

Epworth UMC's Learning Center

As schools and families struggle to discern what is in the best interest of children for this school year, Epworth UMC seeks to be an advocate for children and families, and we want to offer our support and encouragement during these very difficult times. We acknowledge that COVID-19 is amongst us and that it is a dangerous virus. We also acknowledge that we need to find a way to be proactive and vigilant in practicing the habits that are important in slowing the spread, while at the same time making sure our children continue their education in a meaningful and purposeful way. As a result, we are seeking to establish a Learning Center here at Epworth UMC.

Purpose of Epworth's Learning Center

- *To provide a safe environment for children in grades K-6 to get help with the work that is being assigned by their individual teachers in their schools.
- *To provide a consistent daily schedule which will include devotions/prayer, breaks, lunch, outdoor time, and study/work time.
- *To support parents/guardians and teachers with making sure that children have an atmosphere which supports them as they continue to learn while at the same time supporting parents/guardians so that they are able to work.

What will a day at the Learning Center Look Like?

8:30-9:00 am – Arrival and Time to Get Some Energy Out in Several Play Areas
9:00 am – 9:15 am – Devotions and Prayer time
9:15 am – 10:30 am – Studying and Working
10:30 am – 11:00 pm – Outside Time
11:00 am – 12:00 pm – Studying and Working
12:00 am – 1:00 pm – Lunch and Studying/Working/Wrap-up

What kinds of things will children and Learning Center Staff be doing during the Studying and Working time?

- *Creating a plan for getting work completed.
- *Helping children individually with work that their teachers assign.
- *Making sure children are getting work completed and not “wasting” time.
- *Evaluating if a child is struggling with a concept and needs extra help.
- *Completing a log that will let parents know what has been completed on a daily basis and communicating with parents on how the children are doing at the Learning Center.

Other Important Information

*The Learning Center will open on August 24, 2020 and follow the Cabarrus County Schools Schedule for Holidays and Staff Development Workdays. Before children come, the Learning Center will meet with each family to go over what is being expected of each child's teacher and to talk about things that parents/guardians would like for us to work on during the time they are at the center.

*As we continue to implement the Learning Center, we will be tweaking the schedule to better meet the needs of the children. As we are not a daycare, we cannot offer more than 4 hours of services. However, if children need more help with work, a plan will be established to address the needs of the children.

*All children will need to bring individual snacks and lunch with them. Please be sure to include a water bottle that they can refill as needed too. In addition, they will need to bring computers, books, paper, and supplies for completing their work. If your child does not have access to materials, please let us know, and we will take care of that as well!

*It will be imperative for parents/guardians to continue to be actively involved in the education of their children, but our hope is that this assistance will give some support to this new way of doing school.

*CDC guidelines will be followed with extra sanitation, small group sizes, frequent handwashing, and staff wearing masks. Children will also be dropped off outside and picked up outside. Parents will not be allowed in the building; this is to control the environment in which the children are learning and keep the germs to a minimum. Please see the COVID-19 Guidelines for the Flock Preschool and Epworth's Learning Center for very specific details on our plan of action!

*It is recommended in our COVID-19 guidelines that elementary children wear masks, and we would like to encourage parents to send at least one. Our goal is to work with them on wearing the masks and being "ok" with it. After all, it is not something we are used to doing in our country. It is very different for our children. However, please know that we will not make masks an "issue." We will encourage children to wear them as they will need to get used to it for when they are able to return to school. This is just another way that we can assist and support parents.

*Individuals will be hired to work with students in K-6, and they will be individuals who have some expertise in the K-6 curriculum. Mrs. Teresa Gray, Director of Family Ministries, will also be "hands-on" with the center.

*The cost for a K-6 child to attend the learning center is \$90.00 per week. We have decided to do it by the week as we do not know how long families will need this service. Families are welcome to pay for several weeks at a time if this is better for them. Weekly cost must be paid on Monday of each week.

How do I reserve a spot for my Elementary Child?

To reserve your spot, you need to complete a Learning Center Application and return it with a \$20.00 **non-refundable** registration fee to Epworth UMC, C/O Teresa Gray, 1030 Burrage Road, NE, Concord, NC 28025. Spots will be limited and the Flock Staff, of course, will have first priority. We will take as many children as we can, provided we have the space and personnel to accommodate them. Remember that we will need to have small groups. We are also hoping to divide the children into learning groups (i.e. K-1, 2-3, 4-6). How we divide the children will depend on the children who attend the Learning Center. As always, we will do what is in the best interest of the children.

Are you interested in helping with the Learning Center?

If you have background working with elementary children in grades K-6 and would like to apply to help with the Learning Center, please contact Teresa Gray, Director of Family Ministries at Epworth UMC at epworthchildren@epworthnc.com.