 1st will result in a \$25 fine as well as your child not being allowed at the preschool until it is turned in. Failure to have it turned in within the week will result in your child losing his place in the preschool.** (Please note: If the doctor does not think the TB test is necessary, he or she may indicate so on the form.)
- Openings are filled on a first-come first-serve basis. Although we are "exempt," we take DCFS standards into consideration in determining class size. DCFS allows 20 children to every 2 adults per room. Once the classes are filled, names will be accepted for the waiting list. There should be no charge for being placed on the waiting list.
- We also require a copy of the child's birth certificate for our records. This is also due no later than October 1st.
- Parent volunteers must complete authorization for background checks. One Background Check is included in the registration fee. Any additional Background Checks are \$15 per check.

Tuition

3 Days - \$135/Month

5 Days - \$185/Month

If you have 2 or more children enrolled in preschool at one time, there will be at tuition cap of \$200/month

Tuition is due on the first of every month and no later than the tenth of the month. Payment of tuition in a consistent and timely manner is a vital part

of continued enrollment. Payment can be made at the preschool or by mail. Your cancelled check serves as your receipt. The Treasurer should be notified any time your tuition payment will be made after the tenth of the month. **Any tuition payments not received by the 10th of the month and not prearranged with the Treasurer will be subject to a late fee of \$10 for a first-time offense. Consistent late payments will be subject to a \$20 late fee. Your child will be dropped from the preschool if payment is not forthcoming or special arrangements are not made by the 15th of the month.**

No refunds will be made for illness or vacations. Refunds can be given for early withdrawal from the school if a 30-day written notice is provided by the parent. **As a note, the tuition is a yearly tuition broken down over the nine-month school year. That fee is the same each month.**

Arrival and Departure

Students should arrive in a timely manner each school day for the beginning of class time at 9:00 a.m. Please make all necessary arrangements to ensure your child is on time.

Should you need to have someone other than the guardian of the child pickup/drop-off; please let the teacher know in advance. A picture ID may be required if the person picking up is not recognized by the teacher.

Drop off will begin in the morning at 8:45 am. Please make sure your child has arrived no later than 8:55 am so class can begin on time. Both the teacher and the aide will no longer be available to walk your child to the room past 9:00. Due to the security system in the building, the front doors will only be unlocked until 9:00. Anyone arriving after 9:00 will have to call the church secretary to notify her of arrival. Pick up is also at 11:30 am each day. Pick up will be outside. Parents will pull around and a teacher will assist children into the vehicles.

Failure to comply with the drop off/pick-up times will result in a three-strike rule. Repeated tardiness will be noted and taken to the board to decide on the status of your child's enrollment.

Times and Days

The Mt. Zion United Methodist Co-op Preschool follows the Mt. Zion School calendar, starting after Labor Day and ending before Memorial Day. **In case of inclement weather, school will be closed on all days the Mt. Zion Schools are closed, as well as any days determined by the director.**

3 Days: Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday 9:00 am – 11:30 am

5 Days: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 11:30 am

Participating Parent Requirements

Participating parents are expected to:

- Read the preschool's handbook to familiarize themselves with the preschool's purpose and policies.

- Provide transportation for field trips or make adequate arrangements if unable to attend.
- Support any fundraising project that may be held during the school year.
- Submit a background check (information will be covered at August Parent Orientation Meeting) Snack Helper: A monthly snack calendar will be sent home. The designated snack helper will need to provide a nutritious snack for the children on that day. You are welcome to stay and help in the classroom on your child's snack day but it is not required. Please send the snack with your child to school in the morning.

Conferences / Evaluations

New preschool students and their parents can request an opportunity to meet with the teacher and a board member prior to the start of school. Any questions about the Co-op can be addressed at this time. This is an excellent opportunity for your child to meet the teacher and begin to establish a rapport.

Parent/Teacher conferences are offered in October. The fall conference gives the parent and teacher a chance to become better acquainted and opens the lines of communication between them. It is a great time to hear how your child is adjusting to preschool. The teacher conducts developmental testing to evaluate your child's progress and the results will be discussed at this time.

Health and Emergency

Children and participating parents should not attend school if they have the following symptoms:

- Fever which has been present in the preceding 24-hour period
- Excessive nasal drainage or persistent cough
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Eye infections or any undiagnosed skin or scalp disease or rash
- Been exposed to a communicable disease and might be contagious within a 24-hour period [i.e., mumps, measles, chickenpox]
- Has been exposed to COVID-19, tested positive for COVID-19, or has any related symptoms

In case of an extended illness, a doctor's clearance is required for the child to return to preschool.

Parents are notified by telephone immediately if an emergency should occur. If parents cannot be reached, emergency care will be arranged through the doctor or medical facility listed on the emergency consent form in the child's file.

School Supplies

All children need to have a backpack that is large enough to hold art work, papers, newsletters, etc. from the teachers. These school bags should be brought to and from school each school day. Parents may also be asked to help supply other items on an "as needed" basis.

Personal Belongings

CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO BE TOILET-TRAINED before starting preschool. This means they will need to take care of all their bathroom needs by themselves. Please provide a change of clothes, including extra underwear, in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name on it. This can be left in your child's backpack.

Children should wear appropriate clothing for indoor and outdoor play. This means children may need hats, coats and mittens. Please dress your child according to the weather. Only clothing you don't mind getting dirty or messy from art should be worn. NO slick-soled shoes, please! Tennis shoes are a safer choice and much preferred. During the winter, please remember to send a change of shoes if your child is arriving in snow boots.

Snacks

Parent helpers are asked to bring a snack for the class when scheduled to do so. In compliance with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services' guidelines, the preschool requires that all snacks be prepackaged nutritious foods. **Some approved snack suggestions are: raw vegetables with dip, yogurt/yogurt tubes, cheese, crackers, applesauce, fruits, popcorn, pretzels, wholesome breads or muffins, cereal mixes, dried fruit and raisins, and granola bars.** Exceptions are made for party days and birthdays, but these foods must still be prepackaged or bought from a bakery or grocery store.

Birthdays are recognized at school. If you want to bring a special snack for the class in recognition of your child's special day.

Water is provided by the school. **Please inform the teacher of any food allergies your child may have.**

Special Events

There are two main special events held throughout the school year that parents, relatives, and friends are invited to attend.

Christmas – a program scheduled for an evening prior to the holiday

Graduation Ceremony - a program to celebrate the students that are moving to kindergarten. Other events may be planned at the teacher/board discretion.

Class Parties

Our students will be celebrating three holidays with special parties during the school year. The holidays we will celebrate are Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter.

Visitation

Parents with completed Background Checks are welcome to visit the classroom. Arrangements **MUST** be made in advance by communication with the teacher.

