

Welcome

Bethlehem United Methodist Church opened this child care on March 4, 1991. We are licensed by the state with a GS110-106 letter of Compliance.

We understand that making a decision about childcare is one of the most important that parents will make regarding their children. During these most formative and impressionable years, they desire an environment which will be beneficial to the child's security, happiness, educational development, and spiritual growth.

We are sure that you will appreciate the lovely setting that Bethlehem offers your child...a safe building, beautiful play areas, the best in safe equipment for working and playing, and most importantly, a qualified staff to guide your child through this time in life. This is when values are created and learning and behavioral patterns are formed.

We recognize how important it is for parents to be able to go to work knowing that their child will spend their day in an environment that gives every attention to their physical and mental welfare, educational development, and spiritual needs. We welcome you and your child to our Child Care Center family.

Statement of Belief

We expect that parents and families of the Child Care Center will respect the fact that this is a center committed to teaching and instilling Christian beliefs and values. It is to be understood that parents will respect this center as a ministry and extension into the community of the Methodist Church. As such, the faculty and administration shall strive to create and maintain a Christian environment based on the teachings of the Bible.

We believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, suffered in our place on the cross that He now sits at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all men at the last day. We believe in the Holy Scriptures as the inspired and inherent Word of God.

Purpose of Bethlehem Child Care

Bethlehem Child Care Center is the result of our church's desire to minister to the community around us. We did not open the Child Care Center for the purpose of making money or entering into big business. Our desire is to fill a need in our community.

As more and more families find it necessary for both parents to work or in the care of single parent families, there is a large increase in the demand for daytime child care. We offer each child not just a place to spend the day but a warm, loving, Christian atmosphere in which to develop and grow as an individual and responsible member of society.

A child care center plays a monumental part in a child's development. It is here that the child will most likely learn to feed themselves, learn bathroom skills, learn social skills, prepare for kindergarten, etc. Also, it is here that the child will learn many of their values, their self-worth, their love for life and people, as well as their faith. Bethlehem United Methodist Church and Bethlehem Child Care Center desire to help fill these needs. It is our mission to fill these little hearts and minds with God's love and purpose for their lives at a very early age.

Our Program...

Bethlehem Child Care Center is designed to teach the child what they are ready to learn. It is flexible so that the needs of each child can be met. The same curriculum areas are used for all ages; however, the experiences provided expand as the child grows and develops. The curriculum areas are:

Bible

Creative Art

Music

Dramatic Play

Block Building

Large and Small Muscle Activities (Bike Riding)

Discovery (Science)

Problem Solving and Number Concepts

Health and Safety

Field Trips and Visitors

Water Play
Language Development
Self-help skills (Routines)

The rooms are arranged in activity centers on specified days. During free play activities, children have freedom to choose activities and playmates. Periods of active play are followed by periods of relative quiet and rest. There is a balance between self-directed and adult-guided activities. There are opportunities for group experiences, one-on-one interaction experiences, and opportunities for individual play. Children are encouraged to participate in activities but are not forced to do so. There are outdoor activities daily, weather permitting. Vigorous indoor activities are provided when children cannot go outdoors.

Christian Educational

Emphasis upon Christian education will be an important part of each day's activities. In all lessons and activities, we will strive to instill the values and teachings of Christ. We have chapel for children three years old and older every other week.

Welcome Sheets

When your child is enrolled or moves to a new room, you will receive a "Welcome to the Room" sheet. This sheet is to give you specific information about your child's room. Welcome sheets are a part of our child care policy. They contain information that we feel will be helpful to you as you and your child adjust to a new room.

Classroom Assignment

Infants and toddlers are assigned to classrooms according to their individual development. The staff and director work together to determine when a child is ready for the next class. Children two years old and older are assigned to a class by their age and/or maturity. Moving to the next class is determined according to the spaces we have available. Generally, older children may move to a new room in August.

Schedule

The center will operate Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Please arrive early enough to leave the building by 6:00 pm. Parents arriving after 6 pm are charged \$1.00 per minute until your child is picked up.

We will be closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
4 th of July	2 Days for Christmas

Tuition remains the same for weeks that include a holiday.

Inclement Weather

We will make every effort to open on inclement weather days, but should we find it necessary to close, there will be no refund or deductions from tuition. Parents can use a half week if they are eligible. Parents can call the Child Care Center at 674-9879 to see if we are closed or opening late. We will also send out an email through the Procure App.

