



**Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center**  
**Family Handbook**  
**And**  
**Statement of Services**

**Welcome to Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center**

We are delighted that you have chosen to enroll your child(ren) at Immanuel Lutheran (ILECC). We are an extension of the ministry of Immanuel Lutheran Church. We believe that the education and care of children is a cooperative effort that will include parents, teachers, and children as partners for families.

We expect your family to read this handbook, follow the guidelines outlined, and provide us with all information necessary to give the best possible care and education to your child(ren). The family is always the first and foremost care-giver, but we will strive to be “home away from home” for your child(ren). Together, we can provide your child(ren) with love, fun, education, and care in a Christ-centered environment.

**Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center Mission Statement**

We believe that the Christian education and care of children is a cooperative effort that includes parents, children, teachers, and congregational members as partners with families. Immanuel Lutheran Church and its Early Childhood ministry are involved in caring for children and providing early education through activities and experiences that help develop skills necessary for school and for a Christ-centered life.

## Basic Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center Information

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center (ILECC)</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>902 Cleveland Ave. Charleston, Illinois 61920</b>
<b>Office:</b>	<b>217-345-3042</b>
<b>Mobile:</b>	<b>217-508-6450</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:preschool@consolidated.net"><u>preschool@consolidated.net</u></a>
<b>Financial:</b>	<a href="mailto:office@immanuelcharleston.com"><u>office@immanuelcharleston.com</u></a> or 217-345-3008
<b>Ownership:</b>	Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is a nonprofit, Christian Center operated by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Charleston, Illinois. The Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Board approves our policies and governs our Center.
<b>Affiliation:</b>	Our Church and Center are affiliated with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. We reside in the Central Illinois District.
<b>License:</b>	We are licensed by the State of Illinois, Department of Children and Family Services as a preschool and early childhood care facility. This license is renewed every three years. The Center also receives regular visits from the State Fire Marshall and the Coles County Health Department.

## Hours and Days of Operation

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Our center generally follows the Charleston School District calendar. Preschool only hours are 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Holidays for which both our preschool and extended care closes are:

New Years' Eve & New Year's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Holidays do not change your tuition rates or charges. If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the administration will decide if the holiday will be recognized on the Friday or Monday prior or following the holiday.

## Types of Care and Education

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center offers preschool, before and after preschool care (extended care), and an after-school program for children in kindergarten through third grade.

**PRESCHOOL:** We have a preschool session for ages two through five years, Monday-Friday, 8:30-11:30. We will follow the Charleston public school calendar for days of attendance. Preschool is included in the daily schedule for children enrolled in extended care.

**EXTENDED CARE:** We offer half day and full day extended care. The hours for these programs are as follows for the days your child is enrolled.

Half day: M-F 7:30 am - 12:00 pm (noon)

Full day: M-F 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

**AFTER SCHOOL** This program is for children enrolled in kindergarten through third grade or until the child(ren) turns 10 years old. The after-school program is open after the school session each day (Monday through Friday), on half days of school, and on days when there is no school attendance. Transportation to the center is provided by the school bus system. This program follows the same holiday closing schedule stated above.

**Center's Capacity** 116 Children during operating hours

## Curriculum Goals and Activities for Preschoolers

Our two-year-old program will stress developmental goals necessary to build relationships and language skills. The three-year-old program focuses on the developmental skills that we expect children to master before attending school. The four-year-old program continues and extends the development of these school readiness skills. Experiences and activities are provided that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in the following areas:

**RELIGION** - During Jesus time, children have opportunities to learn about Jesus' love for them through Bible stories, activities, Bible verses, and songs.

**SOCIAL** - Children have opportunities to learn to interact through play, to form age-appropriate friendships with peers, to relate to adults other than parents, to show care for other students and teachers, and to share, take turns and compromise. These include learning to interact and get along with others through play and to form age - appropriate relationships with their peers and adults.

**INTELLECTUAL** - Children have many opportunities to practice thinking skills through activities that include reasoning, remembering information, recognizing relationships and differences, classifying, comparing and contrasting, critical thinking and problem solving. Activities are varied and include: cooking, outdoor activities, and show and tell.

**LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION** - In all activities, children have opportunities to see how reading, writing, speaking and listening are useful. Activities include listening to stories and poems, participating in finger plays, taking field trips, seeing print in use and participating in dramatic play. Letter names, sounds, number and word recognition, rhyming words, days, months and seasons are introduced as well as concepts such as opposites, sequences, address and phone number and left to right. Communication skills are increased by talking with other children and adults and by expressing needs verbally.

## **Curriculum Goals and Activities for Preschoolers (continued)**

PHYSICAL - At recess and at various other times, children have opportunities to use large muscles in activities such as running, jumping and balancing. Time on the playground and on the equipment at indoor recesses provide for physical development.

FINE MOTOR- Children have opportunities to use small muscles through play and learning activities such as puzzles, painting, cutting, writing, and other similar activities. To assist your child in making a smooth transition to kindergarten we will be teaching the D'Nealian Handwriting System. This system is taught in all Charleston public schools and it helps the child form the whole letter at once using continuous strokes.

AESTHETIC - During learning time and music time, children have opportunities for appreciation of art and music and artistic expression. Various forms of music are introduced and children have a variety of art media available for creative expression.

PERSONAL - Throughout the preschool session, children practice personal skills such as following rules and directions, taking care of one's self by using the restroom, putting on coat, boots, gloves etc., being the class helper, choosing activities for free play and putting toys away, and following schedules and routines.

## **Parent Communication**

The teachers at Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center strive to be partners with parents and their child's education. Each classroom has a message board where the teacher will write about the events of the day. You will also receive a monthly newsletters or calendar with information about the activities and events for the month in your child's classroom.

## **Staff Information**

All the staff at Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is dedicated to Christian nurturing, teaching, and caring for the children entrusted to our Center. They are also eager to provide the best possible communication and service to our families at Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center. Staff participates in professional development workshops and continuing education classes on a regular basis. The staff is required to attend monthly ILECC meetings and receive training in CPR and first aid.

<i>Director:</i>	The Director is responsible for the daily management and operations of the total program, public relations, and communication with parents, the church, and the community. The director is responsible to the Early Childhood Board of Immanuel Lutheran Church.
<i>Early Childhood Teacher:</i>	Teachers are responsible for the day-to-day planning of the classroom curriculum of developmentally appropriate activities for the preschool children ages two through five. Teachers are the primary care-giver to the children within their classroom. Teachers also serve as primary contact to parents. However, the children will have contact and establish relationships with all the staff and other children in the Center.
<i>Assistant Teacher:</i>	The assistant teacher is responsible for carrying out the activities of the classroom. The Assistant Teacher provides child care and support to the classroom teacher and is fully qualified as a teacher according to DCFS standards.

*Teacher's Aide:* Aides are supervised by the teaching staff; the aides provide child care support and assistance for the staff and the Christian caring of children at the center.

## **Staff Information (continued)**

*School-Age Teacher:* School-age Teacher is responsible for planning the classroom curriculum and developing age appropriate activities for children enrolled in kindergarten through third grade. The school-age teacher is also responsible for homework after school for children whose parents' desire homework to be completed while in attendance. However, it is the parent's responsibility to double check to make sure homework is complete and correct. The school-age teacher is the primary contact for the school-age parents.

## **Admission Policy**

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center welcomes all children ages 6-weeks through 9 years. In the 2-year-old room we will gladly assist in the potty training experience. However, when young children begin the 3-year-old preschool experience, they must be capable of using the bathroom independently. Children must be 2, 3, or 4 on or before Sept. 1 to enter each new preschool level.

Members of Immanuel Lutheran Church that have submitted the registration form and fees before March 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous school year will be given first priority to space available in the following school year.

Parents will receive a registration packet that must be completed and returned before the first day of attendance. Each family will be invited to attend an open house to meet their teacher, meet other staff members, and see their classroom.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center accepts children of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to the children at the Center. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and early childhood center administered programs.

## **Children with Special Needs**

Children with special needs may be accepted after an evaluation is made to determine whether or not the Center can be beneficial to the child's development. The child's family may need to provide the Center with a written program plan based on the determination of a qualified consultant. This plan must be in our files before the child's first day of attendance. The family must be responsible for the cost of additional services, equipment, or staff. Together the family and the Center will regularly evaluate whether the needs of the child are being satisfied.

