



Located within
First Presbyterian Church
101 S. Decatur Street
Strasburg, PA 17579
(717)687-6030

Handbook 2026-27



Welcome

The Christian Education Committee and the staff of Great Beginnings Preschool welcome you and your child to our school. We are here to provide an opportunity for your child to develop socially in a Christian atmosphere.

Mission

Our mission is to provide opportunities for children to develop and grow through the use of creative learning experiences such as group activities, hands-on math, stories, music, art, language games, hands-on science, physical education, cooking and dramatic play.

Program Goals



- Create a nurturing environment in the classroom, and provide an emotional security.
- Instill values of love, compassion and respect for others.
- Provide opportunities for personal accomplishments.
- Provide for social enrichment through interaction with other children and adults, field trips, and class visitors.
- Develop fine and gross motor skills and coordination.
- Introduce basic educational concepts through play, books, music, science, art, field trips and physical education.
- Work closely with parents through daily contact, newsletter, emails, scheduled conferences, and encourage family members to participate in special events.
- A basic Christian curriculum is partnered along with the academic curriculum in the form of Bible stories, songs, etc. The children visit the pastor regularly. A prayer of thanks will be given at snack time and religious holidays will be observed.

Eligibility/Registration

To be eligible for admission to our preschool, children should be two-to five-years-old by the first of September. This is based on the cut-off date for enrollment in the Lampeter-Strasburg School District.

Priority will be given to First Presbyterian Church of Strasburg families and present preschool students in good financial standing. These families may register beginning the day preschool resumes in January and must apply by January 31 to be given priority over the general public. Families with unpaid tuition must bring their account up to date prior to registering for the following school year. The general public may apply beginning in February. Applications will be served on a first come, first served basis; however, when necessary, some spots may be reserved for families willing to aide in the classroom.

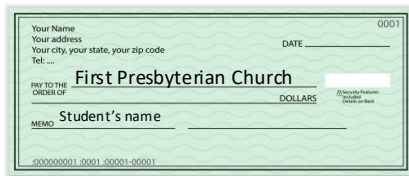
Children in the 3s and pre-K program should be fully potty-trained prior to the start of school. Potty-trained means your child is out of diapers and pull-ups, knows when they need to use the toilet, and does not need assistance with wiping or adjusting clothing.

Applications are provided to current families in our 2s and 3s programs prior to Christmas break and are available on the preschool website and in the church lobby. Parents of pre-K students who want a second year should ask for an application. There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee per student. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church.

Tuition

The tuition rate for the 2026-2027 school year is \$945 for Pre-K (\$105/mo), \$675 (\$75/mo) for the Tuesday/Thursday 2s or 3s classes, and \$630 (\$70/mo) for the Monday/Wednesday two-year-old program. If more than one family member is enrolled in the program at the same time, \$45 is deducted off the combined tuition. This sibling reduction ends this 2026-27 year.

Tuition payments can be paid in full, by semester (half-payments are made September 1 and February 1), or nine monthly payments can be made beginning in September. These are due the first of the month. You will receive monthly notices beginning in October.

A check form for First Presbyterian Church. The form includes fields for 'Your Name', 'Your address', 'Your city, your state, your zip code', 'tel.', 'DATE', 'First Presbyterian Church', 'PAY TO THE ORDER OF', 'DOLLARS', 'Student's name', and 'MEANS'. There is a small box for '0001' in the top right corner and a MICR line at the bottom: '0000000001 0001 00001-00001'.

Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and mail to the church or place your envelope in the preschool mailbox. Cash payments should NOT be placed in the mailbox but should be taken directly to the preschool director or the church secretary. If neither is available, please put your payment through the mail slot of the secretary's office door and inform the director of the payment so it can be transferred into the safe. Payments can be also made online via the preschool website. Please refer to your monthly paper tuition statements issued by the church's accountant for accurate information on balance.

Parents will be responsible for covering credit card fees and charges incurred by the church for cancellations or insufficient funds. If the preschool has to issue a refund for overpayment, any processing fees will not be reimbursed, as they are not received by the church.

Late Payments: Please pay your tuition payments when they are due. If your payments are more than two months late, your child will not be able to attend our preschool until your account is brought up to date, and accounts must be in good standing to register for the next year.

