

“iBELIEVE”

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life”

John 3:16



Preschool Handbook

**Gethsemane Lutheran School is a ministry of
Gethsemane Lutheran Church (LCMS)**

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Updated July 2017

WELCOME FROM ADMINISTRATOR

Welcome to Gethsemane! We are excited that you will be part of our family for this school year! Our school was established in the fall of 1978 as a way to reach the community with the love of Christ. Over the years we have expanded and remodeled to accommodate students from age two through eighth grade.

We consider it a privilege to work with our Gethsemane families in providing them a quality Christian education. Students can avail themselves of sports programs, music, and art, as well as a second language beginning in kindergarten through grade eight.

Our theme this year is from John 3:16- "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him, will not die, but have eternal life!"

Our prayer is that all of our families will share in the everlasting, steadfast love that the Lord has for us.

Claire Fugit

Principal

WELCOME FROM PASTORS

Welcome to Gethsemane! We are excited and thankful that you are part of our school family. While academics are the top priority of our school, we are blessed to provide a Christian environment for your child to grow and learn in. We put a strong emphasis on the entire student and look for ways to develop both knowledge and character throughout their school experience at Gethsemane.

We realize that many of you may attend another church or may be open to finding out more about the offerings here at Gethsemane. Regardless of your church background, we are both available to assist in any way possible. Please call either of us or any part of the church staff (480.839.0906) with any questions you may have.

God's blessings on the school year ahead!

Pastor Troy Schmidt

Pastor Jerry Kosberg, Assistant Pastor (part time)

Vicar Nathan Huse

LETTER FROM THE PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Gethsemane preschool!

We believe that the reason for Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool is to make Jesus and His plan of salvation a very real experience each day.

To open little minds to the wonders of God's creation, our staff is trained to know and teach to the Arizona Early Learning Standards in a hands on, developmentally appropriate manner. Areas of study include: social, literacy, language, science, music, art, motor skills and mathematics.

We are committed to teaching children in the best God honoring environment possible. Sharing the love of Jesus is a privilege that we take seriously and thoroughly enjoy. We can't wait to see what God has in store for us at Gethsemane this next year!

Blessing to you and your family,

Bonnie Braselton

Director of Gethsemane Preschool

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Gethsemane Lutheran School reserves the right to revise policies, procedures and the contents of any of its handbooks at any time, as deemed necessary.

MISSION STATEMENT

Gethsemane Lutheran School is dedicated to help our students become champions for Christ in service to Him by:

Growing in God's Grace
Learning from His Word
Sharing Jesus' Love.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool is a mission of Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Our purpose is to spread the good news of salvation beginning with our smallest preschoolers. We believe that a good spiritual foundation is essential to building a happy, intelligent and successful individual especially in this ever changing world. All subjects become more meaningful to our preschoolers as they discover God's greatness through his creation and continued presence in our universe.

Emotional growth is emphasized through the teachings of Jesus. All classrooms have Jesus Time every day and chapel once a week. Students learn how Jesus would like them to act through his example. Preschool staff strive to be positive, patient, and fair. Teachers and staff endeavor to model respect, kindness, and sensitivity and encourage these characteristics in each student. At this young age, much of our focus is on kindness and learning how to get along with peers.

Along with our spiritual foundation and emotional growth, we believe that a developmentally appropriate academic curriculum which adheres to the AZ state standards should be taught in a hands on, child friendly manner. Research shows that rote learning and lots of pencil paper tasks is not the best way to teach preschoolers. As we teach all subjects, we strive to make the content relevant, real and really fun! Areas of student include: mathematics, literacy, science, fine and gross motor skills, music and art.

However, we believe that a Christian school does not take the place of the home, but rather it is an extension of the training begun in the home. Our hope is that we partner together to provide the best possible education for your child.

The study of God's words, which emphasizes kindness towards friends and respect for staff along with a rigorous academic program is our purpose.

MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

At Gethsemane we encourage families and teachers to use a policy based on Matthew 18. This requires parents to talk to teachers about student problems before they talk to administrators. If unresolved at the two person level, the matter is prayerfully and in orderly fashion, moved upward in the school organizational structure. This is the Lord's way of solving people-to-people problems.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts: II Timothy 3:16; John 10:35; II Peter 1:21.
- We believe the inerrancy of Scripture embraces not only religious truth, but also the Bible's scientific, historical and literary features: II Corinthians 10:5; Colossians 2:8; II Peter 3:15-16; Romans 3:4.
- We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 8:4; Genesis 1:26.
- We believe that creation was an act of God as described in Genesis chapters 1-2, and not the result of evolution, theistic or otherwise: Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 33:6
- We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father: John 5:23, 14:6; Acts 4:12.
- We believe Jesus will one day return to earth in all of His glory and power and that Judgment Day will come suddenly and unexpectedly: 2 Peter 3:10; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16-18; Matthew 24.
- We believe all mankind is born in sin; by nature man is spiritually blind, dead and an enemy of God, condemned to eternal damnation outside of Christ: Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23
- We believe the world has been reconciled to God through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and all sins have been forgiven through Him. God no longer holds our sins against us, but has declared us righteous: 2 Corinthians 5:19; Romans 4:25
- We believe that for the salvation of lost sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. Coming to faith in Christ is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit, not by some "decision" or "experience" by man. Conversion is worked by the Gospel and Holy Baptism. Salvation comes through grace, for while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: I Peter 1:23; John 3:5-6; John 3:16; Romans 5:8.
- We believe the Holy Spirit works through the power of the Word of God in Baptism where He creates faith, washes away sins, saves, all as His gracious work: John 3:5-6; Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:21
- We believe Holy Communion (Our Lord's Supper) is Christ's true Body and Blood, really present in the bread and wine, for the forgiveness of sins: Matthew 26:26-28; I Corinthians 11:23-29. Holy Communion is also an expression of Christian unity in God's Word: Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 1:10; I Corinthians 10:16-17
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life, conforming to the image of Christ: I Peter 1:2; John 14:26.
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; that heaven and hell are real, and they that are saved by grace through faith unto the resurrection of life (heaven) and they that are lost to unbelief unto eternal damnation (hell): Matthew 25:46; John 14:1-3; Revelation 20:15.
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ: John 10:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 4:3-6; Romans 12:4-5.

ADMISSION POLICIES

The enrollment process begins by calling our school office and setting up a tour with our Admissions Director Mrs. Cindy Arnold. The next step for interested parents would be to meet with the the Preschool Director Mrs. Bonnie Braselton. Registration will be accepted upon the results of the meeting. We seek to meet the needs of each student but understand that we may not be able to meet special needs of some children. If a students has been through AZIP program or has suspected special needs , a discussion or review needs to take place with the Preschool Director prior to enrollment to determine if Gethsemane would be a good fit for the preschooler. Enrollment is complete after parents fill out the registration packet which includes a copy of immunizations, birth certificate, emergency contact form, and other school records from previous schools, if any. Please remember that all students are required to have completed immunization records when they enter Gethsemane in compliance with the Arizona State Department of Health regulations. Families opposing immunizations must complete the required form indicating their exemption.

As a private school, Gethsemane reserves the right to refuse admittance for any reason deemed necessary by the administrator.

Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, religion, nationality, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

SCHOOL MINISTRY TEAM

The administrative team at Gethsemane Lutheran School is comprised of the Administrator and School Ministry Team. The administrative team meets monthly. Meetings are open to all church and school families. If sensitive information needs to be discussed the board may elect to go into executive session. The School Ministry Team consists of laypeople elected by the Voters' Assembly of Gethsemane Church and they serve for two years. The Chairman also serves on the church's Mission Director Team.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open for normal business from 8:00am until 5:00pm.

DEVOTIONS

Each day from 8:00-8:15am all teachers meet together for a time of devotions and prayer. Please make arrangements to meet with a teacher other than this time of day so they can keep their commitment to this important time of day.

SCHOOL HOURS

School for all preschool students begins promptly at 8:30am and ends at 11:30am. Classroom doors open at 8:30am. Preschool students must be signed in and out in the school office and accompanied to their classroom if they are not on the playground before school starts.

Students who arrive prior to 8:15am will go to Extended Care and will be charged Extended Care fees. Students arriving after 8:15am may go to the outside play area and will not be charged an additional fee. When the whistle blows at 8:30am, students will be escorted to their classrooms by the playground teacher.

If a student is not picked up by 11:30am the student will be checked into Extended Care and his/her account will be charged accordingly. At 11:30am your child will be brought to the office. If they haven't been picked up by 11:40am, they will be escorted to the gym and given lunch. We do not have staff available to watch your child. Extended Care is available before and after school from 6:30am-6:00pm.

TARDINESS

Please get your preschool to school on time. Every time the door opens after school starts it is a distraction. Especially during the preschool years, it is difficult to get back to the activity and get the focus back once little minds have been distracted.

If a student needs to leave school prior to the end of the school day, please let the teacher and the office administrator know. Your student must be signed out in the office by an adult who is on the emergency card.

