



Parent Handbook

2024-2025

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Welcome and blessings!

Trinity Lutheran Preschool (TLP) is a ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church to provide education, life-skills training and support for families in our community.

The TLP Board and educators are committed to offering the highest-quality preschool education. We believe each student is a gift from God who possesses unique talents, abilities, weaknesses and deficiencies. We support the right to learn according to development level and offer a secure, nurturing, stimulating and supportive environment.

At TLP your child will develop independence, self-help, sharing, listening and following directions. He/she will benefit from learning activities through play, art, stories, songs and games.

This Parent Handbook has been designed as an informative communication tool. Please take time to read it to help fully understand our program. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the preschool director. Please keep it available for reference throughout the year.

About Trinity Lutheran Preschool

Philosophy

The purpose of TLP is to provide a curriculum for the children with an emphasis on Christian instruction as well as academic and social skills with the full intent of helping a child to grow in spirit, mind and body. It provides Trinity's congregation with another opportunity to spread the Gospel and serves as an outreach to families in our community.

TLP will reinforce and enhance parental responsibilities by providing children:

- A Christian atmosphere for spiritual growth
- A sense of security, which is indispensable to good growth
 - This sense of security is derived from being loved, cared for, praised, accepted, encouraged, and challenged
- A variety of opportunities for learning
- The freedom to exercise individual abilities and potential
- The time to develop at their own rate
- A challenging, yet non-threatening climate conducive to exploration and discovery
- The tools and resources suited to individual stages of development

Preschool Board

TLP is guided by a Board made up of volunteers committed to ensuring the operation of a high-quality preschool program for your child. The Board is composed of five members, two (or three) ex-officio members, and the Director/Head Teacher.

Ex-officio members include the Board of Education Liaison and the Trinity Lutheran Church Administrative Pastor and/or Delegated Supervisor.

Chairperson: Natae Johnson (*Term ends January 2026*)

Treasurer: Kirsten Thuringer (*Term ends January 2026*)

Secretary: Danielle Kearin (*Term ends January 2027*)

Fundraising: Anne Hall (*Term ends January 2025*)

Scholarship: Brittany Waldman (*Term ends January 2025*)

Board of Education Liaison: Melody Hansen (*Term ends January 2025*)

TLC Delegated Supervisor: Deacon Koren Lindley (*no term*)

Email: tpsmadisonsd@gmail.com

Phone: 605-256-2771

Instructors



Director/Teacher: Beth Himley

Beth grew up in Brookings, South Dakota. She graduated from Dakota State University in 2021 with a degree in elementary/special education.

She and her husband Ryan were married in 2018. Together they live near Winfred, SD with their sons Tace and Coy.



Assistant Teacher: Cara Bender

Cara grew up in Canova, SD and attended school in Howard. Previously she worked at the Bethel Daycare in Madison and the Children's Care Corner in Howard.

She and her husband live in Madison with their three boys. In her free time, she enjoys being with her family, camping, and spending time with her two corgis, Bella and Dutton.

Tuition & Fees

Tuition for TLP is largely devoted to teacher salaries. Rates are carefully considered by the Preschool Board to ensure a balance between affordable education and adequate compensation for educators. Scholarships are available for tuition assistance. Please refer to the Scholarship section of the Handbook.

TLP pleased to offer the following tuition payment options:

- **Monthly (9 payments):** First payment is due at Open House; remaining balance is payable on the 1st of each month until paid in full. A coupon book will be provided. The last payment is due April 1.
- **Semester (2 payments):** First payment is due at Open House; second payment is due December 2. A reminder message will be sent.
- **Annual (1 payment):** Full tuition payment is due at Open House.

Below is the schedule for each payment method based on the 2024-25 tuition rates.

	Monthly	Semester	Annual
M/W/F session	\$125	\$550 and \$575	\$1,125
T/TH sessions	\$95	\$425 and \$430	\$855

Please note the amount is prorated for a consistent amount, regardless of the number of sessions held each month. TLP is careful to determine a calendar appropriate to the age groups and to prepare your child for advancement.

Please submit payments to the TLP Board via mail or the dropbox located within Trinity Lutheran Church. Checks are payable to Trinity Lutheran Preschool.

Prompt payment will be enforced -- \$25 late fees will be assessed to monthly payments received later than the 1st of each month (unless other arrangements have been made with the TLP Board). Additional fees may be assessed, and the student's enrollment status reviewed by the TLP Board, if tuition late fees are issued for five (5) consecutive months. Late fees may also be assessed to the semester or annual payments.

For your tax records, the TLP tax ID number is 46-0238041.

Scholarships

The United Way Scholarship, provided in partnership with Interlakes Area United Way, offers tuition assistance. You may request an application from the Director/Teacher or download it from www.tlcmadison.com/trinitylutheranpreschool/.