Teachers are not responsible for gathering tuition payments. Please do not give tuition to teachers, but put in the mailbox or give directly to the director or secretary or pay on-line.

Child Safety Policy

Because our church cares about the safety of all children who attend our preschool, all teachers and assistants must submit a Child Abuse History Clearance and a PA State Police Report of Criminal History Record. The church also requires FBI fingerprinting and mandatory reporter training. All staff working with children must also review the church's personal child safety policy. We take your child's safety very seriously.



As an additional security measure, education wing security doors will be locked from 9:15 until 11:30am and 12:45pm to 3pm. It may be locked at additional times, when children are present.

Great Beginnings Preschool Teachers will seek permission to share contact information via a class roster among families. Teachers will also get permission to take and share photographs among families. (These permissions are on our emergency forms.) Families who do not wish to have photos of their child shared will have this honored. Teachers are asked not to share photos on public forums, such as Facebook, without expressed permission from families. Whole group photos may be utilized for Preschool Sunday and advertisements. Parents who do not wish their children to be included should inform the preschool director.

Insurance

Great Beginnings at First Presbyterian Church of Strasburg provides coverage for our preschool children on a secondary or excess basis while they are on church property. This insurance coverage extends to field trips.

Health



If your child is ill with any of the following please DO NOT send him/her to school: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, a contagious disease (chicken pox), or a contagious condition (lice, impetigo, pinkeye, Covid, etc.) Your child should be symptom free and fever-free (<100.4), unmedicated, for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child is prescribed antibiotics, they should be on the antibiotics for a full 24 hours before returning to school or church activities. Please notify the teacher if your child develops any of the childhood issues such as lice, etc. You will be notified if your child becomes ill or has had an accident.

Snacks

A small snack and water will be provided for each child. Children with food limitations may need to supply their own snack. Check possible sign-up sheets to contribute bags of apples to the preschool or special snacks for holidays. The church is peanut free.



Birthdays

Birthday treats are welcomed. We love to celebrate all of the students. Please arrange the date with your child's teacher. We ask that the parent-provided, special treat be non-messy, peanut free, and in individual portions to share with the class, if desired. A non-food related treat is a great option! Summer birthdays will be celebrated as "pretend" birthdays or "half" birthdays as decided between the parent and teacher.



Arrival

Children in the two-year-old program will use the Fellowship Hall entrance. All other children will enter through the carport door. Parents must bring their children to the classroom door. Children should not arrive before 8:55 am or 12:25pm for the afternoon class. We request that families say goodbye at the door rather than entering the classroom to better assist with goodbyes and class structure.



Dismissal

Children will be dismissed at 11:30 for all morning classes and 3pm for PM Pre-K. Parents are requested to pick up their children on time. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, please notify the teacher with a note/text. Regular caregivers should be listed on the emergency form. All students will be picked up at their classroom doors. Children participating in the 2-year-old program should exit out of the Fellowship Hall doors, due to the location of their belongings.

Families with older siblings in morning kindergarten will have to make arrangements for overlapping pick-up times. Great Beginning Preschool teachers may be willing to stay late, but this must be individually arranged. Please know this is unpaid time, and we request you prioritize the most prompt arrival possible. Other options include picking-up your preschool student 10 minutes early, or asking another family to wait with your child (with written permission) until your arrival. This additional wait time could be done on the playground, for example.



School Closings



In case of snow or inclement weather, we will follow the Lampeter-Strasburg School District pattern for closing or delaying school. If the district is delayed for two hours, the morning preschool classes will run from 10:30 to noon (unless your teacher contacts you with other arrangements) and lunch bunch will be canceled. PM Pre-K will run as normal. If L-S is closed or conducting virtual instruction then the preschool classes are cancelled. Occasionally, the teacher may arrange a make-up class that works with most students' family schedules.

Transportation/Field Trips

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents or caregivers. Complete enrollment lists will be provided to help you set up car pools if needed. Teachers will coordinate with parents to chaperone field trips. Parents are responsible for installing car seats in chaperones' cars. It is possible that chaperones may be limited for field trips. Parents who do not chaperone acknowledge that



their children will be in another family's vehicle, under the supervision from a classmate's caregiver.

Clothing/Backpacks

Please dress your child for safety, comfort and activity.

