



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH **PRESCHOOL**

Preschool Handbook 2026-2027

Orientation: Wednesday, August 26th 6:00-7:00 p.m.

First Day of School: Tuesday, September 9th

First United Methodist Church 1001 Fifth Avenue Conway, SC 29526

(843) 488-4251 www.fumcconway.org First
United Methodist Church Preschool
Handbook

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Introduction:

First United Methodist Church Preschool provides an atmosphere where children are encouraged to learn, grow and develop into a whole person with a well-rounded experience.

Socially and Emotionally

- Listen and follow simple directions
- Think for themselves
- Live within limits they understand
- Make choices
- Make new friends
- Express feelings in socially acceptable ways
- Feel secure away from home
- Work both individually and in a group
- Take turns and share with others
- Identify with an adult other than a parent

Physically and Mentally

- Develop muscle coordination and fine-motor skills
- Develop visual and auditory discrimination
- Develop language skills
- Develop fine motor skills
- Recognize colors
- Recognize shapes
- Recognize letters
- Recognize and writing numbers 1 to 10

Spiritually

- Practice prayer at snack time
- Hear age-appropriate Bible Stories
- Explore God's wonderful creation
- Celebrate major Christian and civic holidays
- Hear and recognize faith language such as God, Jesus, love, prayer, and worship

Curriculum:

Our curriculum is founded upon a creative thinking and art-based method. It is our firm belief that young children naturally tend to be highly open to creatively exploring their world. Thus, fostering this creativity allows each child to grow, learn and process information in a way that is natural to their age, development, and personality. We further believe that in the education of young children focus should be on the process of learning by allowing each child to develop and generate original ideas. Nurturing a creative thinking environment is applied across the curriculum.

In providing a creative curriculum for your child, we recognize that great milestones of the human experience such as, inventions, scientific discovery, arts and humanities, have all depended on creative thinking skills. In allowing young children to express themselves openly, and in being open to their new ideas and experiences, we allow them to benefit in many ways, such as:

- Learn self-confidence
- Seek a variety of solutions to a problem
- Develop critical thinking potential
- Develop individuality
- Learn to value individuality of other persons

These skills are critical to becoming able learners who take ownership of their own learning. In taking ownership and in utilizing all the senses (e.g. seeing, hearing, touching, tasting) to learn, young children are more able to process concepts in memory that lead to a foundation for life-long learning.

To ensure a creative curriculum for your child each of our classrooms are arranged in learning centers that are separate areas of the room where activities occur. Some of the centers in our program include: reading/language, math/manipulative, dramatic play and creativity.

Special Activities:

Music - Your child will experience a variety of music lessons. This is designed to help stimulate the growth of your child's cognitive, social, language, physical and emotional development

through music. They will have a bi-weekly opportunity to have music specials including instruction with instruments and guided activities, led by Ms. Janet Lawrence.

Chapel Time – Your child will experience the church sanctuary with all other classmates for a weekly chapel time (Bible story, prayer, and songs). Chapel time is led by the FUMC pastoral staff. In addition to chapel time, we observe a monthly Bible memory verse as an inspirational guide.

Active Physical Play – Active play is integrated into the daily schedule. It takes place outdoors except under extreme weather conditions. Outdoor play is a valuable opportunity for learning and free movement. We have access to the FUMC Fellowship Hall for rainy days. Bi-weekly your student will have an opportunity to join in structured physical education time to develop further their activity skills.

Snack – Snacks are served family style. Children help prepare and serve their own snack and clean up after themselves. This develops specific self-help skills as well as independence and responsibility.

Registration & Tuition Fees:

To ensure your child's placement in our program a non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 is due at the time of application. This annual fee allows for processing your child's application, classroom material and projection of school enrollment. Registration is complete when all enrollment forms have been completed and returned along with receipt of your check.

Monthly Tuition: \$280 per month. Payments can be made by cash, check, money order or via <https://tinyurl.com/FUMCCPreschool> and must be placed in an envelope with the child's full name so that your account will be credited correctly. For families who have multiple children enrolled there will be a 15% discount on tuition.

Payment Schedule:

1. **First Month: The 1st month's tuition is due on or before Orientation on Monday August 26, 2024.**
2. Due Date: The monthly tuition payments are prepaid and are due by the 1st of the prior month. Tuition is based on enrollment not attendance.

