

Grace Promise Preschool

Where children grow with nature.



**PROMISE
PRESCHOOL**

Grace United Methodist Church
501 Pennsylvania Ave.
Warren, Pa. 16345

Our Approach

Grace Promise Preschool is focused on the whole child, meeting each where they are and providing ample opportunities for exploration, self-discovery, and growth. With a focus on outdoor and child-led activities, we give each child authentic experiences, encourage them to learn, and foster a sense of wonder and belonging in the community and the natural world.

Open-ended activities that allow children to choose and self-regulate are central to what we offer. To master essential 'school skills', children must first master their own bodies and minds. We spend a significant amount of time outdoors, on unstructured activities with loose parts, and modeling creative ways to learn.

For young children, learning happens through play. We will work and play with your children to support their growth through enriching materials and activities, both indoors and out. Physical, emotional and social development are as important as academic development for kindergarten readiness. Being able to balance confidently, run without falling, manipulate objects, manage their emotions, and communicate with and listen to other children and adults gives children confidence in themselves.

Once children feel confident and comfortable in their own bodies, they naturally want to learn skills such as counting, colors, sequencing, following directions, and writing. Whether learning sizes by sorting pinecones or drawing letters in the dirt, we hope to balance the body work and the mind work in a safe and caring space to help your children discover their best selves.

Our Goals

- Encourage individualism and creativity by offering indoor and outdoor experiences supplemented by books, art materials, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc. to instill a love of learning.
- Develop pre-reading and pre-math skills through play, both structured and child-led.
- Encourage growth and enrichment in perceptual and motor skills through various activities.
- Cultivate human relationships by interacting with other children and teachers, taking responsibility, and communicating clearly.
- Stimulate social and emotional growth and help children learn self-regulation and how to resolve conflicts on their own.
- Stimulate language development through conversation and reading.



Who We Are

Jen Lynds, Lead Teacher at Grace Promise Preschool, has been involved in early childhood education since high school, when she would use study hall time to volunteer in kindergarten classrooms. She taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School in addition to starting the K-Kids Service Club. As a preschool teacher, she worked at the YMCA and has been a teacher at Grace Promise Preschool since 2021. She lives in Warren with her husband, Scott and has three children, two cats, and two chickens to round out the family.

Sarah Hatfield, Teacher, has worked with children for over 20 years, at nature centers in three states, an educational farm, an outdoor recreation facility, and a preschool/day care. She has training in early childhood education, the benefits of play, and the health and safety of young children. She is a 20+-year resident of Russell, Pennsylvania, and has a small homestead with chickens, turkeys, pigs, and gardens.

What to Expect

The school day instruction starts at 8:45 a.m. and pick up is at 11:30 a.m. Classes are held Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. We provide a block of play time, a snack, and a structured activity time that matches the season. This may be cooking, making leaf prints, testing winter insulation materials, or planting seeds.

Whenever possible, we go outside to the Sky and Tree Classroom, an outdoor space owned by the Grace United Methodist Church, kitty corner from the church on Prospect Street. For outdoor time, the students may be all together rather than split into age groups. This promotes empathy in the older students for the younger students, and gives the younger students role models.

Please dress your child in proper outdoor attire for the weather. We will provide links for recommended outerwear in each season, where to acquire it, and items that we can provide.

When the weather is such that we opt to stay inside (thunderstorms, pouring rain, high winds, low temperatures, etc.), we will provide active time in the gym, classroom, or one of the other spaces in the church. Movement and activity are essential for preschoolers, with a recommended minimum of three hours of activity per day.

Ensuring that they get at least one of those hours with us while they are at school makes for happy and healthy children. Additionally, using different spaces exposes them to new spaces and familiarizes them with the idea of moving from one space to another and the behaviors that go with it, such as being in a line, inside voices, and sharing space with others.

How to prepare

Wear: Wear play clothes! We enjoy spending as much time outside as possible, this is important. Closed-toed shoes are strongly recommended.

Send:

- Send two spare sets of play clothes with your child, including socks and underwear, in ziploc bags labeled with their name. These will stay at school until needed. We will bag dirty or wet clothes and send them home and let you know when we need more.
- Weather-related items as needed. Snow and rain play are part of the outdoor time, and we will check the forecast and communicate what might be needed for the week.
- Make sure your child has a spare set of footwear, if not two. Mud boots are a great idea! These can stay at school or go home. If you do outdoor time at home, you might need them!
- Sunscreen and insect repellent at seasons demand.
- A backpack for them to carry their communication folders and any other items home.

Share:

- Any changes to a child's health information, living situation, or emergency contacts.
- Any changes in your child's behavior (reverting to baby talk, reverting to pull-ups, etc.).
- Methods for addressing behaviors so we may reinforce what you're teaching.