SCHEDULING

We would like your child's schedule to be consistent. When you register your preschooler, you are selecting the days he/she will be coming to school. Because of staffing concerns, there cannot be any switching days, making up days, or adding days due to illness or work schedules. However, if you would like to extend your preschooler's day from half to full day, that is permitted if our numbers are within ratio. There will be a \$10.00 per hours fee for the afternoon.

If your schedule changes and you would like to change your child's days permanently, it is up to our director if that would be permitted.

PARENTS ON CAMPUS

Parents have an open invitation to be on campus and are encouraged to attend chapel services, class parties, or events. For the safety of our students, we ask that all non-staff check-in and out at the school office and obtain a visitor badge. As a courtesy to our teachers, please coordinate any visits to the classroom in advance with the teacher.

TRANSPORTATION

Gethsemane does not provide transportation services for our families to and from school. When dropping off or picking up your student, please refrain from using your cell phone in the parking lot. If you desire your student to go home with a friend, a signed note must be turned into the teacher giving Gethsemane permission to release the student at the end of the day or at the end of preschool.

Gethsemane maintains one, 15-passenger activity bus for extracurricular and field trip use. Adults over the age of 25 who hold a valid driver's license and have been approved by school administration may drive the buses. Appropriate child safety seats/booster seats must be used for students under 8 years of age and shorter than 4'9" tall.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a valuable part of the educational experience at Gethsemane. A permission slip will be sent home well before the field trip date. Transportation for field trips is generally provided by staff on an activity bus or by parent drivers in their personal vehicle. Teachers will notify parents ahead of time if personal vehicles are needed. If parents are to drive for a field trip, an up-to-date "Volunteer Driver Form" must be filled out and on file in the school office.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Please keep all toys and electronic devices at home (not in backpack). When teachers decide on a show and tell day, you will be informed a week in advance. The show and tell item needs to be kept in the backpack except when being shown to the class.

LOST AND FOUND

Gethsemane is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property belonging to students. Any items of value will be taken to the lost and found box between buildings one and two. Throughout the year, any articles still in lost and found will be given to a charitable organization.

SNACKS

Parents of preschoolers ages three to five years, need to pack a healthy morning snack. The snack needs to be put into a bag or container with the preschooler's name on it. Parents may send a drink or the preschooler may use his/her water bottle. If the preschooler stays for lunch, the snack should be separate from the lunch, in a container with his or her name on it. Parents of two-year-olds will be provided with a nutritious snack at 9:30am and 3:30pm (if staying all day).

LUNCHES

Preschool is over at 11:30am, but if you would like your child to stay for Lunch Bunch, it runs from 11:30-12:30 at the cost of \$8.00 per day. This cost does not include lunch. It does include a supervised lunch time from 11:30-12:00 and a playground time from 12:00-12:30.

School lunches are available daily for \$3.25 per lunch. Lunches must be ordered a month in advance from the school office if your child consistently orders school lunch. If you preschooler occasionally orders a school lunch, please sign up in the office and tell the teacher on the days they are having lunch. Payments can be made when lunches are ordered or billed to the account. If a school lunch has not been pre-ordered, a lunch from home must be provided. Microwaves are not available for student or teacher use. Students may purchase milk for .25 cents in the lunchroom. Pop or soda is not permitted during the school day.

BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Birthday and party invitations may not be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited. The exception would be if invitations were distributed to only girls or boys. Students may not hold birthday parties at school. Treats are permissible but must be store bought and in an unopened package. Please coordinate with the teacher and check for food allergies in the class. When celebrating a birthday, we encourage families to pass out different items such as markers, erasers, pencils, pens, etc. to the class as an alternative to sweets.

ANIMALS ON CAMPUS

Please do not bring pets on campus when picking up or dropping off your child. Even the best behaved pet can become agitated by the presence of so many people and safety is our primary concern. Also, many children and adults may be allergic to pets. The safety of our students is our primary concern

Teachers may allow pets to be brought into the classroom for special events when arrangements have been made in advance.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

During Parent-Teacher Conferences you will be given a skills assessment. The assessment is based on the Arizona Early Learning standards and teacher input.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are held twice during the school year. One of the keys to successfully educating our students is the partnership between school and family. One way we strengthen that partnership is through communication. With that in mind, at least one parent is required to schedule a conference with their child's teacher so the teacher may personally present the skills assessment and discuss the student's progress.

CHAPEL

Chapel is held once a week, on Wednesday mornings. Parents and guests are welcome to attend these services. Chapel is held in a variety of formats and is led by students, faculty, our pastors, and guest speakers. Offering is taken at each chapel with the gifts going towards service projects sponsored by the classes.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNITY

One of the ideals which Gethsemane prides itself on, and has throughout the history of the school, is the strong community between all constituents. One of the ways we seek to foster fellowship between faculty, staff, students and parents is in the classroom, in special activities and at events.

