



June 2020

RE: Health & Safety Measures

Dear In the Beginning Preschool Families,

We hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. While many things have changed, your children's safety, development and growth in these tender years has stayed steadfast and strong in our hearts and minds. We are working towards re-opening the Preschool, even though we do not know yet exactly what it will look like, or when this will happen.

The Staff, the Preschool Advisory Team (PAT) and Faith Church leadership are working together to create a safe and warm environment that enable us to continue to fulfill our Mission: "to provide a safe, loving, Christian environment to guide the emotional, social, spiritual, and educational development of children." At the very essence of our mission is your children's health and safety.

To help us prepare for the upcoming school year, the Director and Treasurer are participating in regular conversations/briefings with educational leaders to discuss the options for the re-opening of schools. These discussions are facilitated by the Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS) in partnership with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Department of Children, Family and Youth (DCFY) along with WA State Public Health Departments and Center of Disease Control (CDC), and the United Methodist Church Conference (UMCC).

We are planning on making the following important enhancements to our existing program procedures that meet or exceed the recommended best practices that have arisen out of our conversations with educational and health officials. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Maintaining hand sanitizer stations for the Sanctuary and in Wesley building classrooms
- Intensive, regular cleaning and all spaces used by the Preschool including common area rest rooms
- Staff and family's wellness screenings each morning before work and arriving at Preschool including Wellness/temperature checks of all staff and students upon arrival
- Staggering the arrival and dismissal times of classes so that only one class is being picked up or dropped off at a time
- Arranging the recess schedule to limit the number of classes interacting on both inside and outside recess
- Continuing our regular hand washing routines
- Wearing of masks or face shields
- Installing a plastic divider between the sinks in the lady's restroom in the Sanctuary building
- Rearranging classroom furniture to increase space between student desks/tables when possible
- Rotating specialists to the classrooms on scheduled days
- Encouraging the use of outside areas as often as possible and as weather allows

- Classroom supplies, Specialist and recess resources/equipment will be divided up for each class to limit cross-contamination
- Prohibiting parents and outside providers from entering the school building
- Suspending all field trips and large group gatherings

In the most recent conversations, OSPI has stated that returning to school in our traditional, on-site, in person format **is not a viable option** without dramatic changes of community transmission or a vaccine. Based on this, we do not yet know what our Preschool will look like in the fall. However, we do know that all of us, want nothing more than to allow your children to continue to learn and grow at our Preschool. Therefore, we have been working hard to create a variety of re-opening models that will adjust and change as we obtain more information. Unfortunately, even the best plans will have to change as facts and circumstances change. Our current re-opening models include a hybrid of in-class and Cooperative Learning at home, Cooperative Learning only, and staggering start dates for classes by age until the Department of Health lifts the community restrictions. We are considering several options at this time and the decisions made will also have to factor in enrollment numbers. We do not maintain a large operating surplus. We try each year to charge tuition that covers our expenses. Therefore, as we examine the various re-opening models, we will have to consider how the models allow for us to continue to pay the teachers and other necessary expenses. We will have an updated Tuition & Withdrawal Policy that will be provided before the start of the school year.

**A little about how we financially operate:** We are financially separate from Faith Church and do not derive income from them. We are a Christian non-profit that has always maintained little to zero net-income by years end with charging fees/tuition that cover only our expenses.

At this time, we are not yet asking for tuition for the 2020-2021 school year since we still find ourselves in the planning stages for next year. We will likely begin collecting tuition for next year in late July/early August.

As we continue to consider options for Fall, we would greatly appreciate your input. **Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey see link below.** Our goal is to shape our program to best fit the needs of our families, while keeping your children's health and safety as our number one priority. **To make these decisions using the very latest information, a second survey will be emailed to you in July.** We understand this situation for you and the recommendations from our local government leaders are ever changing. Your thoughts and concerns will be instrumental in planning our program for the new school year. Click on the link below. The survey closes on Friday, June 19.

**ACTION ITEM:** <https://www.mysurveygizmo.com/s3/5628089/Return-to-Preschool-Part-1>

At the very heart of our Preschool is our commitment to create an environment where students and staff are safe, loved and nurtured through God's grace. Thank you for helping us re-open and for your continued support and patience.

Stay safe and stay well.

Grace and Peace,

Kathryn Aitcheson, Staff and the Preschool Advisory Team