

The Preschool and Parent's Day-Out Program is an extension of Hermitage United Methodist Church's ministry to its members and to the community.

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

## **2024-2025**

Hermitage United Methodist Church  
205 Belinda Drive  
Hermitage, Tennessee 37076

615-883-3918 Church  
615-883-3938 School  
615-883-4085 Fax  
[www.humc.org](http://www.humc.org)

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### **PURPOSE**

The HUM School program reflects the church's concern for growing children and their families. The school will endeavor to provide an educational program designed to meet the developmental needs to the child. It shall strive to provide the highest quality education and child care, emphasizing growth in all areas-physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual-in a loving Christian environment.

HUM School is governed by the HUM School Advisory Board. The Board is composed of HUM School parents, professionals in education, health care, business, and church representatives. The Board serves at the will of the Hermitage United Methodist Church Council and under its direction.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

HUM School is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for children ages 12 months through 5 years of age. The HUM School offers a Parent's Day Out program for children ages 12 months through 2 years. Children may attend this program two days a week on Monday/Wednesday's or Tuesday/Thursday's. Our Preschool program is for children who are 3 years through 5 years of age. Children may attend this program on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or on Tuesday and Thursday.

Please bring your child no earlier than 8:55 a.m. and pick him/her up no later than 2:05 p.m. The time the staff has before and after school is spent planning and preparing for the coming day. We need this time to do a good job helping your children grow and develop.

HUM School follows a modified calendar. Parents can review our school year calendar on line at the Hermitage United Methodist Church website under HUM School. You may print this for future reference. Parents will also receive a HUM School monthly calendar of events and newsletter near the first day of each month during the school year. HUM School has a closed Facebook page for parents and also a text messaging system in place.

HUM School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted in any indoor area and it is not permitted on the playground. Any outdoor area accessible during the time the children are present is smoke-free as well. Smoking is not permitted within 50 feet of our school's entrance.

## **POLICIES**

### **Registration**

Eligibility for enrollment shall be granted without discrimination in regard to sex, color, creed, disability, political belief, or national origin. A child shall be eligible for enrollment provided the program can meet the needs of the child as determined by the Director and the HUM School Advisory Board.

In applying for enrollment, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Children who are currently enrolled in the program.
2. Siblings of children who are currently enrolled in the program.
3. Children of members of Hermitage United Methodist Church. One must be an active member for at least six months or more at time of enrollment.
4. All others based upon first filed preference.

A non-refundable registration fee is required with each application for enrollment in HUM School. Registration is in-person only.

### **Records**

Upon acceptance in the HUM School program, each child must have the following forms in his/her file. Complete parent packs can be found online by going to Hermitage United Methodist and go to HUM School.

1. Application form
2. Current Immunization Record-updated as new immunizations are given
  - a. For children under 30 months of age, a health examination as well
  - b. For foreign born children, proof of negative TB skin test per DHS law

Children must be immunized in accordance with current Dept. of Health guidelines unless exempt for religious/medical reasons. If not received in a timely manner your child could be asked to stay at home until we receive the immunization or the exemption form.

3. Child's Developmental Health History Form
4. Parent Signature Sheet
5. Emergency Card

### **Change of Address**

Parents are to notify the school of changes in home address, home phone number, or work number so we may reach parents in case of emergency.

### **Tuition and Fees**

The HUM School Advisory Board will set the tuition amount annually. Tuition is due and payable on the first of the month. If not paid by the tenth of the month, a remainder is sent to parents. A late fee is charged if tuition is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. The late fee is \$20.00. Payment that is overdue by more than one month without special arrangements with the Director will result in removal of the child from the program for the following month. HUM School reserves the right to remove that child from the program and he/she may not register to enroll in the program again unless all outstanding debts are paid.

Tuition may be dropped off in the office or you can leave your payment in the black mailbox located right inside the doors of both the South Wing and Kirby Buildings.

Tuition is determined on an annual basis. For your convenience, the annual tuition amount is payable in ten (10) equal monthly installments. The amounts represent the monthly installments for the respective days per week that your child attends HUM School.

Enrollment at HUM School is for the entire school year. If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child after the opening of school, a **two week notice** is required.

An annual Registration Fee is determined annually by the HUM School Advisory Board. The Registration Fee is due at time of enrollment. This fee is nonrefundable in the event of early withdrawal.

An annual Supply Fee is determined annually by the HUM School Advisory Board. The Supply Fee is due on the child's first day of attendance. This fee is nonrefundable in the event of early withdrawal.

A returned check fee will be assessed by the banking institution used by HUM School and will be due upon notice of a returned check.