## **Discipline Policy**

Our staff believes strongly in positive guidance for children. We are dedicated to behavioral management that is positive and guided by the attitude that disliking an action does not challenge the love or acceptance of your child(ren). Methods of discipline used will center on communication, stressing positive behavior, verbalization, redirection, or possible removal from a negative situation.

Physical punishment will not be used. No child will be shamed, humiliated, or left unsupervised for inappropriate behavior. No child will be punished for lapses in toilet training. It is our staff's goal, whenever possible, to explain to a child why a particular behavior is not allowed, suggest an alternative, and assist the child to become engaged in acceptable activity.

## **Discipline Policy (continued)**

At times when a child's behavior is threatening to himself, others, or the activity in progress, that child will be removed from the situation (time out). The process of removing a child from his/her current location interrupts the child's unacceptable behavior and actions. No child will leave a time-out without a caring discussion with the care-giver.

Action taken by administration:

First incident = child will meet with the director

Second incident = parents, director and teacher will meet

Third incident = child will not be able to attend school for one week

Each child will start the next month with a clean slate.

If behavioral problems persist, and we cannot meet the needs of the child, the parents, the care-giver, and the director will meet to discuss helpful ways of working with the child. Progress will be monitored and reported to parents frequently. If the child's behavior continues to be an issue and Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center is unable to meet the child's needs, the Director reserves the right to dismiss the child from the center.

## **Tuition Policy**

**Our program is a *nonprofit* organization that operates primarily on the tuition fees from each child. Therefore, it is essential that your fees be paid promptly and regularly. ALL FEES MUST BE PAID FOR THE DAYS AND HOURS YOUR CHILD IS REGISTERED TO ATTEND. If your child is absent, the fees are still due in full. Tuition will remain the same during periods that contain closings for holidays.**

The *annual* non-refundable Registration Fee is due *before* your child(ren) will be admitted to preschool or extended care.

Children enrolled in preschool only may arrive no earlier than 5 minutes before class and must be picked up no later than 5 minutes after their class. Half-day children must be picked up at 12:00 sharp. Drop-in care may be available if needed.

Drop-in care services are offered as space is available. Please call in advance for space availability. Drop-in fees are payable *in advance or the same day* of the service.

The additional child care charge begins immediately after the preschool class or extended care time your child is registered for is complete. Every effort should be made to respect closing times. The late fee must be paid immediately upon arrival or before the child is dropped off the following school day. Continued tardiness will result in a conference with the center Director, the Early Childhood Board, and the church Pastor and may result in the termination of enrollment.

Late Fees      \$5.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 for each additional minute thereafter.

**Tardiness of 15 minutes or more will have a \$20.00 fee for every occurrence.**

**We use the school's mobile phone time as our official time keeper.**

## **Tuition Policy (continued)**

No discounted tuition fees or space holding credits for sickness or vacation are offered.

Please notify the director at least two (2) week in advance of a child's withdrawal from the center.

Tuition and fees may change without prior notice; however, we will announce any changes as soon as possible.

There will be a \$20.00 charge for any check returned from the bank for any reason.

Tuition payments are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. There are no refunds if you withdraw your child during a month, but you will not be required to pay for the remainder of the preschool term.

Families receiving assistance from the State of Illinois Department of Human Services for child care payments will be responsible for any tuition remaining each month after the state payments and the parent co-pay have been received

## **Late Tuition Policy**

\*A notice will be sent home at the end of the first full week of the month if your tuition or a portion of your tuition is not paid.

\*A \$10.00 late tuition charge will be applied after the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

\*Any tuition that is unpaid by the first day of the following month will result in preschool and or care being discontinued and legal action will be taken.

## **Arrival/Departure Procedures**

Licensing requires that parents must sign children in and out every day they attend. Attendance sign- in sheets are located at the doorway of each classroom.

Parents *must* accompany their child into/out of the program at arrival and departure time. Be sure the teacher is aware of your child's arrival or departure.