3. Late fee: A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged after the 10th day of each month.
4. Returned Check: If your check is returned for insufficient funds, you will be responsible to repay the full amount of the check along with a \$30.00 service fee.
5. Should you cancel your child's spot before the first day of classes a half tuition will be refunded. **It is our policy that a registrant gives 30 days written/ paid notice before canceling their child's spot. Notice of withdrawal must be given to the Associate Pastor.**
6. If tuition becomes delinquent over a two-week period, we reserve the right to notify you that your child cannot continue the preschool program until fees have been satisfied.

Enrollment Procedure:

FUMC Preschool does not discriminate based on national origin, ancestry, or gender. While Christian values and attitudes will be practiced, specific religious doctrine is not an emphasis of the curriculum.

The following forms must be completed to enroll your child at FUMC Preschool:

1. A medical record for each child to be filled out by a parent/legal guardian. This form includes a medical history and a record of immunizations or a doctor note stating you are abstaining from immunizations on grounds of faith tradition or medical necessity.
2. An emergency release for medical treatment which is to be signed by parents/ legal guardian in case the parent/legal guardian cannot be reached during a medical emergency requiring the care of a doctor or hospital.

An Enrollment Orientation will take place on August 26th from 6:00-7:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to the preschool rooms during this time to meet their teachers, see the preschool rooms and release their enrollment packet.

2026-2027 Preschool Classes & Operation Schedule:

Monday-Friday: 8:30-11:30am

Note: To determine your child's class level, they must be three, for example, by September 1st. We follow the same guidelines as the Horry County School System. Children stay in the same class throughout the school year. **Based upon registration the eighteen month-two and three-four-year-old classes may be combined.**

Preschool Hours and Attendance:

All classes are held from 8:30am to 11:30 am. Please observe the hours of operation and be prompt in bringing and picking up your child. Staff members will not be ready to receive your child prior to this time.

School closings and holidays will closely correspond with Horry County School District but may not follow exactly. A monthly preschool calendar will be available the last week of the prior month. You can view and print a copy of the school district calendar online at www.horrycountyschools.net.

FUMC Preschool Procedures:

FUMC Preschool shall observe the following procedures outlined below.

Drop Off, Pick Up and Release Procedures:

Please do not bring your child for drop off prior to 8:20 am. Teachers are busy preparing for the day and are not always in the classroom.

Children should be dropped off in their classroom between 8:20-8:30 a.m. Class activities will begin promptly at 8:35. Please do not conference with the teachers during the drop off time. If you have questions, comments or concerns that need to be discussed with the teachers please call either the Preschool Director, Mrs. Kathy Cooper, or the Associate Pastor, Rev. Emily Kirby to arrange a conference (843)488-4251 or elkirby@umcsc.org.

If you arrive late, you must escort your child into the building and to the classroom through the church office. No one is allowed in the preschool facility without the presence of a FUMC staff member.

Pick-up promptly at 11:30 am. Please park in the Educational Hall parking lot located off Laurel Street. When you arrive, please come to your students classroom door to pick your child up from school. Please be prompt when picking up your child— a late fee of \$10.00 may be added to your account if your child is picked up late. If you are late your child will be located either in their classroom with their teacher or in the office of the Associate Pastor.

A child will be released only to the custodial parent or guardian unless prior authorization is received. Individuals listed on the Authorized Child Release form may pick up your child by having picture identification.

Security Measures:

To keep children safe, security measures will be practiced. Children will need to be walked to their classroom. Please note the release procedures above regarding proper identification and notification for release. Although there is an open-door policy to allow parents to drop by and visit the preschool at any time only authorized parents or guardians will be allowed. To visit your child, you must check in to the church office first. Entrance at Steeple Tower off 5th Avenue.

Behavior Management: *All Behavior Management Guidelines are managed by First UMC Conway 'Safe Sanctuaries Policy' maintained by the Associate Pastor and the First UMC Church Council*

Positive behavior will be encouraged by providing opportunity for quiet and stimulating activities, outdoor and recreational play. We offer acceptable choices and re-direction.