We encourage sneakers and rubber-soled shoes since we are very active and go out to play daily, weather permitting. Flip flops and open-heel shoes may not be appropriate. Please mark all removable clothing—boots, sweaters, mittens, coats, etc. with your child's initials. We love when our students wear our preschool shirt on field trips or other special activities. We will try to send reminders home about these opportunities.



Backpacks are encouraged on a daily basis. A change of clothes is recommended. **Teachers do not go through backpacks. Please hand teachers necessary items/papers/etc.**

When weather becomes cool, please teach your child how to put on their coat, and send a coat daily. Classes go outdoors weather permitting, or inside recess occurs in the Fellowship Hall. In winter months, mittens are easier than fingered gloves.

Bulletin Boards/Newsletters



Important information and notices will be posted on the parent bulletin boards outside each of the preschool classrooms. A monthly newsletter will be distributed to keep you posted on upcoming events and your child's activities.

School Tour

Before school begins, we will hold group visitations at the church to offer parents and children a chance to meet the teacher and to become familiar with the classroom and church surroundings. Families may also arrange a school tour if they are interested in enrolling.



Conferences

Conferences for Pre-K will be scheduled during the winter months. Evaluations will be conducted and presented to help guide kindergarten preparedness, with the understanding that there are many months prior to the start of school. We have many parents of children with late spring to summer birthdays who choose a second year of pre-K to more adequately ready them for public school. Parents of children in the two and three year-old programs can request a meeting with the teacher.



Schedule



Monday/Wednesday/Friday

AM: Miss Heather

PM: Miss Eileen (12:30 - 3pm)



Tuesdays/Thursdays

Miss Rachel or Miss Brianna



Mondays/Wednesdays: Miss Brianna

Tuesdays/Thursdays: Miss Amy

Contacts

Heather Reynolds,
Preschool Director
hreynolds@stnaspres.org
717-617-9501

Brianna Davis
bdavis@stnaspres.org
814-227-5814

Amy Black
ablack@stnaspres.org
(717) 224-3036

Eileen Smith
esmith@stnaspres.org
(717) 824-9509

Rachel Ropp
rropp@stnaspres.org
(517) 416-7164

Lunch Bunch

Pre-K lunch bunch is an optional program. It will be held most Fridays from 11:30am - 12:30pm, starting October 16. This is open for both Pre-K classes. Sign-up sheets are located on Miss Heather's parent bulletin board, across from Room II. The cost is \$5/per student/per week, cash only. Caregivers are responsible for packing their students' PEANUT-FREE lunches. After eating lunch and cleaning up their personal areas, the children are invited to play on indoor recess toys. The lunch bunch period will generally end with one or two movement songs after putting away the recess equipment. Lunch bunch is a very popular program! PM Pre-K kids can enter the preschool hallway once security doors are open for morning dismissal.

Two adults, generally one of the pre-K teachers and a teacher's aide, will be supervising each lunch bunch session.

Questions? Ask Heather Reynolds -
hreynolds@straspres.org or 717-617-9501



Calendar 2026-27

September

1	First Tuition Payment Due
14-18	FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES ENDS A HALF-HOUR EARLY, 9am – 11am
14	First day of school for Monday/Wednesday 2s
15	First day of school for Tuesday/Thursday 2s and 3s
16	First day of school for pre-K

October

1	Tuition Due
9&12	Preschool closed, Fall Break

November

2	Tuition Due
3	Preschool closed, Election Day*
6	Preschool closed
25-30	Preschool closed: Thanksgiving Vacation

December

1	Tuition Due
21-31	Preschool closed due to Christmas Vacation

January

1	Closed, New Year's Day
4	Tuition Due, registration opens for current/church families
15, 18	Preschool closed, Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February

1	Tuition Due, registration opens for public
12, 15	Preschool closed due to Presidents' Day

March

2	Tuition Due
26, 29	Preschool closed: Easter Vacation

April*

1	Tuition Due
16	Preschool closed

May

1	Last payment Tuition Due
19	Last day of school for Monday/Wednesday 2s
20	Last day of school for Tuesday/Thursday classes (2s and 3s)*
21	Last day of school for pre-K

*Because First Presbyterian Church of Strasburg is a voting precinct, preschool classes will not be held election day.