

Parent Handout and Policies

Mother's Day out Program of Epiphany Lutheran Church

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The mission statement of Epiphany Lutheran Church is to help people grow into a living relationship with Jesus and His Church, through worship and fellowship; understand God's purpose for their life, through Bible study and prayer; and to go forth as Jesus' ambassadors, to care for and share His Good News with all people.

The Mother's Day Out Program of Epiphany Lutheran Church is licensed by the state and was established to help meet the needs of young families in our congregation and to reach out into the surrounding community. Mother's Day Out gives parents the opportunity to have some free time, work part time, attend classes, do house work, run errands, etc. while giving the children a chance to play and interact with children in their own age range. The program provides a place where children are cared for in a loving, secure, Christian environment.

In the Mother's Day Out setting, Christian education is taught through the everyday activities of snack time, indoor and outdoor play. Chapel time is held weekly in the Sanctuary. All classes gather together to hear a children's message and sing praise songs! Religion is being taught as teachers and children are involved in Christian interaction. Children are met on their level, and teachers show, by example, Christ's way of love, acceptance, and forgiveness.

We are committed to the belief that "children learn by doing". The classrooms are arranged so the children learn by discovery. Through art projects the children learn to express feelings and ideas; building blocks give children the opportunity to plan and solve problems; dramatic play gives children the opportunity for expression and language development; manipulative activities help develop fine motor skills; and outdoor play and periodic nature hunts allow children to use their five senses to learn more about nature.

Social skills are a very important part of being a preschool child. The activities in the classroom are aimed at teaching the importance of sharing, listening, and working in groups and taking turns.

ENROLLMENT

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Your registration fee will hold a position for your child. MDO registration is open in February for 2 weeks for Epiphany church members & families of children currently enrolled. Registration is then open to waiting list families, then to the community.

Very young children thrive best in small groups. In order to provide the best setting for your child/children, we strive to keep our staff/child ratios and our class sizes small.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Staff/Child Ratio</u>	<u>Max. Class Size</u>
Infants	1/3	6
Toddlers	1/5	10
Two Year Olds	1/5	10
Three Year Olds	1/ 8 & 1/6	8 & 12
Four Year Olds	1/8	16

TUITION /REGISTRATION FEE

Our Mother's Day Out program is a community outreach effort and not a for-profit organization. Therefore, we try to keep our fees reasonable. Tuition for one child is \$22.00 per day. In order to make our program more affordable for families with more than one pre-school child, we offer a reduced rate for each child after the first. The tuition for the second child is \$15.00 per day. The tuition for the third child is \$12.00 per day. When writing checks for tuition, please include your child's name in the memo section.

Epiphany tax ID # - 76-0334759

Tuition is due the first week of each month. If it would be easier for you, arrangements can be made for you to split your payment by paying on the first and third weeks. A *NON-REFUNDABLE* registration fee of \$75.00 per child, per program will be required upon enrollment in the program. A \$20 supply fee per child will be collected in September.

DISCIPLINE

Appropriate behavior will be praised. Despite all our attempts to encourage positive behaviors, children will still misbehave at times. When this occurs, we treat this situation as an opportunity for teaching rather than punishment. When necessary our method of discipline is warning the child and "time-out". No physical contact will be used. Biting cannot be tolerated. When necessary, the parent will be called to remove the child from the program for the rest of the day.

Policies

1. Mother's Day Out offers two separate programs, held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Wednesdays and Fridays. The hours are from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Our doors open promptly at 9:00 a.m. A late charge will be assessed to all parents picking up children after 2:00 p.m. The fee is \$1.00 per minute. Example: If you pick up your child at 2:09 p.m. you would pay the teacher on duty a fee of \$9.00. This policy may appear strict, but it has been found that if we do not enforce it, as the year progresses, many problems are created. The teachers have numerous duties to perform before the children arrive and at the end of the day, some of which cannot be completed while the children are in the classroom. Also, keep in mind that some children become quite upset when the others have gone and their parent is still not here. If you need to speak to a teacher or have more than one child to pick up, please come early enough so that you are finished by 2:00 p.m.

