ST. JOHN’S CHRISTIAN NURSERY SCHOOL

Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten Classes
Licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families

ST. JOHN’S
Christian Nursery School

Serving His kids and families for 50 years.

Located at and a ministry of:
St. John’s United Methodist Church
149 Ganttown Road
Turnersville, NJ 08012
discoverstjohns.org/nursery-school
856-227-3722

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Welcome to St. John’s Christian Nursery School. We are a ministry of St. John’s United Methodist Church. The Church Council is our governing board and our staff is comprised of members of the church. Every staff member meets the requirements to work in a licensed nursery school as mandated by the State of New Jersey’s Department of Children & Families Office of Licensing.

Although we are owned and operated by St. John’s United Methodist Church, we are open to children of all faiths, races and nationalities. Children do not have to attend our church in order to attend our nursery school.

As Christians, our staff members depend daily upon God for guidance and direction in every aspect of their lives. Our vision is to show children the love of Jesus, help them to personally know Jesus and to teach them to show the love of Jesus to others in the world around them. We do this through age-appropriate Bible stories, songs, prayers, service projects and our daily interactions with the children. It is in this loving, Christian environment that we seek to help each child grow in every area of his/her life.

Our goal is to prepare every child for entrance into an elementary school program. We seek to provide learning experiences that will nurture, stimulate and challenge each child to grow mentally, emotionally, and socially. We want every child to feel accepted, loved and secure within our classrooms. We realize that parents have entrusted to our care their most treasured assets, their children. At St. John’s Christian Nursery School, our staff considers it an honor and a privilege to partner with parents in educating children.

OUR PROGRAM

We have classes for children between the ages of 3- and 5-years-old. Classes are based on the child’s age as of October 1 of each school year. There are NO exceptions. All children must be potty-trained and physically able to take care of their own personal toilet needs.

Our school utilizes a research-based curriculum called Creative Curriculum which is published by Teaching Strategies. In each classroom are interest centers for specific areas, such as math, literacy, writing, dramatic play, toys and games, etc.,
where students will learn in a hands-on way while they explore and interact with their peers and our staff. Students will also participate in monthly studies on specific topics preschool-age children are typically interested in. We also provide weekly Bible stories, music and/or cooking activities. Our students are provided with a wide range of activities which encourage them to use a variety of their senses. Your child’s teacher will share with you her plan for the school year during our annual Open House in September. Classroom goals and further information about our curriculum will also be explained at that time.

HEALTH & SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD

When you enroll your child in our school, you will be required to give us a Universal Child Health Record that has been completed and signed by your child’s physician. Our students are also required to have necessary and up-to-date immunizations. This is a requirement of the State of NJ.

We request that you keep your child home for the day if he/she has any of the following conditions, unless they have been authorized to return to school by their health care provider:

- A fever within the last 24 hours
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting with a period of 24 hours
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
- Severe pain or discomfort; swollen joints
- A sore throat
- Yellow eyes and/or jaundiced skin
- Heavy nasal discharge; yellow or green runny nose
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- A questionable rash or infected, untreated skin patches
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- A stiff neck
- Blood in the urine
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Excessive coughing
- Mouth sores with drooling
- A discharge in or around the eyes; red eyes
If your child has received an antibiotic, he/she should have received treatment for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

If a child exhibits any of these symptoms during the course of the school day, we will notify the parent. The child will wait in the director’s office for an authorized adult to pick him/her up from school.

Please contact the school if your child has a communicable disease such as, but not limited to: chicken pox, measles, German measles, mumps, strep throat, whooping cough, Hepatitis A, salmonella, shigella, impetigo, lice, scabies, tuberculosis, giardia lamblia, meningococcal disease, or haemophilus influenzae.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Student attendance is tracked by each classroom teacher. Please call the school office or notify your child’s teacher as soon as possible if your child will be absent. If a child is absent for more than three consecutive classes and it was not a pre-arranged vacation, a doctor’s note may be required for the student to return to class. The director or teacher will also reach out to a family that has not notified the school of an upcoming absence of greater than three consecutive classes.

Please do not deduct money from tuition for absences. Due to staff/student ratio requirements, we are not able to allow makeup days for absences.