Link to outerwear and examples of in what we want people to dress their kids.

Sample Schedule

Arrival: between 8:35 - 8:45 a.m. children arrive, place their items in their designated space and engage in a self-selected activity (blocks, books, dramatic play, etc.)

Gathering: at 8:45 a.m. children and teachers gather to greet each other, go over the plan for the day (inside or outside), share any news, and introduce any topics.

Lesson and Themed Activity: after gathering, teachers present a short lesson and new materials with which children are then permitted to interact and explore. (Example: lesson that different trees have different shaped and colored leaves; read a book about trees and leaves; provide real and pressed leaves, leaf rubbing plates, leaf blocks, leaf stamps, tree puzzles, etc. as manipulatives in addition to the regular classroom items.)

Snack: around 10:00 a.m. groups will come together for snack

Outdoor or Active Time: After snack, children will prepare to go outdoors to the Sky and Tree Classroom if weather permits. We build in time for clean-up and transition as needed. If weather is inclement, we will do active play in the gym or one of the classrooms.

Arrival and Departure

Morning arrival is 8:35 - 8:45 a.m. Pick-up is between 11:20 and 11:45 a.m. The elevator door at the parking lot is unlocked from 8:30 - 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 - 11:45 a.m.. Please notify the teacher if you are going to be late for either arrival or departure.

All the outside doors in the church are locked during the day apart from arrival and departure times. The only door that remains open is the elevator door on the parking lot. Access to the offices, classrooms, and any other gathering is through the elevator, through which you can reach the office on the first floor and they can call the school or let you in depending on circumstances.

Arrival and departure procedure may look different for the 2025-26 year than it has in the past, as we are in the process of evaluating classroom spaces. We will notify you prior to school starting the location of the classrooms and the process for accessing them.

Tuition, Fees, and Cancellations

Tuition and Fees

Annual tuition is \$900, with a monthly rate of \$105. There is a one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$20 due with application. See registration page for details.

Annual tuition payment is due by the first Thursday of the school year. Monthly payments are due on the first day of class each month. A one-time \$15 materials fee is due with the first payment. You may pay via cash, credit, or check (made to Grace Promise Preschool) at the church office. We are working on a Venmo or other similar payment method, so check back. We understand that life takes unexpected turns, so if you will be late on a payment, please reach out to us to discuss options.

Cancellations

We follow Warren County Public Schools for closures due to weather. If there is a **2-hour-delay**, we will still operate and attendance is at your discretion.

If a teacher is ill or out unexpectedly and we can't find a substitute, we will notify families as soon as possible of the cancellation.

Registration and Requirements

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration applications are due by August 1. A non-refundable \$20 is required with your application.

Grace Promise Preschool is designed for children ages three through five. Children must be 3 on or before July 1. Groups are together for some activities, and separated for others. Ms. Jen will lead the 4/5-year-old group and Miss Sarah will lead the 3/4-year-old group when they are in separate groups.

We require proof of immunization for all children attending. This may be a printed copy of the records, a photo of the baby book, have the doctor's office fax the record to 814-723-6137 or email it to promisepreschool@myyahoo.com. Please include this with your application or, at the latest, one week prior to the first day of class.

All children must be toilet trained.

You can find the registration form at graceumcwarrenpa.com. There is a printable version, which you can also pick up in the church office, and an online version, which you can fill out and return via email to promisepreschool@myyahoo.com.

Communication and Sharing

We want your child to thrive at preschool. You are an essential part of making that happen. If you want to visit your child at school, or shadow a day, we can make arrangements for that after your child has transitioned and understands the routine of the school, usually a month after the start of school.

If you or we have a concern or suggestion, a parent/teacher conference might be necessary. This will allow a private setting away from other students to talk about concerns or needs and solutions or options. We appreciate compliments and knowing what works well for your child and you, too!

We will regularly share updates about class activities on social media, and touch base with parents about their child's growth and learning. We encourage parents to share with us, as well.

Facebook page: Grace Promise Preschool

Website: <https://www.graceumcwarrenpa.com/preschool>

Instagram, Blue Sky, and more: Stay tuned!

Contact Us: We want you to contact us anytime you feel the need to do so, for good, ugly, big, and little things! During the school day we minimize cell phone use, but in an emergency, please call cell phones first and then the church office. Contact the office, send an email, or message online if it is not an emergency.

Jen Lynds, Lead Teacher: 814-723-7115, lyndsfamily@yahoo.com

Sarah Hatfield, Teacher: 814-688-8889, sarah_hat@yahoo.com

Church office: 814-723-9440, promisepreschool@myyahoo.com