2. To protect the health and well being of the children in the Mother's Day Out program, all children must show proof of current inoculations prior to enrollment. These records must be kept up to date, and kept in our files throughout the year. Please do not send your child with a fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, green runny nose, or any other obvious illness. You will be contacted immediately should your child become ill. **PLEASE HAVE A LOCAL PHONE # ON FILE FOR US TO CALL. WE CANNOT MAKE LONG DISTANCE CALLS!** If we are unable to contact you, we will contact someone on your Emergency and Medical Form. If an emergency situation should arise you will be contacted and/or your child will be taken to the hospital you have put on your Emergency and Medical Form. Any medication that needs to be given during MDO hours should be put in a zip-lock bag in the original container with clear instructions and given directly to the Mother's Day Out director to administer. Medications are NOT allowed in children's bags or lunch kits!

*** Please see pg. 5 of handout, this is taken from the TX DFPS Minimum standards for child-care centers, as a licensed facility we must follow these rules and regulations for the safety of all children.

3. Please note that we observe all Pearland I.S.D. holidays. You will be notified of these dates. Epiphany M.D.O. will be closed for weather-related problems and any other reason Pearland I.S.D. closes. Tune into local TV or radio stations if weather is threatening. ***MDO STAFF IS SUBJECT TO ATTEND WORKSHOPS DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR. TYPICALLY THESE DAYS ARE THURSDAY AND FRIDAY. TUITION IS REQUIRED FOR THESE TEACHER TRAINING DATES. ADVANCE NOTICE WILL BE GIVEN.**

4. Parents are to hand your child and bags over to the teacher (PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE ROOM). Gates must be remained closed and classroom doorways must be monitored by the teachers for your child's safety. **EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH POLICY REQUIRE THAT ONLY TRAINED AND SCREENED PERSONNEL BE ALLOWED IN CLASSROOMS WITH CHILDREN.** Only one parent at the door at pick up and drop off time. Please wait in line to drop off and receive your children. This is a safety issue, sometimes children see their parents at the crowded door and run out, leaving the teachers unaware that one of their students has been picked up.

5. Each child must bring a nutritious lunch with a clear or light colored drink. **DO NOT SEND RED, BLUE, OR GRAPE JELLOS, APPLESAUCES, PUDDINGS, YOGURTS, JUICES OR DRINKS.** We request each child use some type of spill proof sipper cup. These cups can be filled at home and sent in the lunch kit. The Capri Suns work well for the 4-year-olds. They are light in color and inexpensive. **GLASS CONTAINERS AND CANNED DRINKS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE. PLEASE SEND A NAPKIN, AND FOOD YOUR CHILD CAN HANDLE WITH THEIR FINGERS.** Do not send Yogurt with children under age four. These requests make easier clean ups for our carpet and for your child's clothing. Morning snacks, consisting of crackers, pretzels or low sugar cookies and water, are provided.

6. We will be happy to help celebrate your child's birthday by the parent providing cookies, muffins or donut holes. You are welcome to provide plates and napkins for your child's special day! Cake, cupcakes and party favors are not allowed. Please let your child's teacher know the week before you plan to bring the snack. Birthday snacks will be served as the morning snack with water. Special occasion & holidays are celebrated in the classrooms throughout the year.

7. Children in the toddler class through three-year-old classes must bring a mat for rest period. Because of space restrictions, the thin folding mat is preferred with a king-size pillowcase as the cover. These mats can be purchased at Wal Mart. Other type mats are acceptable as long as they fit in the storage space provided. All children will have to rest (not necessarily sleep) during rest time. **PLEASE MARK EVERYTHING** clearly with your child's name. (lunch kits, mats, "blankies", pacifiers, diaper bags, bottles, coats, sweaters, etc.). We ask that you dress your infant or toddler in clothing that will ease diaper changes. Older children should be dressed in clothing that can be easily removed at rest room time. Elastic waist pants work best so that the children can learn to take care of themselves at potty time. Dress children comfortably for active play. Girls wearing dresses should also wear shorts underneath. Because the safety zone in our playground consists of pea gravel, and because we do have some climbing equipment, we ask that for your child's safety please send him/her in rubber soled shoes. Velcro shoes work best so that the children can remove pebbles from their shoes during playground time. (No sandals, boots or flip-flops). **ALL CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE AN EXTRA SET OF CLOTHES IN THEIR BAG AT ALL TIMES.**