If your child leaves the program for a period of time, you are still expected to pay tuition or your child will forfeit their spot.

## **Scholarships**

Please note that the HUM School has a Scholarship Fund when monies are available. If, at any time, you find that you are having a temporary financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness, loss of job etc. please contact the school director before your payments are in arrears. We can then discuss whether possible assistance is available. If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund, please speak with the Director.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Upon arrival and dismissal, parent, guardian, or other designated adult must sign in and sign out the child. Children must be accompanied to the restroom for toileting and hand washing then accompany the child to their classroom and be signed in.

Children will be released only to parents or other persons designated on the child's HUM School application. A child will not be released to any person whose behavior suggests that he/she may place the child in immediate risk. The child will be retained in the HUM School Director's office until another person on the child's application can arrive. If no one on the application can be contacted, Metro police will be called for assistance.

## **Late Pick Up Fee**

If a parent is late in picking up a child, the child will be taken to the school office to wait for the parent to arrive. A fee of \$25.00 will be added if pickup is from 2:05-2:10 p.m. Afterwards the charge will then be \$5.00 per minute. A notice will be sent via registered mail after the fourth late pick up. After five late fees have been assessed, the Director may remove the child from the program.

## **Closures**

It is HUMS intention to be open and provide care for all scheduled days, but inclement weather, natural/national disaster, or major building issues may disrupt service from time to time. In the case of closures, we will send a remind text message and post to our Facebook Hum School Parent Group. If HUMS is closed for emergencies or inclement weather, parents will still be responsible for tuition payments.

Excluding unforeseen emergency circumstances, 24-hour notice will be given for unscheduled closings.

When Metro Davidson County Schools are closed due to snow or inclement weather, HUM School will also be closed. If Metro Davidson County Schools dismiss early due to bad weather, HUM School will also dismiss early. If Metro Davidson County Schools open late, HUM School will open on time. Snow Days will not be made up and there will be no refunds. The rare instances when all secondary roads are clear in Hermitage and surrounding areas after several days (and Davison County is only still closed because of snow/ice in the northern part of the county near Joelton) we could decide to open. A remind text message would be sent out to inform you if this were to happen.

## **Safety**

Our staff strives to maintain a safe and healthy environment for your child. We would appreciate you keeping the following safety procedures in mind:

- We ask that parents not leave valuables or children unattended in their vehicles when they are dropping off or picking up.
- Children will be released only to parents or adults authorized on emergency forms. Written permission is required for children to leave with someone other than a parent or authorized adult.
- A parent, guardian or other designated adult must sign the child in and out daily upon arrival and dismissal.
- The school doors will not be attended to by a staff member after 9:15 a.m. Parents who plan to come late should notify the school office of this prior.
- The school doors will be attended by a staff member at 1:45 p.m. for pick up until 2:05 p.m. Parents who arrive after 2:05 p.m. should enter through the South Wing Building. and come to the HUM School office to pick up your child. Please call 615-883-3938 to let us know you are here.
- Children will not be released to anyone whose behavior may place a child/children in immediate danger.
- HUM School is a smoke-free/ environment and guns are not permitted on the grounds or in the building of the school at any time.

## **Security**

HUM School is licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services and is inspected yearly by the State Fire Marshall, Health Department, and the Department of Human Services. All doors to the South Wing Building and the Kirby Building are locked and supervised. Anyone who enters the building is subject to verification of identity and purpose in the building. If you arrive late or pick up early, you must enter through the South Wing Building. The church office will no longer let parent's or visitors in through entrance 1.

## **Disaster Plan**

DHS, our licensing agent, requires a disaster plan for all child care facilities. A copy of our current plan is located in the HUM School office. We encourage families to stop and familiarize yourself with the disaster plan and the locations we might possible use in the event of a disaster. We will make every effort to inform parents via text message/email system as to the location of the children but in some emergency situations technology is nonoperational and time is of the essence so this might not be possible. If we have to leave our building, we will go next door to McKendree Village. If we have to leave the area, we will go to Dodson Chapel @ HUMC on Andrew Jackson Parkway. This plan has also been put on the website for you to review.

## **Accidents and Injuries**

First aid equipment is maintained in the classrooms and HUM School office. An injury report is kept on file in the office. The Director or Teacher will contact a parent whenever a head injury occurs, an injury requiring additional medical assistance occurs, or if a child is inconsolable. In all other cases, only an injury report is sent home to the parents.