FUMC Preschool seeks to demonstrate positive guidance for children. There are a few simple guidelines and a consistent reminder to children who forget the guidelines. Often, a reminder is all it takes to change a child's behavior. Staff will speak calmly to the child about how the behavior was inappropriate.

- A. Redirection and Substitution – Channel the child's attention elsewhere and offer something else to do when applicable.
- B. Model and Problem Solve – Show examples of expected behavior and offer suggestions.
- C. Logical Consequences – Match the consequence to the behavior being corrected. (i.e. If a child is throwing blocks instead of building he may be asked to move to another center)
- D. Isolate – Time alone helps get feelings under control.
- E. Office Visit – If negative behavior continues – child's parents will be notified.

It could be possible that our center may not be able to meet the needs of all children. We reserve the right to terminate services when a child's behavior poses a direct or significant threat to the health, safety or structure of the class.

Emergency Procedures:

Fire drills and tornado drills will be conducted throughout the year giving the children and staff security in knowing what to do in case of an emergency. In the event of a serious injury or illness parents will be contacted. If a trip to the emergency room is necessary, the director will accompany the child to the hospital while another teacher or staff member stays with the rest of the children at the church. An accident or illness report will be filled out and kept on file.

Inclement Weather Policy:

When faced with potentially dangerous weather conditions FUMC Preschool will follow Horry County School decisions. Visit their website at www.horrycountyschools.net for information on closings. Information is also released by the local television stations.

Health:

If your child is well enough to come to preschool, we consider him/her well enough to participate in all indoor and outdoor activities.

Please keep your child at home if he/she has any of the following:

- A fever within 24 hours
- Two or more episodes of diarrhea within 24 hours
- Vomiting
- Constant cough
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Sore throat
- Abdominal pain
- Pink eye within 24 hours

If a child becomes ill at preschool the parents will be notified and are expected to pick up the child immediately.

No medications except for Epi-pens and inhalers will be administered by the preschool staff. Epi-pens and inhalers will be administered only when a medication form has been completed by the parents/guardians of a child.

An up-to-date immunization form must be on file at the preschool. If an accident or injury is incurred the staff will seek professional medical attention as the child's registration form indicates.

Clothing:

Washable play clothes are most suitable. Efforts will be made to prevent getting paint, glue, etc. on clothing. However please don't expect your child to stay clean. Clothes should be easy on/off clothes to assist the children for trips to the restroom. Clothes with complicated belts, buttons, ties, etc. should be avoided.

Children should have a complete change of clothes in his/her book bag each day. In case of a bathroom accident, soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag. Teachers will not be responsible for washing out soiled clothing.

For Safety Purposes all children are required to wear rubber sole shoes which entirely cover the feet. Absolutely no flip-flops or open toe or heel shoes are permitted. If these shoes are worn parents will be called to bring proper shoes and child will not be permitted to join in physical activities until correct shoes arrive.

We are not responsible for lost items of clothing. All clothing should be labeled with child's name.

Food:

The preschool will provide daily snacks – please do not bring any food into the classrooms without first talking with your teacher. Make sure your child has a spill proof water bottle each day.

If your child has food allergies or you wish to make sure his/her snack is totally nutritious, please feel free to pack a snack for your child teacher permitting. You may provide special snacks for your child's birthday. If your child's birthday falls during the summer months and s/he will not be with us during the summer s/he may have a birthday celebration during May. Please provide store bought treats for birthdays.

Toys:

We have plenty of toys and equipment in the preschool classes. When children bring toys from home it often presents a problem. Therefore, we discourage bringing toys from home on a daily basis. There will be share days throughout the year to encourage the children to share their toys from home with the group.

Special Needs:

First United Methodist Preschool will make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for mentally or physically handicapped children, the Preschool cannot accept children that are

- (1) of danger to themselves
- (2) of danger to others, and/or
- (3) a disruption to the normal activities making it unreasonably difficult for other children to learn and participate in our programs.

Any of the above reasons will be grounds for dismissal for the FUMC Preschool. A parent/guardian must discuss with the Director any special conditions or circumstances involving their child. This must be discussed prior to registration, so that we can advise you as to whether or not we can make reasonable accommodations for your child.

