

GOOD SHEPHERD WRITTEN PURPOSE/PHILOSOPHY/MISSION STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Mission of The Good Shepherd Lutheran School and Early Childhood Center is to share the love of God in Christ Jesus, the caring Shepherd, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Ministry accomplishes this Mission by:

1. Celebrating Christ as God's gift for our salvation, proclaiming Him as Savior, and growing through grace.
2. Equipping, developing, and utilizing God's people for ministry.
3. Ministering with the Gospel to each other, our community, and the world.

OBJECTIVES OF GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

God teaches that parents are to provide Christian training for their children and promises blessings from it. Consider the following words of God:

*"Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:20 (ESV)*

*"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
Ephesians 6:4 (ESV)*

*"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise."
Deut. 6:6-7 (ESV)*

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it."
Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)*

*"All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children."
Isaiah 54: 13 (ESV)*

The School and ECC exist to provide a program of education, care, and development that is in harmony with God's will, as revealed in the Bible. All life, including knowledge and service, finds its source, meaning, and purpose in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church operates the School and Early Childhood Center as a part of God's mission to all people. It makes this route available to those families of the congregation and the community desiring this kind of Christian education program. Even though the School and ECC are essential agencies in the training of children, the other agencies of the Church, such as Sunday School, weekly worship services, and youth activities, are integral parts of the spiritual training of the total child. All parents and students at the School and ECC are encouraged to participate regularly in these agencies.

We aim to provide a total educational program in a caring Christian atmosphere. Not only are there daily religion classes, in which the crucified and risen "Christ is exalted, but the secular subjects are also taught in the light of Christ and Scripture. Our purpose is to assist parents in educating their children to become good citizens of this country and to help them become and remain citizens in the kingdom of heaven. This is done by the daily use of God's word, prayer, and Christian example through the power and working of the Holy Spirit. We also wish to assist parents by providing a loving, caring atmosphere in the School and ECC, where children learn to share, care for, and love one another.

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PHILOSOPHY

WE BELIEVE that the Bible teaches that man was created perfect and holy with free will by our loving God (Genesis 1:27, 31; 2:16-17). But this was all lost when sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's disobedience and spread to all through the inheritance of a sinful nature (Romans 5:8). Because of his boundless love for us, Jesus rescued us from the punishment we and all people earned by our sins (Romans 5:8), and it is by the acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior that we receive the forgiveness of sins as a free gift from God (Romans 10:9). It is the Holy Spirit working in us to draw us to Him (Romans 8:8-9). As we seek the total leadership of Jesus in every part of our lives, the "growing in grace" occurs (II Peter 3:18), which we trust the Lord not only to receive but also to share this Good News of salvation with the world, beginning where we are (Matthew 28:19-20).

WE BELIEVE that Christian education is unique because:

1. Christian education views the pupil as one redeemed by Christ.
2. Christian education carries out God's command to educate humanity.
3. Christian education is powered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish its purposes.

The guiding principles of Good Shepherd Lutheran School and Early Childhood Center are found in Scripture, the inspired Word of God, and the only norm and source for all we believe and teach, as outlined in the Lutheran Confessions.

WE BELIEVE that our Christian responsibility compels us to pursue academic quality as the proper response to Christ's redemptive work. Good Shepherd Lutheran School and Early Childhood Center strives to make itself an effective educational agency for equipping children and their families through participation in the following five functional areas of Christian living: Education, Worship, Evangelism, Fellowship, and Service.

- **EDUCATION:** Christian education nurtures children's faith for a lifetime of service to God and their fellowmen. The Holy Spirit empowers all teaching, especially exposure to God's word for accomplishing God's purposes. Students are prepared to become responsible stewards of the gifts God has bestowed upon them. II Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness."
- **WORSHIP:** Students are helped to grow spiritually through all the practical aspects of worship: prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Teachers provide Christian models and leadership in building the worship life of students. Matthew 4:10 says, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only."
- **EVANGELISM:** Students and teachers learn to bear witness to their faith by witnessing to each other and their community. Children hear and share the Good News of Jesus' love with their families and friends. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God."
- **FELLOWSHIP:** Students and faculty accept one another as fellow members of the Body of Christ. They work and play together, support and encourage each other, and learn to value, accept, and respect one another. The understanding of the Law and Gospel pervades relationships so that each person knows they are a redeemed sinner and a beloved child of God. Teachers and students work together to maintain an atmosphere of love and joy. Romans 12:5 says: "So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."
- **SERVICE:** Students and teachers help each other and the community to emulate Christ-like compassion and love for all people. John 13:35 says, "By this, all men shall know that you are my disciples if you love one another."
- **WE BELIEVE** each child is a special gift from God, a unique creation, possessing their personality, learning style, and maturation pace. Mindful of this, our programs are designed to encompass the total child and promote each individual's spiritual, physical, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and social development.