## Illness

State laws mandate that we are unable to care for children who are ill. If your child has a temperature exceeding 100 degrees and/or has one or more of the following symptoms listed, he/she should stay at home. If the temperature and/or symptoms occur after you leave your child at school, we will notify you so you can pick up your child.

### Symptoms:

- Blisters on face, scalp or body indicating the possibility of chicken pox.
- Two or more bowel movements which are atypical for the child, indicating the possibility of infectious diarrhea. Children cannot return to school until diarrhea subsides without medication.
- A blotchy rash on the stomach and back or fine red rash all over the body indicating the possibility of measles or scarlet fever.
- Discharge from the eyes or crusted eyelids indicating the possibility of infectious pink eye.
- Listless, lethargic behavior, lack of appetite, refuses to eat or drink, extreme irritability or clearly unusual behavior for the child which persists over time indicating the likelihood of oncoming illness.
- Vomiting.
- Body or head lice/nits. Once a child is infected, he/she may return to school with a doctor's or health department's certificate stating the child is free of lice/nits.
- Heavy nasal discharge or constant cough indicating symptoms of a cold.
- Any combination of the above symptoms listed.

When children are ill, their immune responses may be lowered, leaving them vulnerable to other illnesses. Additionally, when children come to school ill, other children and staff are exposed to illness thus creating an unhealthy environment.

**Children should be symptom free and fever free without the aid of a fever reducer for 24 hours before returning to school. Children who are sent home but have been considered by their pediatrician to be non-contagious must still be symptom free and fever free without the aid of a fever reducer for 24 hours before returning to school.**

If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease such as chicken pox, impetigo, covid, etc. please inform the office so we can alert other parents in the classroom.

When a child becomes ill at school, we will notify the parents and the child will be cared for until parent arrives to pick up the child. Please have a backup plan for your child's care when he/she is ill.

## Medicine

Medicine prescribed for life saving conditions such as diabetes, asthma, anaphylactic allergic reaction by your child's physician will be administered by the school staff with parent's written authorization and a medical note from the child's physician. The medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's name and accompanied by a medication authorization from signed by the parent with clear instructions for administration. Medication forms are available in the HUM School office. The medication will be stored out of the reach of children but easily accessible to the school staff.

## **Parent-School Communication**

Prior to the opening of school, parents will be given the opportunity to meet with teachers and visit the classroom during Open House. Parents must bring their child to acquaint him/her with their new classroom and teacher.

Teachers welcome the opportunity to confer with parents whenever possible. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be offered three times a year for both the 3 year old's and 4 year old's. We will gladly set up additional conferences at your request.

Please check the bulletin board located outside each classroom and watch for a monthly newsletter for parent information and classroom activities. Be sure to also check the HUM School bulletin board located across from the HUM School office and in the Kirby Building by the girl's bathroom for more Parent-School information.

Please join our Facebook Parent Page and Remind Text Messaging System. This is a very important way to stay informed. You were given information on how to join when you registered. Let us know if you misplaced that information.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to participate in the activities of the school. To help keep HUM School tuition and fees affordable, we will have fundraisers during the year. Traditional events include two children's consignment sales in the fall and spring each year. Parent volunteers are vital to the success of these fundraisers. We strongly urge one member of each family work a 4 hour shift. The money raised from these sales helps to keep tuition costs down and to purchase much needed equipment and make improvements as needed.

## **Staff**

Our HUM School staff are chosen for their training, experience, dedication, character, and love for children. Staff members also maintain current certification in First Aid and CPR. They are expected to continue to grow personally and professionally through workshops, training events, on-line training, professional organizations and reading throughout the year.

## **Discipline and Classroom Guidance/Expulsion policy**

The goals of the classroom management program used at HUM School are to teach children to evaluate and make choices, to take responsibility for their own actions, to recognize and express their feelings appropriately, and to be considerate and fair in solving problems with others. Our classroom management program is based on the recognition that a stimulating, balanced, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate learning environment; an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring; and positive teacher attitudes and expectations will encourage cooperation and prevent most behavior problems. The following procedures are observed at HUM School to ensure the safety and welfare of all children and to help teachers in each classroom be consistent in setting limits and using techniques that keep all classroom members safe while conveying the values of respect, trust, honesty and caring for others:

- Establish a climate of trust.
- Communicate positively and clearly.
- Prevent inappropriate behavior with redirection and gentle reminders.
- Offer choices.
- Praise efforts and accomplishment.
- Ignore minor annoyances.
- Use natural and logical consequences.
- Assist with verbal problem solving, and conflict resolution.