Fees and Payments

As a non-profit organization, every effort will be made to keep fees as low as possible while maintaining a quality child care program. The Child Care Center Board, elected by the church, is responsible for setting the fees. A schedule of our current fees will be given to you, and you will be asked to sign a financial agreement.

Fees are due on Mondays, and a late fee will be charged after 6:00 pm on Wednesdays. Payment of cash or check should be placed in the metal box in the Infant room. The late fee for late tuition payments is \$10. There is also an auto-draft option and the ability to pay online through the Procure App.

If your child is absent on Monday and Tuesday, the late fee will be waived if you pay the first day your child returns. **If your tuition is not paid by Friday of the week due and you have not made payment arrangements with the director,**

your child will be dismissed from the Center. Should the child return to the Center, a new registration fee will be charged. Special arrangements for payment may be made with the director should the need arise. For information on how to use vacation days, see heading entitled "PERSONAL AND SICK DAYS."

Returned Check Policy

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for all returned checks. An email will be sent the day we receive the copy of the check from our bank. You will have to write us another check to cover the returned check plus \$25.00. In the event of a second returned check, it must be replaced with cash within two days from the date of notice to the parent. Parents will lose the privilege of paying by check should their bank return a check twice more (two times per year). A letter from the bank stating the parent was not a fault for the returned check is required to remove charges and reinstate check writing privileges.

Fund Raisers

In order to provide quality equipment for the classrooms and playground, we depend on fund raisers at certain times during the year. Without your help in these events, the children must do without many of the things we would like to provide for their preschool experience. When every parent participates in some way, we get BIG results.

Personal and Sick Days

When a child is enrolled, he/she will be allowed four (4) one-half weeks' credit per twelve months for illness, vacation, or holidays [one (1) one-half week per quarter]. Your child can be absent 3 days or more to use a half week. Leave days cannot be carried over from one year to the next year.

Parent and Teacher Communication

Mutual understanding and cooperation between parents and teachers are an essential ingredient of a successful child care program. In order for the program to be effective, there must be carryover at home. The parents who share the

Center experience with their children at home will find the learning more permanent and the experience more enjoyable for both themselves and their children. To help keep you informed of your child's daily activities, we send home a calendar of activities at the beginning of each month.

We feel that good communication is the key to a successful relationship between parent and care giver. Each classroom has a Parent Information Center that contains the current lesson plan, daily schedule, menu, pick-up list, and other information you will find useful. Your child also has a locker or basket in the classroom that is used to share information. Please check this locker or basket daily for any communication from the office or teacher. Parent conferences can be set up as needed. Contact the director if you would like to arrange a conference with your child's teacher.

Mutual respect between parent and teacher is important. The administration and staff shall treat parents with respect, shall not use insulting words or actions, and shall not display acts of violence. Any occurrence of this shall be reported to the director, or the Child Care Center Board. Children are subject to immediate dismissal if a parent shows disrespect, uses insulting words or actions, or displays acts of violence towards any Bethlehem employee.

School Injuries and Insurance

If a child is injured or an unexplained mark is found during the day, an incident Report is filled out signed by child's teacher and parent and placed in the child's file in the director's office. Although staff may not see every injury, any mark on a child should be noted in the child's file. Please notify the teachers of any per-existing injuries or bruises or if any are noticed when the child returns home.

If your child is injured at the Center, the teacher and director will determine the need to contact the parent. We do not call parents with every scratch or bump but do contact you when we feel additional medical treatment may be required. Any time a child's teeth are loose; we call the parent and ask them to come to the center to determine what action they wish to take. When a child has an injury that requires treatment by a medical professional, we are required to report the accident to our state licensing agent. This notice must be signed by the parent and mailed within seven days of the injury.

Birthdays and Parties

Parents who wish to contribute an afternoon snack should notify the center in advance. Although birthdays are special, we request that they be celebrated simply – no party favors or gifts, please.

Guilford County Health Department rules will not allow homemade food items to be served to the children in child care centers. All food brought to the center to be served to the children must be from an approved source such as a bakery or grocery store. Food items must be labeled with all ingredients.

Party experiences may be planned during the year by the teacher: Valentine's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. You will be given an opportunity to contribute on these occasions with a sign-up sheet.

