Little Lights of St. Luke’s Children’s Day Out

Parent Handbook

In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

~Matthew 5:16

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**Table of Content**

Welcome …………………………………………………………………………...1

Purpose……………………….……………….………..…………………………..2

Program………………………..…………….……….…….……………………....2

Tuition and Fees…………………………………….…….………………….…… 3

Registration……………………………………….………..…………………..…...3

Deposit…………………………………………………………..………………….3

Payment………..……………………………….………………..…………………4

Withdrawal………………………………………....………………………………4

Late Pick Up…………………………………………………..…….……………...4

Removal from the Program………………………………………………………...4

Biting Policy…………………………………………….………………….………4

Illness………………………………………………………...……………………..5

Medicine………………………………………..…………………………………..5

Child Becomes Sick at CDO……………………………...………………………..5

Dress………………………………………...……………………………..……….6

Arrival……………………….…………………….………………………………..6

Dismissal……..……………………………………………………….……………6

Parking………..………………………………………………….…...…………….6

Food……………..…………….……………………………………………………6

Special Activities…………………………………………..……………………….7

Personal Items………………………………………………………………………7

Babysitting Policy……………………………………………………….………….7

Behavior Management……………………………………..……………………….8

Dear Little Lights Family,

We are so excited that you have trusted your most precious gift to us here at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church! The goal of our Children’s Day Out program is to provide a loving Christian educational environment that will help create a life-long learning desire in your child. It is our hope that your child will grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, and spiritually while they are in our care. Once again, welcome to Little Lights of St. Luke’s, where children shine with God’s love!

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Rev. Tom Long Tracie Greene

Lead Pastor of St. Luke’s UMC Director of Little Lights CDO

2

**Purpose**

1. equip children with social and intellectual skills they will need to

 become life-long learners

1. nurture children and help them discover God’s love
2. instill a sense of positive self-worth in children
3. provide a safe and loving place for parents to bring their children

**Program**

Little Lights of St. Luke’s UMC Children’s Day Out will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and/or Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a 2- or 4-day school week. We will offer 4 classes to serve children from 18 months up until they are ready to enter kindergarten.

Please bring a change of clothes every day for an **occasional** accident. If a child has an additional accident in that same day, CDO will call you to come and pick up your child. After three days of multiple accidents, CDO reserves the right to remove your child from the program. Little Lights is a faith-based program that will celebrate Christian holidays. Children will attend chapel weekly where they will learn a Bible story and sing songs of praise. Bible stories will also be used in the classroom. Little Lights will follow will observe MISD weather delays and closures.

3

**Tuition and fees:** Tuition is $200.00 a month (2 days a week) for potty-trained/training\* children and $250 a month if they are not. If you choose to enroll in both sessions (4 days a week) a discount of 10% will be applied. We have a sibling discount – First child full tuition and $10 off all other children in family.

\*Potty training is defined as children who do not wear diapers and will try to use the toilet during the day.

**Registration:** Registration requires a non-refundable fee of $60 per family.

**Supply fee:** Each 2-day semester has a supply fee of $50 and the 4-day semester has a supply fee of $75. Summer session is $15. The first semester’s fee to be paid when registering.

**Deposit:** A deposit of the last month’s (May) tuition is required for registration. This deposit is refundable if your child must withdraw from the program before the school year is over with 30 days written notice is given to the director. If your child completes the entire school year with Little Lights, then this deposit will pay your May tuition. This deposit will also be used to pay any outstanding fees, late fees etc. with the understanding that the balance will be owed to attend in May and to hold a spot in the program the following year.

**Late fee:** Payments are due the 1st day of the month and considered late on the 5th day of the month. A $25 late fee will be accessed on the 5th and your child will no longer be enrolled in the program if payment is not received by the 10th. This fee will be waived if autopay is enabled. Any fees accessed by a bank will be passed on to you.

4

**Payment:** Payments may be made by debit/credit card/checks or cash. If paying by check, make check payable to St. Luke’s UMC and include the student’s name on the memo line. If you are paying with cash, please place money in an envelope and write the student’s name on the front, they may be placed in the deposit box or left at the front desk. Online payments may be made through the church’s website at [www.StLukesUMCMidland.org](http://www.StLukesUMCMidland.org)

**Withdrawal** – 30 days written notice to the director to receive your deposit back. Tuition for the current month is non-refundable.

**Late Pick Up:** Children should be promptly picked up at 2 p.m. after 2:05 a $1 a minute fee will be charged.

**Removal from the program:** Little Lights reserves the right to remove a student from the program for: non-payment, needs of the child and/or parent are not being met, and safety concerns.

**Biting Policy**: The teachers will provide a verbal notice to the parents of both parties involved when a biting incident occurs. The CDO will send home bite warning reports to the parent of the child who is biting. After 3 notices, if the biting has not ceased, the CDO reserves the right to remove the child from the program.