WHAT IS EDUCATION IN A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL?

In education, we are focused on the development of knowledge, skill, ability, attitude, and character utilizing teaching, training, study, and experience. Christian education has precisely the same general aims, but it is based on the Bible and has three specific goals:

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1. To lead the individual to faith in Christ and to keep them in that faith.
2. To help the individual develop into an even more perfect Christian in all of life's secular and religious relationships.
3. To keep the goal of every child of God before the individual - eternal life in heaven.

WE BELIEVE that the Lutheran school is the best agency for such Christian education because it provides for the total growth and development of the child. The Bible describes such a complete education in Luke 2:52:

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man."

Our educational program includes five types of growth: Mental, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual, and Social Development. All five types receive daily attention at Good Shepherd Lutheran School and Early Childhood Center. In this total program, the Word of God influences everything the child learns and serves as a unifying and organizing force in the school and childcare program.

OVERALL ORGANIZATION

GOD

The Universal Christian Church

Congregation

Voters' Assembly

The Board of Christian Education

Administration

Parochial School Teachers and Childcare Caregivers

Paraprofessionals

Students and Parents

The above flow chart demonstrates authority in descending order and accountability in ascending order. It is paramount that each entity recognizes, respects, and works in peace and harmony with those above and below for the good and welfare of the church as a whole.

GOD

The triune God who created, redeemed, and sanctified us and continues to do so is responsible for our very being. As revealed through Holy Scripture, His Word shall be heeded and obeyed, as Jesus stated in Matt. 22:37, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, shall all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind."

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The body of all true believers, regardless of denominational lines. As stated in the Office of the Keys and Confessions, "It is the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. The church has the power or authority to preach the Word of God, to administer the Sacraments, and especially, the power to forgive and retain sins."

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THE CONGREGATION

One often hears Lutherans speak of the congregation's autonomy. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church has autonomy over all ministries and programs and the final say in all matters. The congregation has chosen to affiliate with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, but the LCMS has no authority concerning the decisions of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

THE VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

This is Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's decision-making body, consisting of members who wish to participate in the congregation's decision-making process. The voters' assembly calls church workers, elects congregational officers and elders, approves budgets, and retains the final say for all aspects of ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This board consists of members from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church elected by and are accountable to the Voters' Assembly and tasked with oversight of the parochial school and childcare programs, administrators, and the budgets for the parochial school and childcare programs. It is responsible for policymaking rather than for the day-to-day operations of the parochial school and childcare programs.

ADMINISTRATION

The administration comprises our administrators, the Early Childhood Center Director, and the Church Pastor. The Pastor is the spiritual leader of the parochial school and childcare programs. Our administrators and the Childcare Director are responsible for carrying out the policies the Board of Christian Education sets for their programs, overseeing and supervising the day-to-day operations of these programs, and being accountable to the Board of Christian Education.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS/COOKS

Teachers and caregivers/cooks work directly with students and their parents. They are to carry out their duties under the direction of our administrators for the parochial schoolteachers and the Childcare Director for the caregivers/cooks. Teachers and caregivers/cooks are directly accountable to our administrators of their particular program.

PARAPROFESSIONALS

Paraprofessionals augment the overall educational programs of the parochial school and childcare programs. Paraprofessionals consist of our secretaries, business manager, custodial staff, teacher's aides, and substitute teachers/caregivers. While paraprofessionals are expected to work closely with teachers and caregivers, they are directly accountable to the program administrator under which they have been hired.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Upon enrollment, parents and students are given a Student/Parent Handbook, which defines the classroom teacher or paraprofessional as the classroom authority. Parents and students shall agree, as a part of enrollment at Good Shepherd Lutheran School or the Early Childhood Center, to accept the authority given to the teacher/caregiver/paraprofessional by the Board of Christian Education.

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CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

PREAMBLE

The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, students, parents, and community members provide the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct. The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

PRINCIPLE I

Commitment to the Student. The educator strives to help each student realize their potential as a worthy and influential member of society. The educator, therefore, works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator:

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, political beliefs, family, or social or cultural background, unfairly:
7. Exclude any student from participating in any program.
8. Deny benefits to any student.
9. Grant any advantage to any student.
10. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
11. Information about students obtained in the course of professional services shall not be disclosed unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

PRINCIPLE II

Commitment to the Profession. The public trusts and holds the education professional responsible, requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In the belief that the quality of the services of the education professional directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In the fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator:

1. Shall not, in an application for a professional position, deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent their professional qualifications.
3. Shall not assist in any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified with respect to character, education, or other relevant attributes.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.

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6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional services unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.