Scholarships are available as funds permit and all decisions are made by the TLP Board. Requests for more than 50% of tuition per month/semester/year will require an interview with the TLP Board President, Scholarship Member and/or the Director/Head Teacher.

Requests are preferred prior to the school year to allow for time to evaluate the need and budget. However, applications may also be accepted at any time at the discretion of the TLP Board.

Curriculum

TLP creates a warm, loving environment for students to play, discover and grow! Our curriculum focuses on literacy, math, science, music, large and fine motor skills, creative play and social skills. Children learn to explore through art projects, stories, songs, group games and activities.

Your child will be encouraged to try new activities, practice sharing, solve problems, participate in small and large group activities, develop independence, practice self-help and express himself/herself creatively. We implement exciting materials and developmentally appropriate activities and lessons to engage little learners.

Circle Time is a time during which all children come together to participate in daily calendar, story time, show and tell, singing, and learning about letters, colors, numbers and more.

Small Group is an opportunity for students to cover academic skills in a smaller teacher-to-student ratio. During this time, hands-on activities will be used for work on letters, numbers, colors, shapes and more.

Center Play is a time for structured play activities. The children use this time to make friends, cooperate, share with others and work on specific skills with the Director/Teacher. Center activities include blocks, ABC/library, reading/listening, dramatic play, math/science, sensory table, play dough and art.

Table Time activities vary between art projects, math activities, science discoveries and more.

Snack Time is a time for children to practice table manners, proper hand washing and socializing with classmates and the Director/Teacher. We strongly encourage children to try a taste of whatever is brought for a snack each day.

Large Motor Development is provided each class. Outside play consists of playing on the playground, balls, jump ropes, hula hoops, trikes and sidewalk chalk. Inside play includes bean bags, group games, creative movement and more.

Music is integrated throughout our curriculum. We use music to learn as well as express ourselves.

Field Trips are occasional. They are an extension of your child's opportunity to develop social skills and learning. Specific information will be sent home prior to each trip.

TLP wants students to feel safe, valued and loved as they discover, create and build confidence. It is our goal to foster a love of knowledge and create lifelong learners.

Policies

Attendance

No deductions will be made due to absenteeism, illness or vacations; tuition is needed to reserve your child's place in preschool. Please give the Director/Teacher appropriate advance notice if your child will be absent. We want to be sure all children are safe and accounted for.

If advance notice is not given, the Director/Teacher will call to verify your child's absence.

Withdrawal from Preschool

If your child will be withdrawing from TLP, a two-week written notice is required. You will be responsible for paying tuition for the duration of the two-week notice but will be reimbursed for tuition that has been paid beyond that time frame.

Immunizations/Illness

Your child will not be permitted to attend TLP until we have a current copy of his/her immunization record or a religious/medical consent form signed by a physician stating your child has not received their immunizations.

Colds, flu and other contagious diseases can occur frequently and pass easily among preschool-aged children. To help protect your child's health and to minimize the possibility of spreading an illness at school, please keep your child home if symptoms of sickness are present.

TLP follows the South Dakota Department of Health School Guidelines for sickness. The guidelines for remaining at home include, but are not limited to:

- green or yellow nasal discharge
- complaints of ear pain
- productive cough
- severe sore throat
- fever
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- head lice
- pink, burning or itching eyes

Your child **MUST** be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If there are any lingering signs of illness, please keep your child home an additional day. This will help ensure the illness has passed and he/she is healthy enough to resume school activities.

If your child has been diagnosed with an illness and they were contagious while at preschool, please let the Director/Teacher or TLP Board know immediately so proper precautions can be taken.

If your child will be absent due to illness, please notify the Director/Teacher. If notice is not given, the Director/Teacher will call to verify your child's absence.

Pandemic

In the event that in-person education cannot occur due to a pandemic for an entire class for more than three class days, TLP will pivot to a virtual, remote learning platform. TLP has planned ahead and is pooling resources, training, education and talents to make the virtual learning experience as meaningful as possible.

The transition to virtual learning is not intended to be a permanent transition. TLP staff will work to transition back to in-person education as soon as reasonably possible while following guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and the South Dakota Department of Health. A reopening plan will be provided to parents when appropriate.

During this time, TLP will continue collecting tuition. Refunds will not be issued. We also understand that pandemics may impact your family's income. Please keep in mind, TLP does have a scholarship program and families may apply any time throughout the year.

Behavior

The Director/Teacher will explain behavior expectations to all children on the first day of school. Expectations are as follows:

Participants must

- respect themselves, other children, staff, facility and supplies/equipment
- follow directions
- have fun
- give positive encouragement to self and others

TLP will not tolerate aggressive behavior such as hitting, kicking, biting, etc.