8. **ALL CHILDREN ENTERING THE 3 1/2 AND 4 YEAR OLD CLASSES MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY TRAINED. CHILDREN ENTERING THE 3-YEAR-OLD CLASS MUST BE IN THE PROCESS OF ACTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL POTTY TRAINING. POTTY TRAINING MUST BE COMPLETED BY JANUARY 1ST. CHILDREN NOT ACTIVELY POTTY TRAINING BY SEPTEMBER OF EACH NEW SCHOOL YEAR WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MOVE UP; THEREFORE WILL FORFEIT THEIR SPOT.** Children MUST stay in a pull up or diaper until COMPLETELY potty trained. Accidents happen and are understandable; however, children should be aware and capable of using the toilet by this age. Repetitive accidents often affect self-esteem in children and as childcare professionals; we are concerned for your child's social and emotional well being.

9. Children must be signed IN and OUT each day on the attendance sheet outside the door of your child's classroom. The emergency number for that day should be added here, and most importantly who will be picking your child up. Please initial at the time in and time out box of the daily attendance sheet. Your child will only be released to the person listed on the attendance sheet. If the person listed on the attendance sheet to pick your child up changes during the day, a phone call to the director will be necessary. This is for your child's protection. Feel free to call and check on your child at anytime. If needing to pickup your child early, or drop off lunch or forgotten supplies please do so through the MDO office in the main building, we recommend that parents do not interrupt the classroom setting. When picking up your child, we ask that you leave your cell phones in the car. The teachers and your child deserve your full attention at the end of each day to communicate any information.

10. The yellow daily evaluations forms that are sent home at the end of each day are a way of keeping you informed and involved of your child's daily activities. If your child has had an off day, keep in mind that the situation or concern was handled at school by the teacher. Take this opportunity to remind your child about appropriate behavior, but further punishment is not needed, as this may confuse your child. Thank you!

11. Our side doors of both buildings are open early so that our teachers can come and go during their prep time and to take their own children to their classrooms by 8:50. They will be ready to greet you and your child at 9:00. If you choose to come into the buildings before 9 am, please wait in the narthex (main building) or hallway (gym building). There are clocks in both buildings for your convenience.

12. Wednesdays and Thursdays are chapel days. Chapel begins promptly at 9:20 am. After dropping your child off in their classroom, we ask that you please clear the hallways, as the children will be moving throughout the halls to the sanctuary in the main building. If you arrive after 9:20 and the chapel doors are closed, please remain in the narthex with your child until chapel time is over. It is your responsibility to make sure your child gets in with his/her class when exiting chapel.

13. Monthly newsletters go out the beginning of each month. These include important activities and dates. Please keep these on your refrigerator or another handy spot to refer to each month. Newsletters are posted on the M.D.O. bulletin board between rooms 3 and 5 along with the most recent Licensing inspection report. Newsletters are also kept on the director's table. If your child is absent or does not receive one, please make a point to get one.

14. If any of our policies change during the school year everyone will be issued a new copy of our updated policy. If you need to review or discuss any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the childcare center please call our office at any time. You are welcome at any time during the day to call or visit our program and observe the childcare center's operation.

A PAID TWO WEEK NOTICE WILL BE REQUIRED IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE DISCONTINUING OUR M.D.O. PROGRAM. PLEASE GIVE NOTIFICATION TO THE MDO DIRECTOR. THIS COURTESY WILL ENABLE US ADEQUATE TIME TO FILL THE SPOT BEING VACATED.

MDO STAFF: Each staff person in the Mother's Day Out program has passed a criminal history check, The Safe and Secure Program, and is CPR certified and first aid trained. Other training includes 15 hours of various workshops. For information about local licensing offices look on the Protective and Regulatory Services website at: www.tdprs.state.tx.us. The Child Care Information line at 1-800-862-5252 also has information about local licensing offices. We will be happy to let you review a copy of minimum standards provided by Child Care licensing.

* This is a Drug Free and Gang Free Zone facility. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center. Gang related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of the center is a law violation and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

Revised – 2-2010, BB