5

**Illness**: We work hard to keep our staff and children healthy. Even healthy children can develop illnesses that can be spread easily in a group setting. The goal of our illness policy is to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. You need to keep your child at home if they have **any** contagious diseases including but not limited to:

 Vomiting (now or within the past 24 hours)

 Fever (now or within the past 24 hours)

 Diarrhea (now or within the past 24 hours)

 Constant Cough

 Pink eye

 Fussy, Cranky, Generally Not Themselves

 Unreasonably Tired or Listless

 Heavy Green Nasal Discharge

 Lice

**If your child is too sick to participate in all our normal activities, he/she is too sick to be at CDO, this includes outside play.**

**Medicine:** Medicine will not be dispensed by CDO staff members.

**If Your Child Becomes Sick At CDO:** If your child becomes sick at CDO we will immediately contact the parent or other authorized person. We expect your child to be picked up within 30 minutes after we have called.Please call the director if your child will be absent.Please also notify the director immediately if your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease so that other parents can be informed that their child may have been exposed.

6

**Dress:** Please dress your child for learning. Learning may be messy at times – we will paint, use markers, use crayons, use glue and other fun, messy learning tools. We also run, so closed toes shoes are preferred. Dress your children for comfort and safety. Please label all jackets.

**Arrival:** Little Lights begins promptly at 9 a.m. Teachers are busy preparing for the day until 9 a.m. so please do not leave your children before then. All students must be signed in every day on the sign in sheet.

**Dismissal:** Our school day ends at 2 p.m. If you are running late, please call and inform the director. Late fees begin at 2:05. Written notice is required if someone other than a parent will be picking up a child. Please inform those picking up your child that they will be asked for their photo id.

**Parking:** For safety reasons we ask that you please park in the parking lot on the east side of the building to walk your children in. In the event of a church activity that would limit your parking, you will receive a note informing you of where to park.

**Food:** Since we start learning at 9 a.m. please make sure your child has finished their breakfast **before** they arrive at school. Please send an easy to eat lunch. Food should be cut into bite sized pieces, no refrigeration needed, and no microwaving required. We will notify class members if there are food allergies in that room and if that classroom will need to eliminate any food for safety reasons. Parents are welcome to send a box of cereal, bag of pretzels, crackers, fruit snacks, etc. during the year for us to share at snack time. Please keep nutrition and ease of eating in mind when sending snacks.

7

**Special Activities:** We will have several special activities during the year (Pumpkin Patch, Thanksgiving feast, Christmas party, Valentine’s, Easter – just to name a few). When we have a party, we will have a volunteer sign-up sheet posted with the sign in sheet. Your child’s birthday is an important event to them and us. Feel free to send a special snack to celebrate their special day!! Please know that we are teaching love and compassion for all, therefore you may only pass out invitations to classmates for any parties if the whole class is being invited.

**Personal Items:** Please label all containers and clothing that your child might remove during the day. This will help the teachers find the proper owner. We provide educational and interesting toys and activities for play, so please encourage your child to leave their personal toys at home – unless the teachers have scheduled a show and tell time.

**Babysitting Policy**

If a CDO family chooses to hire a CDO teacher to babysit their children at their home, St. Luke’s UMC and Little Lights of St. Luke’s will not be liable for any damages or injury that may result.

8

**Behavior Management:** Little Lights will use the concept of good choices vs. poor choices to manage behavior. Our goal is for children to realize the difference, learn from mistakes and to make better choices in the future. Little Lights does not allow the use of corporal punishment. The following positive techniques are used:

 praising

 reinforcing good behavior

 reminding of behavior expectations

 setting limits and enforcing them

 redirection

 mediating

 time-outs with director

These are consistent with our goal of discipline, which is guiding the child in developing inner control and assuming responsibility for his/her own behavior. We ask for parental input to help us understand the needs of each child. Parents will be notified when negative behavior becomes serious or seems to be setting a pattern. A child will be removed from a situation or deprived of certain privileges if he/she cannot behave. The CDO reserves the right to remove a child from the program if his/her behavior becomes disruptive or abusive to the learning environment of others in the class.

**Handbook Agreement**

I have received and read the Little Lights of St. Luke’s Children’s Day Out Parent Handbook, and I agree to follow the procedures and guidelines as stated in the Parent Handbook.

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent (print name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Picture Release**

We often have the opportunity to photograph the children during classroom activities. Many of these informal pictures will be displayed within the classroom for the families to enjoy. Occasionally, certain pictures may be submitted to local news publications or used for advertising the program offered here at Little Lights of St. Luke’s UMC which include our social media pages. Please complete this form to allow us to take pictures of your child.

\_\_\_\_ St. Luke’s has permission to take and use informal

 photographs of my child for display, press releases, and advertising.

 \_\_\_\_ Pictures may be labeled with my child’s name.

 \_\_\_\_ Please do not include my child’s name.

\_\_\_\_ St. Luke’s has permission to take and use informal photographs of my child for classroom use only.

\_\_\_\_ Please do not take any informal pictures of my child.

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent (print name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_