If your child engages in behaviors that are unsafe and/or disruptive and may endanger himself/herself or another participant, or interfere with successful completion of the program, the procedures outlined below will be followed. The Preschool Board has the right to intervene at any time during the process. As parents, you have the right to request a meeting with the Preschool Board.

1. The Director/Teacher will give the child an explanation of his/her aggressive behavior and a warning that includes further consequences if the behavior continues. If the aggressive behavior continues, the child will be given a time-out and the child will be placed away from the group for at least five minutes. The Director/Teacher will inform the child's parent/guardian of his/her actions via phone call or upon arrival at pick-up.
2. On the second offense, the parent/guardian will be contacted about the specific incident at the end of the day or sooner as deemed appropriate by the teacher.

3. On the third offense, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and the child must be immediately removed from the preschool for the remainder of the day. At this point, seeking assistance for the child's behavior is strongly recommended. The Director/Teacher can provide information on how to access community resources.
4. On the fourth offense, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and the child must be immediately removed from the preschool for the remainder of the day. A meeting will be scheduled including the parent/guardian, TLP staff member and Preschool Board Member to discuss a behavior plan and implementation. The child may not return until the plan is established.
5. On the fifth offense, the child will not be allowed to return to TLP for the remainder of the school year.

Once the child has been permanently removed from the classroom, he/she may be allowed to enroll in TLP the following school year but must submit to a probationary period that is not to exceed twelve (12) days in the classroom. Enforcement will be determined at the discretion of the Preschool.

This policy protects the rights of the teachers and the rights of other children in our care. The educators will do their best to exemplify positive behavior and students are commended for meeting and exceeding expectations.

Weather Cancellation

TLP utilizes alerts on the Bloomz application for weather-related announcements. If weather is inclement but school is still in session, parents/guardians make the final decision whether to send their child to school. If school is in session for either AM or PM class, it is considered a full school day.

In the event the Preschool is closed due to inclement weather, additional class days may be added to the end of the school calendar with the direction of the Trinity Board of Education and approval of the council.

Dress Code

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that allows for easy bathroom use and is appropriate for active play. Take into consideration your child will use glue, paint and markers on a regular basis. Shoes should be comfortable and suitable for running, jumping and climbing.

Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play or send along extra clothing or outerwear. If your child will utilize snow or rain boots, please send along an extra pair of shoes for use indoors.

Toilet Training

All children attending TLP must be toilet trained upon entering. It is best to postpone preschool until the child is consistently able to use the toilet on his/her own. The minimum expectation is that your child is able to pull down their pants, wipe their bottom and pull up their pants. To minimize messes in the bathroom, boys will be encouraged to sit down to use the toilet.

An occasional accident is understandable and will be addressed respectfully. If your child has a wetting accident, he/she will be allowed to remain in class. Clean clothing will be provided, and a parent/guardian will be notified. If your child soils his/her clothing, a parent/guardian will be contacted and expected to immediately attend to the child and change his/her clothing or remove him/her from school.

If toileting accidents occur on a consistent basis, the child's ability to attend TLP will be evaluated by the Director/Teacher with input from the Preschool Board and the parents/guardians.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

TLP conducts ongoing assessments throughout the school year. Students will be assessed both formally and informally using a variety of methods.

All students will have two parent-teacher conferences during the school year, scheduled for fall and spring. Additional conferences may be held any time upon request from a parent/guardian or the Preschool Board.

During conferences, we will discuss your child's progress and his/her adjustment to the program. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to share their observations from home.

Conference dates are noted on the school calendar. Please make every attempt to keep your scheduled day and time. Rescheduled conferences are not guaranteed.

Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the preschool, the Director/Teacher will escort the children across Harth Avenue to a designated meeting area..

The children will remain with the teachers until the regular dismissal time unless conditions are such that an early dismissal is in the best interest of the children. After evacuation, you may pick up your child at any time if you desire to do so.

If the designated area is not available or is deemed unsafe, the Director/Teacher will procure another suitable location. Parents/Guardians will be contacted as soon as possible with further information.

Visitors

Visitors to TLP's classroom requires advance notice and approval from the Director/Teacher. Upon arrival, the visitor must first check in at the Trinity Lutheran Church Office unless other arrangements have been made with the Director/Teacher.

Non-Discrimination/Sexual Harassment

TLP will not discriminate in hiring staff or in providing services to children and their families based on race, religion, gender, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

All TLP officials are responsible for ensuring our program is free from sexual harassment. Any complaints of sexual harassment or inappropriate behavior should first be brought to the attention of the harasser, letting him/her know the behavior is offensive or unwelcome and requesting that it stop immediately. The issue should then be brought to the attention of the Director/Teacher, who will meet with the harasser and take necessary action. See the Behavior section of this Handbook for the procedure to address inappropriate behavior.