If you will be later than usual to pick up your child, please let us know. We can reassure your child (because your child knows when you are late.)

An overtime fee begins as soon as each class period has ended. The fee is payable *immediately* for each child that is not picked up on time.

If someone other than you will be picking up your child(ren), for safety sake you must let us know, in writing ahead of time. Please let your pick-up person know that they need a photo I.D. because the staff will check for I.D. if the person is unknown to them. Phone authorization will be accepted in cases of emergency. The staff shall refuse to release a child to any person who has not been authorized by the parent(s) to receive the child.

No one under 18 years of age may pick up a child without written permission from the child's parent.

At least two pick-up and three emergency contact persons are to be listed on your child's file.

If you are going to be away from home or your place of work for the day, be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case you are needed for an emergency.

## **Arrival/Departure Procedures (continued)**

Please call the center if your child will not be attending during normal attendance times. Our staff will be concerned if they are expecting your child to be here.

If your child eats lunch at the center and will be absent, please call before 9:00AM so we can adjust our lunch count for the day appropriately.

## **Two-Year -Old Care Information**

The first few years in a child's life are filled with growth, awareness, relationships, and exploration. Each child will develop at his/her own pace. As parents and care-givers we need to respect and encourage each child's individual development. Children need to feel trust for the adults around them and live in a nurturing environment that promotes confidence in their abilities to explore the world around them. This is a wonderful time to introduce our Christian faith to them in day-to-day living. Parents need to communicate frequently with care-givers for information regarding the daily new developments as they occur.

There are some special rules that apply to the child care of two-year-olds. A child may enter the two- year-old class if they are two on or before September 1. The child will remain in the two-year-old class for the school year and until potty trained.

1. The family shall furnish all diapers, pull-ups, wipes and clothing changes. Be sure all items are labeled. Check the clothing periodically for correct size and appropriateness for the season.
2. Parents shall receive a daily log of sleeping and diaper changes until the child is fully potty trained.
3. If your child is on a special schedule (sleeping, eating, etc.) please give a copy of that schedule to the teachers. We will strive to maintain your home schedule as closely as possible within the centers limits.
4. Sheets and cots will be furnished by the center for nap/rest time; however, your child may bring a doll, blanket, small pillow or stuffed animal to cuddle. Be sure the buddy is labeled with your child's name. It will remain on your child's cot each day. You will be responsible for the weekly cleaning of your items.
5. Staff will provide potty training as the child is ready.
6. Drinks and snacks will be provided as needed. Please refrain from bringing bottles to the center. No bottles or sippy cups.
7. Pacifiers will be allowed at nap time only if necessary. Immanuel would appreciate all attempts to discontinue the use of pacifiers during center hours.
8. Parents, feel free to call or stop in at your convenience. Take time to rock, play, or read to your child.

### Three- Four- and Five-Year -Old Care Information

These children are alive with the excitement of learning, exploring, and growing wonderfully independent. However, they need to feel the nearness of the family at the same time. They accept God's love as natural and are fascinated with the Bible stories and the wonders of God's care. Our center is designed to nurture the whole child's individual development in a comfortable, secure environment. Parents need to communicate frequently with care-givers for information regarding the daily developments as they occur.

There are some special rules that apply to the childcare of three- to five- year-olds.

1. Each child needs to keep a complete extra set of clothing at the center.  
  
Please be sure each item is clearly labeled with the child's name. The items must include underwear, shirt, pants, and socks. Check the clothes periodically for correct size and appropriateness for the season. Shoes must be sturdy and firmly attached to the feet. Flip-flops are not appropriate footwear for preschool.
2. Children are *not* to bring toys from home. The center cannot be responsible for personal toys lost or broken here. A special exception may apply to show and tell arranged in each preschool room.
3. Sheets and cots will be furnished by the center for nap/rest time; however, your child may bring a doll, blanket, small, cot sized pillow or stuffed animal to cuddle. Be sure the buddy is labeled with your child's name. It will remain on your child's cot each day. You will be responsible for the weekly cleaning of your items.
4. Commercially prepared foods may be brought in by parents. Food brought in must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted.
5. A child must be potty-trained to be enrolled in these classes. There are no diaper-changing facilities in these rooms, so diapers and pull-ups may *not* be used. Children do have occasional accidents. Please be sure that they have an extra change of clothing at the center.
6. Lunch will be provided by the school. Please refrain from bringing a sack lunch for your child. Lunches are prepared by Country Catering food service and transported to Immanuel before scheduled meal time. Lunch count is taken daily at 9:00am. Please call and notify the center if your child will be late or absent so corrections can be made to the lunch count.
7. Parents, feel free to stop in at your convenience. Take time to play with your child or join us for lunch at a slight additional charge. Advance reservations for lunch please.