PARENT PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT

Gethsemane families are required to participate in school activities. This requirement helps build relationships with faculty, staff and families, keeps tuition costs down, and strengthens our community. The yearly requirement is ten (10) hours per family. If the participation hours are not met, the family will be charged the participation fee of \$10 per hour not completed.

Some examples of ways to participate include:

Lunch/Recess Duty	Music/Art Programs	Coaching
Help in classroom	Teacher appreciation	SCRIP
Auction committee	Field trip chaperone	Dining for Dollars
Building repair/technology	Book fair	Gator Gallop
Towel and paint-shirt washing		Playdough making

These hours must be recorded in the classroom or school office the month in which they are completed. For additional information or to volunteer to serve, please contact the school office.

DRESS CODE FOR PRESCHOOL

Please send your Preschooler to school in comfortable clothes that can get dirty or messy. We do many hands-on activities that “require” a messy outcome.

Please send your preschooler with shoes that fully enclose the foot and are worn with socks. Sandals are allowed if there is a backstrap to keep sandals safely on feet and the foot is fully enclosed. Shoes with velcro fasteners are preferred unless preschoolers are working on shoelace tying, so that preschoolers can be independent in taking shoes off and putting them on. Shorts need to be worn under girls dresses and skirts.

We recommend parents mark all clothing with their child’s name. In case of an accident, we require that all preschoolers have a change of clothing (except shoes) in a ziplock bag with their name on it. This will be kept at school.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Preschoolers are led to understand that in order to be happy in the classroom and our homes, there are certain rules or guidelines which need to be followed.

The rules at Gethsemane Preschool are:

- Try to follow Jesus.
- Be kind to your friends.
- Be kind to yourself.

- Be kind to your school.

At Gethsemane, we do not think of discipline as a form of punishment, rather, as the teaching of self-control, attitude, spirit, and responsibility. It is how we attempt to “train up a child in the way they should go.” (Proverbs 22:6) It is our desire for staff to interact with our students in accordance with the teaching and philosophies of Christ.

It is felt that children do best when the teacher builds a positive, firm, but fair relationship with all students. We believe also that when students are actively engaged in an interesting, developmentally appropriate curriculum which offers a mix of child and teacher initiated activities, behavior concerns are limited.

As a parent you will be kept current on any behavior concerns we have. Our goal is to work together to put together a plan that will be successful for the preschooler.

If, however, teacher/parent strategies do not solve the problem and students are continually being hurt or are kept from learning, you will be invited to a meeting with the teacher, preschool director, and the administrator. After this conference, it would be decided if your child may be best served in another placement.

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

If a child should become ill or injured at school, a member of the staff will notify the parents. For this reason, it is important we have accurate, up-to-date contact information on file in the school office for parents and emergency contacts. Our school staff are all certified in CPR and first aid; however, in the event of a medical problem or injury that is severe or life-threatening, 911 will be called. If the injury is not life threatening, the staff will administer first aid and determine if the child is able to stay at school or needs to go home.

Parents will be notified if a child should become ill or injured while at school. If a student develops a temperature of 100 degrees or over, the parent will be asked to remove the child from school.

For the health and well-being of all children and staff, the following rules must be adhered to in regard to sick children:

- Fever: A child with a fever is to remain at home until fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. If your child has a fever at school and you are called to pick him/her up, he/she may not return to school the next day. Again a fever is defined as any temperature 100 degrees or over
- Vomiting: A child may return to school 24 hours after the last episode.
- Colds: The symptoms of a cold are described as an irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose, and sneezing. A cold may or may not produce a fever. Children are most often contagious in the early, runny stage of the cold. A green discharge can signal infection. A child may return to school after 24 hours of medication.
- Pink Eye: Your child may return to school after antibiotic treatment has begun and eye ooze has stopped. If it is viral, the child may return with a doctor’s note when they are no longer contagious.
- Chickenpox: Child must stay home five days after the onset of blisters, or until all pox is scabbed over and dry.

- Head lice: No child may be present while there are any nits present in their hair. If a case of lice is discovered at home, please report it to the school. We will keep details of reports and incidents confidential, but we do need to alert parents about them. Discovery of lice requires the child be sent home and treated. When lice is discovered, that child needs to be kept home at least through the next school day. All nits must be removed before the child can return. Upon return, the child's scalp will be inspected by a staff member.

MEDICATION

Because of insurance, liability mandates and state law, students may not bring medication of any kind to school and administer it to themselves. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE in the original container and a medication release form must be filled out and signed by the parent.