Fundraisers:

FUMC Preschool does fundraisers as a means to enhance and update our program and equipment. This helps us to make every attempt to keep our monthly tuition affordable to families. We request parental assistance for fundraisers and a schedule of fundraising events will be sent to families throughout the year.

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**First United Methodist Church Preschool
2026- 2027 Registration Form**

Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Name of Parent(s) and/or Legal Guardian:

Father: _____ Mother: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Contact Phone:(____) _____

Email: _____

Please indicate which class for which you are registering your child:

Infant: _____ Eighteen Month: _____ Two Year Old: _____

Three Year Old: _____ Four Year Old: _____

Please return this form along with the registration fee to the following:

First United Methodist Church 1001 Fifth Ave Conway, SC 29526
C/O Director of Preschool

Child Information

Name of Child: _____ Last, First Middle

Name to which Your Child Responds: _____

Family Background:

Please help us to understand the family dynamic and background information that may be pertinent to discerning the needs of your child. This information will help our staff have better contextual understanding of your child.

Please List Siblings (Names and Ages): _____

Child's parents or guardian (circle one)

Never Married Married Divorced Separated Remarried

Additional helpful information about your child's family setting:

Child Development:

Is your child potty trained? _____(Y)_____ (N)

Can you understand most of what your child says? _____(Y)_____ (N) What
type(s) of toys does you child enjoy?

Has your child spent short periods of time away from you? (Daycare,
Preschool, Sunday school, Church Nursery, Play Groups, etc.) _____(Y)_____ (N)

Do you have any concerns about your child’s development?

Does your child have any special needs that we need to know about?

What do you expect your child to gain from the preschool experience?

Emergency Form

Name of Child: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____

Check One: Boy _____ Girl _____

Child’s Date of Birth: _____/_____/_____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Parent/Guardian: _____

Place of Employment: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Place of Employment: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Child's Insurance Information

Carrier/Plan Name: _____

Group Number: _____

Is the child currently covered under this plan/policy? _____(Y)_____(N)

Name of Insured (on Card): _____

Relationship to Participant: _____

Primary Care Physician: _____

Dentist: _____

Medical Report

Name of Child: _____ Last, First Middle

Please list any/all allergies your child has experienced:

Please list any/all medications your child takes on a regular basis:

Does your child require an Epi-Pen? _____(Y)_____(N)

If 'yes', please list specifics for use: _____

Health Background

Food Allergies: _____

Seasonal Allergies: _____

Physical Limitations: _____

Auditory, Sight, Speech Impairments or Difficulties: _____

Are your child's immunizations up to date? _____(Y)_____(N) Other
information that you wish us to know:

Consent for Medical Care

I understand the staff at FUMC Preschool will exercise all reasonable care in supervising the children. However, the staff and First United Methodist Church cannot be held responsible for accidents which may occur. I hereby give permission, should my child need emergency medical care and I cannot be reached, for services to be rendered to my child by a licensed physician and/or hospital. I also authorize my child to be transported by care or emergency vehicle should an emergency situation occur.

Child's Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Date: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Pick Up and Release Form

First United Methodist Church Preschool has my permission to release my child _____ Last, First Middle to the following person(s).

In the event of an unplanned event or emergency where someone not listed below needs to pick up my child, I will contact the Preschool by written (signed) note or phone call at least 15 minutes prior to the end of the day.

For the safety of your child, please remind persons other than yourself who may be picking up your child (and whom we do not know) that they will be asked for proper identification before your child will be released to them.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____ Name

of other person(s) allowed to pick up child:

_____ Last, First Middle
_____ Last, First Middle
_____ Last, First Middle

Photo Release Form for Minors

First United Methodist Church has my permission to use my or my child's photograph publicly to promote the preschool. I understand that the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Child's Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

Bus Rider Permission

I understand that First UMC Preschool will, on occasion, take field-trips for certain events. I acknowledge that I will be given prior notice before any such event takes place and be provided with the timeline and location of the event.

To make these special events possible I acknowledge that If I am not accompanying my child that First UMC Preschool will provide transportation on the First UMC church bus. I acknowledge that any persons operating the church bus are certified and trained to do so.

I hereby give my permission for my child to ride the First UMC church bus during the 2026-27 preschool year.

Child's Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Last, First Middle

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____ (MM/DD/YYYY)