## Preschool Information

Not all families need child care for their children, but they do want to provide the social experience a few hours each week. Our preschool program offers that opportunity. Here the children have the opportunity to interact with others, while growing in their intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social development. They will have wonderful opportunities to develop new relationships, expand their horizons, improve motor development, and grow in their Christian knowledge and faith.

There are some special rules that apply to the preschool children and families.

1. Your child(ren) must be accompanied to the classroom door. Please be sure the teacher is aware of your child(ren)'s presence.
2. Please do not bring your child more than five minutes before class begins. This is our Preschool staff's preparation time. Children may *not* be dropped off in extended care without prior notice to the center Director. Any child dropped off in extended care will be charged the drop-in rate for child care.
3. Please pick up your child at dismissal time. Call our office if any emergency will delay your arriving to pick up your child. A late fee will be issued.
4. Each child needs an extra change of clothes (underwear, pants, shirt and socks) in case of spills or bathroom accidents. Please put the clothes in a zip lock bag labeled with your child's name.
5. Children are **not** to bring toys from home except for show and tell arranged by the classroom teacher. The center is not responsible for lost or broken toys.
6. Snacks are used as a learning experience. During snack time the child learns to wash hands properly, pray before eating, and eat with socially acceptable manners. This is a time to demonstrate good nutrition and eating habits. To help get the children involved in good nutrition we ask the parents to volunteer to bring in snacks. Allowing your child to help make good choices now will set the stage for a lifetime of healthy eating. If you choose to participate please remember to bring enough for the entire class. DCFS guidelines state that all snacks must come prepackaged. Snack calendars are available for those who wish to participate.

Suggestions for wholesome and nutritious snacks are provided below.

Bite size fruits or vegetables	Jell-O	Ice Cream Pops
Cheese and crackers	Trail mix	Pudding
Graham crackers	Fruit juice pops	Cereal
Pretzels	Popcorn	Granola Bars

7. If your child is ill or cannot attend for any reason, you MUST call the office to let us know at 217-345-3042.
8. If the Charleston School District has closed for weather conditions, our Preschool session will also be closed. Extended care will remain open. Please watch WCIA Channel 3 for more information and check your email.
9. If you will not be available at your usual contact numbers, please leave the phone number where you can be reached.
10. Tuition must be paid in full by the first of each month.

## Observers at the Center

Occasionally our center may be used for observation by **college students** to meet their class requirements or complete a research project. This may include observations of the usual routine, observations of play with specific manipulatives or equipment, and/or parent or teacher interviews.

Parents will also be notified if their child(ren) will be used for any form of **publicity** (i.e. newspaper, radio, television, and promotion brochures). A publicity waiver is included in the family registration packet to be completed upon enrollment in the Center.

## Health Care Policy

A medical report or forms prescribed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services shall be on file for each child. The initial medical report shall be dated less than six months prior to enrollment.

The medical report shall indicate that the child has received the immunizations required by the Illinois Department of Public Health. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the center of any special medical conditions, needs, or allergies for their child. Report *in writing* new immunizations and any changes in your child's medical or physical condition.

Unless the examining physician has made a determination that it is unnecessary, a tuberculin skin test by the Mantoux method and the results of that test shall be included in the initial examination. The tuberculin skin test by the Mantoux method shall be repeated when children begin elementary school.

First Aid will be provided to an injured child. In case of emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents or designated adult responsible for the child. If neither can be contacted and transportation to the hospital is needed, a staff person will accompany and stay with the child at the hospital.