General Guidelines for Illness

If your child becomes ill while at Bethlehem, you will be contacted to pick up your child. Sick children must be picked up within one hour of notification. Although we realize it may not be convenient for you to pick your child up on short notice, we have no control over your child's health. Once the staff has made a careful determination (based on our policy) that it is necessary for the child to leave the center, we ask that you respect their decision. You will be contacted if your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, eye drainage or any other noticeable signs of illness.

Please be considerate of your child and other children enrolled at the center, keep your child at home if symptoms of illness have occurred. If your child has a communicable illness, such as strep throat, please let the center know so we can inform other parents. The staff will notify all parents when children have been exposed to a contagious illness with an email by the Director.

Your child must stay at home or go home if he/she has:

- A temperature of 101 degrees or higher. Child may not return to school the next day. Please keep your child home until the temperature has been normal for 24 hours, without medication. A child cannot be medicated with

fever-reducing drugs (Tylenol, etc.) in order to reduce fever and remain at the center.

- Severe cold with sneezing and excessive colored nasal drainage.
- Diarrhea (water or foamy bowel movements). (2 times) Child may not return to school the next day.
- Vomiting (2 times). Child may not return to school the next day.
- Rashes that have not been diagnosed by a physician. Child must have a doctor's written note to return.
- Impetigo, a skin infection consisting of blisters surrounded by a red rash.
- Conjunctivitis, an eye infection commonly referred to a "pink eye". Generally, consists of a red eye with a yellowish discharge; child may return to school 24 hours after beginning medication.
- Bronchitis, which can begin with hoarseness, cough, and a slight temperature.
- Any childhood contagious disease, such as RSV, Ringworm, and Hand, Foot and Mouth.
- Herpes infection (fever blisters) blisters in the mouth and on lips.
- Strep Throat. Following diagnosis, the child may return to school 24 hours after beginning treatment.
- Lice, child may return if no nits are present following treatment.

If your child seems sick without obvious symptoms, please do not bring your child to the center. By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and other children in the center. We appreciate your cooperation.

Failure to abide by the above policy may result in the child's dismissal from the Child Care Center.

Medication

All non-prescription medications will be given only upon receipt of a physician's written instruction for a specific number of days. (If the physician does not list the number of days, we will assume it is for five days only.) Prescription and non-prescription medication will be given at the school only after the parent has completed the "Permission to Administer Medication Form" located in each class. Medication must be in the original container and have the child's name and proper dosage clearly labeled. Medication is administered at the time on the

doctor's note. Prescription medicine does not require a note from the physician in order for us to administer. (The prescription label is sufficient).

Medical Reports and Immunization Records

Immunization records and a physical must be completed for every child in the center. No child will be admitted to the center without a complete record of immunization. To help keep our records up to date please bring proof of immunizations given throughout the year. Failure to keep immunization record current, without a written medical exemption, may result in your child's dismissal from the center.

Field Trips

Children three years old and older occasionally go on field trips. Parents will be asked to sign a blanket permission slip allowing their child to participate. Field trips will be posted on the child's classroom door two days prior to the trip. Children may not remain at the center while their class goes on a field trip. If you do not want your child to participate, you must make arrangements for your child during the time the class is away from the center. Children four years old and under must travel in a car seat, no booster seats are allowed for 4 and under. Five to eight years of age will have to be in a booster seat. (This is subject to change in accordance with North Carolina State regulation).

Field trips are a regular part of our school-age program.

Outside Activities

Daily routines at Bethlehem Child Care include a playtime outside (weather permitting). The children will not be allowed to stay indoors while their class is outside. If your child is too ill to participate in daily activities, please keep them at home.

On days that the **air quality forecast** is **ORANGE, RED OR PURPLE**, we will not be outdoors any longer than the maximum time allowed. We will stay indoors for

most of the afternoon. We may change daily schedules to accommodate more morning outdoor time.

Personal Articles

Clothing: Children are busy at play during the school day and should not wear their "Sunday Best" to school. Comfortable play clothes are preferred. Children should not wear flip-flops as they are a tripping hazard for outside play. An extra set of clothes should be clearly marked and kept in each child's locker or basket. Remember: children are active, active children soil their clothes. Parents will be called to bring clothes to the school when necessary.

Children are not allowed to wear clothing which is not in keeping with our Christian child care setting. Example: T-shirts with alcohol or tobacco products, profane language, or any reference to violence is not allowed.

Jewelry: Children should not wear jewelry to the center due to potential safety concerns. Jewelry deemed unsafe will be removed and brought to the office for the parent to pick up. The center is not responsible for any jewelry brought to school.