When a child breaks a limit that cannot be dealt with using preventative techniques, logical or natural consequences or conflict resolution, he/she is asked to leave the activity and have a very brief time out or is re-directed. The child will never be humiliated, isolated, or made to feel badly about himself or herself. Additionally, discipline will never involve food, toileting, or rest.

At HUM School we try to manage the behavior of children as they grow and learn in positive ways. Teachers observe and record observations of the children's activities. They also compare their growth to appropriate developmental checklists. When we see a pattern of behavior that is harmful to self or others for which these techniques do not seem to be working we will hold a conference with the parents to share information on resources available with the expectation that the parents will use the resources for assessments and intervention for the child as applicable to the problem. The parents, teacher, director, and ideally a representative from the resource will meet to discuss the assessments, interventions needed, and prognosis of progress. HUM School will maintain confidentiality of all information shared at these meetings and it will not be shared outside of the team. As a result of this meeting, in collaboration with parents, outside specialist, and HUM School staff, a plan of intervention will be mutually agreed upon and begun in the classroom. After a reasonable period of time, the child's progress will be assessed. If the behaviors of concern are remitting, the team will continue efforts to make progress. When a child's harmful behavior does not change after these conscientious efforts, the family will be asked to find another program. Other options shall be considered prior to expulsion, such as but not limited to reducing the number of days or amount of time the child may attend, or if applicable, referrals to the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for early learning (CSEFEL), Early Intervention System, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Hum School shall develop a planned transition for each child to another program if expulsion must occur. Reasons for expulsion shall be maintained and reported to the Department of Human Services annually.

### **Toileting Policies for 3–4-year-olds**



Please remember that per HUM School policy, children must be toilet trained to enroll in the three and four-year-old program as diapering facilities are not available in the Kirby Building. The director will consider any special needs of any child.

## **Outdoor Play**

Per DHS licensing regulations, children must be provided the opportunity for outdoor play when the temperature range, after adjustment for wind chill and heat index, is between 32 degrees and 95 degrees Fahrenheit and not raining.

When cold or hot weather is present, the length of time outside will be adjusted to the conditions and the age of the children. Children should come to school dressed in simple, washable play clothes suitable for current weather conditions. Clothing should be appropriate to the season. For outside play in cold weather, a coat, mittens, and a cap are sufficient extra clothing. A seasonal change of clothes should be stored in your child's classroom. For safety's sake shoes must be worn at all times on the playground, preferably tennis shoes.

## **Labeling**

Please mark clothes including coats, sweaters, mittens, and caps, all bottles, cups, dishes, and lunch boxes with your child's name.

## **Movies and Videos**

HUM School teachers occasionally show videos that relate to the instructional theme of the week. The title of these videos and the date to be shown will be noted on the monthly calendar/newsletter sent to parents. Only "G" rated videos will be shown. Parents will be asked to sign a permission form when movies are shown.

## **Cots and Naptime**

The children rest on Angeles® Cots. These cots are made of Greenguard Sof-Tex fabric and are disinfected by our staff. A standard fitted crib sheet is needed to cover the cot. You can purchase these at Walmart or any store that sells baby items. Please send a small blanket to cover your child. Please do not send sleeping bags or large pillows. If your child has something special he/she likes to have at rest time, it is fine to bring it. The sheet, blanket and special item are to come in your child's back pack daily and washed over the weekend. Please make sure all items are labeled well.

Children in a program of fewer than 6 hours are not required to take naps. As children reach the age of 4, they get to a point where the majority of them do not nap. Taking that into consideration, our 4s will have a quiet time sitting on the rugs with a book, puzzle or their journals with the lights out for a period of 30 minutes.

## Lunch

Your child should bring his/her lunch each day that includes the following items:

- **Milk** (4 oz.)
- **Meat or Meat Substitute** (1 ½ oz.) Excellent suggestions: Cheese, Peanut Butter, Tuna, Chicken, Hotdog quartered, Egg, Deli Meat, Pepperoni
- **Bread Product** (1/2 slice or 1 of each) Excellent suggestions: Bread, Roll, Biscuit, 5 Crackers, Muffins, Cornbread
- **Two fruits or One vegetable and one fruit** (1/2 cup) Excellent suggestions: Carrots, Mini Tomatoes quartered, Cucumber Slices, Pepper Slices, Orange, Banana, Grapes quartered, Green Beans, Strawberries, Pineapple
- Utensils if needed
- Napkin
- Ice Pack to keep items cold

Please do not send items that need to be microwaved. To help prevent choking hazards, please cut all grapes, mini tomatoes, hot dogs, etc. in fourths. Children under the age of three should not be served nuts, popcorn or raisins.