## Administering Children's Medication

Many prescription medications now come in two-dose (morning and evening) form. Please consult your physician or pharmacist about this possibility. If it does become necessary for our staff to administer medication, the parent must fill out the proper Medication Administration Form.

Many over-the counter medications state that they are for children over age 6. We will dispense such medication only with your doctor's written permission.

Medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. The container shall be in such condition that the name of the medication and the directions for use is clearly readable.

Any topical products, such as diaper ointment, sun screen, or insect repellent, must be provided by the parent and approved by the parent in writing prior to use on the child.

## Illness

We know that it is common for preschoolers to have frequent colds and illnesses. Our greatest concern is for the child's well-being. Parents, you are strongly encouraged to arrange back-up child care for the days your child(ren) will be too ill to be at the Center.

Please keep your child home if he/she has exhibited any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours. **Please notify the Center if your child(ren) will not be in attendance that day. Please indicate the reason your child(ren) will not attend.**

## **Illness (continued)**

If the child develops one or more of these symptoms during child care hours, parents will be called so the child may be picked up within the hour.

1. Fever of 100 degrees F or higher.
2. Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, or severe sore throat.
3. Discharge from the body.
4. Any undiagnosed or contagious rash.
5. Severe headache.
6. Infected skin patches (i.e. impetigo, etc.).
7. Unusual behavior
  - a. Child is cranky or less active than usual.
  - b. Child feels general discomfort or just seems ill.
  - c. Child cries more than usual.
8. Loss of appetite.
9. Red, watery eyes with recurring yellow/green discharge.
10. Lice or nits.
11. Onset of contagious disease (mumps, chicken pox, etc.)

## **Procedure for Reporting Abuse**

The Center's Early Childhood Board and staff shall report all suspected child abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. Suspicions of abuse or neglect shall be documented and maintained in a confidential record.

## **Outdoor Play**

Children play outside every day (except in extreme weather). Our playground is an extension of our center's daily routine for the children. Be sure your child(ren) will have appropriate clothing for time outside. Due to staffing demands, children are not allowed to stay indoors while their group is outside. Children who come to the center will be expected to join the others in outdoor play.

## **Nap/Rest Time**

Licensing guidelines require that our center provide a nap/rest time for all children. Two-year-olds shall be allowed to rest or sleep according to each child's individual pattern, as determined in consultation with parents. Children three years and older (until enrolled in kindergarten) will rest/sleep on their cots every day. The center furnishes and launders cot sheets. No one must sleep, but all children must rest or relax for 60 minutes. After 60 minutes they may be given quiet activities to do until nap time ends.

Kindergarten and school-age children are not required to sleep or nap, but classroom areas are provided for lounging and resting.

## Children's Clothing

Children should be dressed in washable, easy-to-manage clothing suitable for tumbling, climbing, and crawling on the floor, as well as for messy play with art supplies. We ask that only closed-toe shoes be worn. We want to protect toes from bumps on the playground equipment. We are available to assist your child with bathroom procedures, but clothing that will help your child be independent in this activity is best. No flip-flops or sandals.

Please be sure your child has outdoor clothing at the center that is appropriate for the season and temperature. We will try to go outside every day (except in extreme temperatures) and we want your child to be prepared for the day.

The center's staff will encourage self-dressing whenever possible. You may want to keep that in mind as you purchase clothing for your child(ren). Ask yourself the question, "Can my child learn to put that on alone?" Remember, we will be there to help when needed!

## Birthday and Holiday Treats

We know that families like to help the center celebrate their children's birthdays and special holidays. Please let the staff know *in advance* if you are planning to share treats with the children in your child's room. However, the Illinois State Licensing Regulations state that **"Food brought in for this purpose must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted."** You may also want to consider non-food treats (pencils, stickers, etc.) for the children. Our staff will assist you in making the special day an enjoyable one.

## Field Trips

When children are enrolled in the center (childcare or preschool) the parents will sign a general release form for taking short walking trips.

When off-campus field trips are scheduled, you will be notified in advance and asked to sign a separate release form for each field trip. You will be welcome to accompany our group at any time. If you come as a chaperone, please make arrangements for the care of your other children. This will be a special time for you and your child from this age group.