Toys: No weapon toys of any type are permitted in the building, Music, videos, and books in keeping with our center's philosophy are welcome. School-age children can bring "G" or "PG" rated movies. Preschoolers can bring "G" rated movies. Bethlehem is not responsible for any movies/videos brought to school.

Preschoolers can bring a small blanket from home for rest time. They will remain in the child's locker/basket at all times other than rest time. The blankets will be sent home each Friday for laundering.

Weapons: NO WEAPONS OF ANY TYPE ARE ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY. Parents, staff and children are required to keep this policy.

Tobacco: Parents are asked to refrain from the use of tobacco or alcohol on the premises. Please do not dispose of tobacco or alcohol on the property.

Drug Free School: Teachers and Director will be asked to have a pre-employment drug test and take random drug tests.

Miscellaneous: Children should not bring any small items, money, gum, make-up, or nail polish, etc. to school.

Requirements for Your Child's Files

Your child's file must be up to date at all times. Please make sure all information remains current and up to date; especially addresses, telephone numbers at work and home, pick up lists, etc.

The following information must be in child's files and kept in the child care office. Please make sure we have signed and dated copies of the following:

1. Application
2. Names and telephone numbers (work and home) of persons other than the parents that are authorized to pick up the child.
3. Medical Report and current Immunization Record. (Send up-dated copy after each series of shots).
4. Discipline Policy Acknowledgment
5. Financial Agreement.
6. Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
7. Field Trip/Play Outside Fence Permission Slips
8. Safe Sleep Discussed Signed Forms (for children under 1 year old)
9. Documentation of Receipt of Policies
10. Documentation of Receipt of Summary of Child Care Laws
11. Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma
12. Tobacco Policy

Arrival

When bringing your child to the Center, they must be accompanied to the classroom by an adult. A teacher should acknowledge the child's arrival prior to the adult leaving the room.

Departure

Parents will designate on the application who is to pick up the child each day. If there is a change of plans regarding your child's departure, the director or teacher should be notified in writing. (Only a parent can call during the day to notify his/her teacher when plans change.) Please inform those picking up your child that proper identification is required. Please list the work and cell telephone numbers of those persons designated to pick up your child.

Bethlehem Child Care Center closes at 6:00 pm. There is a **late fee of \$1.00 for every minute after 6:00 pm**. Please arrive in time to leave the building by 6:00 pm. If you know ahead of time you are going to be late, or you are stuck in traffic, please call us. You will still be responsible to pay a late fee of **\$1.00 every minute** until your child is picked up. Payment can be paid directly to the child's teacher or it will be expected with the following week's tuition. Absolutely no exceptions will be made for late arrival charges. Chronic problems with late departure may result in the child being dismissed from Bethlehem Child Care Center. Parents will be given two written warning concerning late departures. A third warning will result in the child's dismissal.

Building Security and Emergency Preparedness

Providing a safe environment for your child is important to us. All our doors are locked during the child care hours and anyone that wishes to enter will have to buzz in at the side door. Visitors and anyone who is not recognized as a parent will have to show identification upon entering. Because the church shares the facility with us, we will take every effort to monitor individuals entering our building.

Snack and Lunch

Our snacks and lunches meet or exceed the minimum requirements set by North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development. Children with food allergies must have a note from their physician stating they can not have a particular food item. Snack and lunch menus will be posted on the front bulletin board. At 8:30 am, we serve milk with snack. At 11:00

am, we serve milk with lunch, and we serve juice or water with a snack at 3:00 pm.

Rest Time

Children rest each day for approximately two (2) hours. Parents are asked to bring a blanket for rest time. Blankets are sent home on Friday for washing and should return on Monday morning. If possible, please do not bring or pick up your child during rest time. Rest time is approximately 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm daily.

Withdrawal

A full two-week written notice of withdrawal is required. Failure to give written notice two weeks in advance is just cause for the parent being required to pay for those weeks. Notice should be given to the Director.

Dismissal

Our policies are set by the Child Care Board elected by Bethlehem United Methodist Church. The Program Director's responsibility is to see that the policies are followed. The decision to dismiss a child is never easy. That decision is the responsibility of the Director.

There is a variety of reasons for a child's dismissal from the program. Failure to follow Center policy as stated in this handbook is cause for dismissal. A child's behavior can result in dismissal. Every effort is made to avoid this. Both the staff and the Director work to manage a child's behavior, but at times all we can do may not be enough. We can recommend agencies to the parents to assist them with their child.