We encourage families to check with the child's teacher at the beginning of the year to see if the class has any friends with peanut/peanut butter allergies so you can plan your child's lunch accordingly.

Please do not send chips, cookies or candy in their lunch boxes. We must adhere to very strict guidelines from the State.

## Snacks

A simple snack of cheerios, pretzels, goldfish, cheese-its, or crackers and juice/water is provided in the morning.

## Birthdays

We are happy to celebrate birthdays at HUM School. Let your child's teacher know if you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school.

## **Holidays**

At HUM School, we celebrate the traditional holidays of Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter.

## **Observation**

Written permission by parents for observation of children is required by HUM School for any non-agency staff. The HUM School Director periodically observes children as well as the staff throughout the year.

## **Physical Activity Policies through the Gold Sneaker Initiative**

**Policy 1:** Children attending less than a full day program shall be offered a proportional amount of physical activity time as required by TDHS licensure rules. Physical activity for children ages three years and older must be a balance of structured and unstructured play, both indoors and outdoors (weather permitting) utilizing age appropriate activities.

**Policy 2:** Providers shall provide education (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources etc.) to families twice each year that addresses the importance of limiting screen time according to current American Academy of Pediatrics policy and the development of a Family Media Plan.

**Policy 3:** Children shall not be allowed to remain sedentary or to sit passively for more than 60 minutes continuously, except for scheduled rest or naptime. Childcare director/owner shall take Go NAP SACC Self Assessments (Infant and Child Safety Physical Activity & Screen Time) to compare their physical activity practices to best practice standards.

**Policy 4:** Childcare providers must ensure physical activity is a positive experience for children and that it is never used negatively or to control behavior.

## **Nutrition Policies through the Gold Sneaker Initiative**

**Policy 5:** Providers shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including breastfeeding. All educators shall be trained to: advocate for breastfeeding, safely prepare breastmilk for feeding, feed infants according to their individual needs, and store expressed milk properly. Providers shall publicly display their support for breastfeeding infants and mothers by posting signage or other publicly facing information (i.e., participate in Breastfeeding Welcomed Here through the TN Department of Health or Team Nutrition resources for new and expectant moms about breastfeeding).

**Policy 6:** Childcare educators shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including adequate time for snack and meal consumption and age appropriate portion size.

**Policy 7:** The childcare provider campus shall be free of all tobacco and tobacco-related products, including smoking, smokeless and electronic products. The campus is inclusive of all vehicles used to

transport enrolled children, all outdoor spaces, all indoor locations whether or not children are present. Childcare employees and volunteers may not use tobacco or tobacco-related products while off-campus at provider related activities (i.e. fieldtrips, walks, and all other outdoor activities). Employees who use tobacco products while off campus are required to change clothes and wash hands thoroughly prior to interacting with children. "No Smoking" signs shall be posted conspicuously at each childcare provider entrance, as required by State law.

### **HUM Advisory Board**

The HUM School program is an extension of the educational, pastoral, and missionary ministries of the Hermitage United Methodist Church and operates in cooperation with the policies and guidelines of the Hermitage United Methodist Church, but under the control of the HUM Advisory Board, and subject to approval by the Hermitage United Methodist Church Leadership. The Board is made up of parents, church members, and church staff members.

### **Community Resources Available to Parents**

If you find that you are in need of assistance, please look over the following list for resources available. If you have any questions or need help in gaining assistance from one of the resources listed, please see the Director.

Health Care for Wilson County Residents	Charis Health Center	615-773-5785
Immunizations and Flu Shots	Metro Health Dept.	615-340-5616
Health Insurance	Cover TN (Cover Kids)	1-866-COVERTN
Food Assistance	Second Harvest (Donelson)	615-889-8568
Food Assistance and Utilities Help	Hermitage UMC	615-883-3918
Library Services (Internet Access, Story Hour)	Hermitage Branch	615-880-3951
Free Children's Books	Books from Birth	615-936-3737
Child Care Licensing	Dept. of Human Services	615-532-4410
Early Intervention ages up to 3	TEIS	615-277-1649
Gifted Program & Special Needs ages 3 and up	Metro Public Schools	615-259-8702

**Chapel**

There are times when we will participate in chapel with one of our Pastors. We will try to inform you ahead of time so if you do not want your child to attend, you will need to make arrangements for that day. Sometimes we do not know ahead of time but since we are a ministry of the church, we believe this is of utmost importance while children are in our care.

**I have read the Parent Handbook and agree to the policies set forth in this book.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Parent/Guardian Signature)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Date)**