EXTENDED CARE

Gethsemane offers state-licensed extended care for all GLS students in preschool through 8th grade. Extended care is available before and after school hours from 6:30am-6:00pm. The Extended Care Program fee is \$8.00 per hour, per child. Extended Care fees will be billed on your monthly tuition statement.

Our school utilizes a digital check-in and check-out system called Brightwheel for Extended Care. When checking your student in and out, someone on the emergency card must use this system. Late fees will be assessed for students not picked up by 6:00pm. The fee is \$10.00 for a pick up time between 6:01-6:15pm. The fee from 6:16-6:30pm is \$20.00. Please respect our extended care workers.

At the beginning of the day and end of the day, we may have fewer children therefore we may have a multi-age group of students. However, throughout most of the day, the children are separated according to age and stay with one teacher together in a classroom or play area.

LIABILITY

Gethsemane Lutheran School does meet the minimum liability coverage requirements set forth by the State Health Department. A copy of the liability coverage is available for review in the school office.

Gethsemane Lutheran School and Extended Care is licensed and regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services School, office of Extended Care licensure (150 N 18th Ave. 4th Floor, Phoenix, AZ 85007. 602-364-2539) Inspection Reports are available upon request.

PESTICIDE PROCEDURE

Pesticide application is administered the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 p.m. No pesticides will be applied during school hours.

PLAYGROUND RULES

- Treat your friends with respect.
- Respect our playground
- Balls: Staff will retrieve balls when it is safe and at their discretion.
- Fences and Gates: Stay off the fences and gates.
- Slides: Go down the slides feet first. Do not climb on the outside or inside of a slide.
- Swings: only use one swing at a time. Sit on the swing with your bottom. Only move forward and backward.
- Line up when the whistle blows.

TAX-CREDITS

Although tax credits cannot be used to lower tuition in preschool, Arizona state law allows Arizona taxpayers to receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions made to a school tuition organization (STO). These donations can be designated to a particular private, Christian school or a particular student. Funds from STOs can be used to cover tuition, including the initial tuition payment. We encourage each family to apply to Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization (ACSTO.org) and/or Arizona Lutheran Scholarship Organization (ALSO) yearly. We seek to make Christian education an affordable option for families. If you have any questions about utilizing tuition tax credits or making Gethsemane an affordable option, please contact the school office.

TUITION/EXTENDED CARE PAYMENTS

Families have the option to pay tuition in full or in ten monthly payments, from August through May. All monthly tuition and extended care payments are due on the 20th of each month. A \$30 per month late charge will be added to all unpaid balances on the 21st of the month. Students may be dismissed from Gethsemane for lack of payment after the account is one month past due. According to current government regulations, tuition payments are not tax deductible.

Electronic statements will be emailed out each month. Families may choose to have automatic withdrawal from a banking account on a monthly basis. Credit cards may be used, but must be registered with the school office first and incur a 3% processing fee. Families can also pay online using RenWeb.

DONATIONS

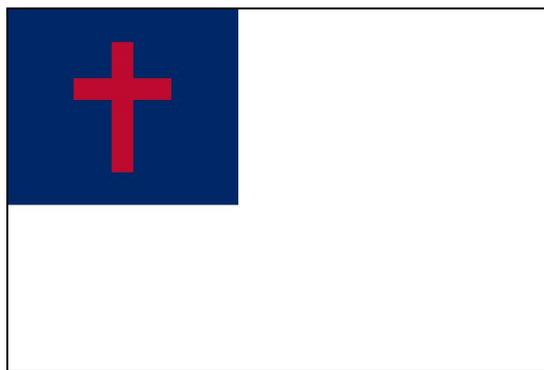
Gethsemane is very grateful for any financial gifts or other donations to help support the mission and operations of our school and enhance our students' experience. All checks should be made payable to Gethsemane Lutheran School. All gifts are tax deductible. Many businesses promote employee gifts to nonprofit organizations by providing a matching donation. If you are considering a gift to Gethsemane, you may wish to check to see if your employer provides matching gifts to maximize your donation.

PLEDGES



American Flag

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty, and justice for all.



Christian Flag

I pledge allegiance, to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the faith, for which it stands. One Savior, King Eternal, with mercy and grace for all.

Gethsemane Lutheran School | 2017-2018 CALENDAR

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COMMITMENT FORM

Parents must read and sign the commitment form stating they understand and agree to support the purpose, philosophy, and policies of Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool as outlined in the handbook. Forms can be returned to the school office or your child's teacher.

We/I the parent(s) of _____ understand and agree to support the purpose, philosophy, and policies of Gethsemane Lutheran Preschool as outlined in the Preschool Handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____