Failure to pay fees in accordance with the Bethlehem Child Care Center Parent Financial Agreement is just cause for dismissal.

Unless the safety of the child or other children is involved, Parents are given two weeks' notice when the child's behavior requires dismissal.

Discipline

Our teachers seek to provide discipline that respects the child's self image. Techniques used include verbal reminders, the restriction of privileges, natural consequences, and time-out. The teacher's emphasis is on recognizing and encouraging positive behavior rather than focusing on negative. Teachers are not permitted to use spanking, or any method of physical punishment, or verbal abuse, such as threats. Children are not denied food or rest as punishment. Every attempt shall be made to be fair and equitable in the enforcement of our policies and discipline of students.

Parents are asked not to make disciplinary remarks, give instruction, or make suggestion for behavior to any child other than their own while at Bethlehem Child Care Center. Any remark of observation a parent has concerning another child should be made to the teacher. No inappropriate behavior by parents or children will be allowed on site.

We are always open to consideration of methods and techniques parents have found to be effective in correcting unacceptable behavior in their children.

If a child continually fails to respond to corrective measures used by the center, it may become necessary to dismiss the child from our program. Prior to such action, a Parent-Teacher-Director conference will be held to evaluate the child's behavior.

We do not allow the use of profanity in our building. When a child chooses to use profanity, a note is sent home to inform the parents of the problem. If profanity cannot be stopped within a reasonable time, it may become necessary to dismiss a child from the Center.

Parents are asked not to instruct their child to hit or bite another child. Children who hit or bite for any reason are disciplined. Hitting/biting incidents are documented, and a form is presented to the parent for signing which will be kept in the child's file. If the misbehavior does not stop within a reasonable amount of time (based upon the child's age), the child will be sent home. We ask that parents instruct their child to discuss problems with his/her teacher. Listed below

is the discipline/notification procedure. (This procedure is for 3 years old and older. Some cases may be younger.)

1. If a child hit/bites, a form is presented to the parent for notification/signature.
2. If a child hits/bites again, a form is presented to the parent for notification/signature, and he/she will be sent home and suspended from the Center for **a day**.
3. If a child hits/bites a third time, a form is presented to the parent for notification/signature, and he/she will be sent home and suspended from the Center for **a week**.
4. If a child hits/bites a fourth time, a form is presented to the parent for notification/signature, and he/she will be dismissed from the Center **permanently**.

*Note: Discipline will be determined based upon the child's age.

Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods in the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief in how children learn and develop values, this Center will practice the following discipline and behavior Management Policy:

We Do...

- Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- Reason with and set limits for the children.
- Model appropriate behavior for the children.
- Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
- Listen to the children.
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.

- Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires and feelings.
- Explain things to the children on their level.
- Use short supervised periods of “Time-out” as described in the next section.
- Stay consistent in our behavior management program.

We Do Not...

- Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
- Make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
- Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
- Deny food or rest as punishment.
- Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
- Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
- Place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
- Allow discipline of children by children.
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children’s parents, families or ethnic groups.

“Time-Out”

“Time-out is the removal of a child for a short period of time (2 to 5 minutes) from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The ‘time-out space is located away from classroom activity but within the teacher’s sight. During ‘time-out”, the child has the opportunity to think about the misbehavior which led to his/her removal from the group. After a brief interval of no more than 5 minutes, the teacher discusses the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. Then the child returns to the group. The incident is over, and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown the other children. If “time-out” at the level above is ineffective, the child will be sent to the Director’s office for supervised “time-out” for further discussion of the incident and the appropriate behavior desired. The

Director may request a parent-Teacher-Director conference if deemed necessary regarding the child's misbehavior.

Child Abuse and Neglect

By North Carolina Law, teachers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If such cases arise, the alerted staff member will report to the Center's Director. The director will then notify the Child Protective Services Unit of the Department of Social Services. The parents will not be given advance notification.

A Final Word...

Bethlehem Child Care Center takes pride in the care we provide for your young child. Due to an excellent child-staff ratio, you can be assured that your son or daughter receives much individual attention during the day. Our child care providers are carefully selected for their loving and responsible nature. Staff training helps them to grow in their understanding of the child. We know that you appreciate their hard work. Please know that we have an open-door policy and you can feel free to speak with us about any concerns that you may have! Thank you again for choosing Bethlehem Child Care!

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