Expectations

Supplies

TLP has budgeted to provide many classroom supplies, but we do request you provide the following items for your student for the 2024-25 school year:

- Standard-sized backpack
- 1: 3-ring binder, 1-inch, white
- 4: Elmer's Glue Sticks (Disappearing Purple is OK)
- 1: Box of Kleenex
- 1: Orange plastic folder- MWF AM class
- 1: Green plastic folder- MWF PM class
- 1: Red plastic folder- TTH AM class
- 1: Blue plastic folder- TTH PM class

PLEASE NO PAPER FOLDERS 😊

Reusable water bottles are allowed in the classroom but not required. Water breaks are provided.

The Director/Teacher will also have an Amazon Wish List available throughout the school year with items to stock the classroom. Your generosity is appreciated!

Snacks

Your child will have one or more opportunities to bring a snack to school for the class. A schedule will be provided each month.

When it is your child's turn, a reusable grocery bag will be sent home in his/her backpack one class prior to your scheduled date. Please use the bag to send the snack to school on your child's designated day.

Snacks should include the following, one per student:

- snack
- cups (unopened package please)
- drink (optional; water will be served if a drink is not provided)

For sanitary reasons, we ask that treats be individually or pre-packaged. Individual juice boxes/pouches or one-half gallon jug of juice or milk are acceptable for drinks.

Please send snacks that are healthy with minimum sugar added. Some examples include fruit, crackers, meat and cheese, trail mix, popcorn, yogurt or granola bars. Please DO NOT send cupcakes or fruit snacks.

Snacks will be served at the discretion of the Director/Teacher. If your child has any food restrictions or allergies, please indicate so on the biography form. We will have a supply of snacks available if the provided treat will cause an allergic reaction.

Children are strongly encouraged to try a taste of each daily snack. Another snack will not be served in replacement if the child does not like the taste.

Birthdays

When sending birthday treats, please send pre-packaged or individually packaged items, one for each student in the class.

Please do not distribute personal birthday party invitations at the school unless you plan to invite the entire class.

Fundraising

Fundraising supports 100% of our classroom supplies and equipment. In other words, the more we raise, the more we can give to the kids! Parents and students will be asked to assist with fundraising efforts. We encourage you to participate as it benefits your child.

If you are a Thrivent member, you have the option of directing your choice dollars toward TLP and we would greatly appreciate your support.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Throughout the school year, the Director/Teacher will provide continuing information regarding what is going on in the classroom. Examples include pictures, videos, newsletters, field trips, holidays, curriculum and classroom reminders.

Information will be shared via *Class Dojo*, which allows communication through the app as well as email and text. To access *Class Dojo*, you will receive an invitation to the class via email from the Director/Teacher.

Drop-off/Pick-up

Please follow the required drop-off procedure:

- Arrive between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. for morning sessions and 12:15 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. for afternoon sessions
- Children must be accompanied by an adult into the classroom and welcomed by a teacher
- Enter through the front door of the Trinity Lutheran Church and use the preschool hallway door to enter the classroom

Please follow the required pick-up procedure:

- Arrive between 10:55 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. for morning sessions and 3:25 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. for afternoon sessions; Enter the classroom through the preschool hallway door

Classroom doors will remain locked during school hours to ensure the safety of your child. Drop-off and pick-up are important communication times between parents/guardians, students and the Director/Teacher, so please refrain from cell phone use during this time.

The East Dakota Transit bus service (605-256-5810) is available for transportation to and from school. Please notify the Director/Teacher if your child will be using the bus service on a regular basis. Regular riders must provide advance notice if there are days in which the service WILL NOT be used. If notice is not given, the Director/Teacher will assume the child is riding the bus as usual. At dismissal time, the Director/Teacher escorts the children to the bus to ensure they board safely.

Emergency Procedures

If your child has a serious injury, a parent/guardian will be notified and asked to come to school to evaluate your child.

In the event of an emergency, it is necessary for the school to be able to contact a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or emergency contact. It is vital that telephone numbers, email addresses and addresses are kept up to date.

Please notify the Director/Teacher in writing of any changes in contact information. Emergency contact numbers are required with enrollment.

Chain of Communication

TLP strives to provide transparency and open communication. If parents/guardians or concerned individuals wish to voice or discuss opportunities, grievances or concerns, the following chain of communication is encouraged:

1. Director/Teacher (or Teaching Assistant)
2. Trinity Lutheran Church Delegated Supervisor (if applicable)
3. Trinity Lutheran Church Administrative Pastor
4. Preschool Board
5. Board of Education