## Food Service

*Food Allergies:* Information on special diets shall be obtained in writing from the parents and/or medical providers and maintained on file at the center. It may be necessary for parents to provide meals or portions of meals to meet the needs of their child. The parent shall be responsible for the safety and clear labeling of food brought into the center. Our staff will willingly accommodate this child to help maintain his/her health.

*Lunch:* Children will be served their meal at approximately 11:30. Lunches are prepared onsite. Occasionally, the group may eat in the multi-purpose room or outside. Our meal times are designed to be an enjoyable experience for the children and staff. We will teach and encourage good manners. Children will also be encouraged to serve and feed themselves as much as possible. We will encourage but not force children to try all foods. You are welcome to join us for lunch. Please make a reservation in advance so we may have enough food prepared. There will be an additional cost.

## **Food Service (continued)**

*Snacks:* Two snacks will be furnished each day. The first will be mid-morning; the second will follow nap/quiet time in the afternoon. We appreciate donations of snack items; they must be prepared in a commercial kitchen. Two items will be offered from the four main categories: milk products; vegetable, fruits, juices; protein; or grains and bread.

*Breakfast:* This meal is not included as part of our daily routine.

## **Daily Closing Time Policy**

Our center has a specific closing time: 5:30 p.m. We expect the children to be picked up by that time. If an emergency delays you, please call the center before closing time and leave a message. A late charge will still be issued.

In the event that your child is still at the program after closing and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:

1. Attempt to reach you at home, work, or school.
2. Call the people listed on the child's emergency form.
3. Call the authorities after 30 minutes.
4. Apply a late fee

## **Exceptions to the Handbook Policies**

We realize that sometimes there are emergencies or extreme and unusual circumstances that affect our families unexpectedly. A letter may be written to the Early Childhood Board to apply for an exception to our handbook policies. The Board and the Director reserve the right to make the final decision for all requests.

## **Dedication**

Our Immanuel Lutheran Early Childhood Center staff is dedicated to the mission of serving our Lord through the caring of children and their families. We thank our families for giving us the opportunity to help you in the task of providing quality education and care for your children. Please pray for us and we will remember our families in our prayers. May the Lord bless our time together.

We look forward to having your child at Immanuel this year. We hope that the Family Handbook has answered any questions you may have had. Please feel free to call the early childhood office at any time should a question arise (345-3042). Please read and initial the summary of the policies at Immanuel and return to the early childhood office. Please keep your handbook as a reference for the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tuition is due on the first day of the month, or on Monday of each week if paid weekly. Please contact the early childhood office if you will be unable to pay by this date. Payment that is thirty days late may result in withdrawal from the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please accompany your child to the classroom and sign them in on the attendance sign in sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_ We would appreciate having your child arrive no earlier than 5 minutes before the start of their preschool session and ask that children be picked up promptly. Late pickups will be charged a late fee.

\_\_\_\_\_ If pick up arrangements for the day are different than usual, please send a note to school informing the staff of this change.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please keep your child home if he/she shows any signs of illness or has been sick the night before. Children cannot return to school until 24 hours after a fever of 100\* or higher, if they are taking fever reducing medication (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.), have diarrhea, or vomiting.

\_\_\_\_\_ Your child's health record and immunization record must be on file before your child can begin.

\_\_\_\_\_ Children should dress in appropriate clothing that allows them to participate freely in art and play activities without concern. Please have your child wear rubber soled shoes. No flip-flops or sandals.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please dress your child according to the weather. We will play outside in the winter months, weather permitting. Please keep an extra change of clothes in case of accidents or spills. (Underwear, shirt, pants and socks. Please put in a zip-lock bag marked with your child's name.)

\_\_\_\_\_ If Charleston School District closes due to bad weather, preschool will not be in session. Listen for Charleston school closings on the radio and TV.

\_\_\_\_\_ We enjoy celebrating birthdays and un-birthdays (summer birthdays) at school. Please talk to your teacher before your child's birthday to make arrangements.

\_\_\_\_\_ Conferences will be held in May for those children entering kindergarten the following fall. Any parent who would like a conference may request one with the teacher at any time.

I have read the family handbook and policies and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_