**SAFETY DRILLS**

The State of New Jersey’s Department of Children & Families Office of Licensing requires all licensed childcare centers to complete monthly fire drills, as well as two lockdown drills each year. At the start of the school year, our staff explains these drills to the students prior to conducting them to ensure the students understand the process and are not frightened by it. As parents know their children best, we would also encourage you to discuss this with your child if you feel they may find the safety drills intimidating. Your child’s teacher can provide an overview of how our drills are handled to equip you to prepare your child.
OUTDOOR SAFETY

Outdoor play is an important part of a child’s physical development and provides learning opportunities different from the indoor environment. Adequate supervision in a safe environment allows children to explore more freely and play in a safe outdoor environment promotes good health and reduces the risk of injury to children and staff. Each morning a school staff member will be responsible to check the playground using a daily outdoor checklist before children are permitted to play. This includes checking for standing water, debris, glass, beehives/wasp nests, tripping hazards, other injurious material, or damage to any equipment. The director and/or church facility manager will be notified of any hazards and act upon a resolution based on the importance of the issue so that the correction can be made as quickly as possible. Basic playground rules will be enforced to ensure safety on the playground for students and staff. The outdoor play area is enclosed by a fence to aid in supervision and our staff will be positioned for the best view. We ask that parents dress their children appropriately for outdoor play every day and staff will use their discretion as to whether it is safe for a child to play outside based on their attire. Outdoor playtime may not occur or may be shortened due to weather conditions. A first aid kit will be taken out for use on the playground and all injuries occurring during outdoor play will be documented on an Accident Report form. Refer to our Parental Notification Policy for further information on how parents are notified in the event their child sustains an injury while at school.

SNACK TIME

We serve daily snacks which are properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the USDA Child Meal Pattern recommendations. Our snacks include apple slices, crackers, pretzels, cream cheese and crackers, celery, carrot sticks, hard cheese and crackers or clementines. We offer apple juice or water to drink.

St. John’s is a “nut free” facility. Some children have other dietary restrictions or food allergies, and, as such, we respectfully request that you do not bring food from home into our center, except in the instances of your own child’s dietary needs, or to celebrate a birthday. Children with severe food allergies and dietary restrictions are asked to bring a snack from home. It must be labeled with your child’s name. Please let your child’s teacher know if you are choosing this option.

If your child has any dietary restrictions, please make our staff aware of the situation. We will take all the necessary precautions and post it in your child’s classroom.
During snack time, students will have the opportunity to assist with selecting the snack, and/or serving themselves and their peers. Snacks are served using disposable cups and napkins and students and staff sit together to eat. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Staff members trained in first-aid for choking are present at snack time.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Our morning classes begin at 9 AM and end at noon. Our afternoon classes start at 1 PM and dismiss at 4 PM. We encourage our parents to please be punctual when dropping off and picking up their children. If you are going to be late, please call the school office. Children are often embarrassed when they have to walk into a classroom after the class has started. They also become upset when all the other children in the classroom have been picked up. We realize that sometimes the unexpected happens and you are detained. However, please make every effort to be consistently on time.

Outside doors will open for each session at 8:50 AM and 12:50 PM. We ask that you do not drop off your child at the outside doors and assume they will arrive safely at their classroom. Please escort your child to the room. Do not enter the room until your teacher or teacher’s assistant has arrived. Our staff gathers for prayer each morning and is not available to supervise children until class time.

In order to keep our students safe and secure, we lock the outside doors 15 minutes after arrival time and re-open them five minutes before dismissal time. If you must come into the building at any other time, please use the door closest to the church office. You will be video monitored and asked to identify yourself before being allowed to enter our building.

At the end of each class session, you will be required to sign out your child to verify that he/she was picked up by an authorized adult. If you cannot pick up your child on any given day, please make your teacher aware in writing of the name of the person that you are authorizing to pick up your child. You may also help us by notifying the person who will be picking up your child that he/she will be required to show personal identification (i.e., a valid driver’s license) to the teacher, and it will be notated on the sign-out sheet. This is a safeguard to protect your child. Under no circumstances will we release a child to anyone not authorized by the parents to pick up the child. We also reserve the right to refuse to release a child to any
parent/guardian or approved escort who is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or is in any way impaired. We will not compromise any child’s safety at any time.

**BIRTHDAYS**

We like to give each child the opportunity to celebrate his/her birthday with the class. We encourage parents to bring in a special treat that your child can share with the class. Please check the school approved snack list before choosing a birthday snack. Make sure there are no food allergies or dietary restrictions in the classroom. Each birthday child will receive a birthday book made by his/her classmates and get a treat from the birthday box. Summer birthdays are also celebrated throughout the year. Your teacher will assign you a celebration day.

**PARTY DAYS/HOLIDAYS**

Our children celebrate the following holidays with a party: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and Easter. Parents are asked to volunteer to help prepare food for the parties such as pancakes, waffles or grilled cheese sandwiches. They also help set up, serve and clean up on party days. Each teacher will ask for volunteers during the course of the year. *As a Christian school, we do not celebrate Halloween in any way. We do acknowledge and mention Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and leprechauns at St. Patrick’s Day. If you have concerns with this, let your child’s teacher or the director know.*

On occasion, parents have elected to send in a special treat for their child’s classmates in celebration of holidays such as Christmas and Valentine’s Day. While we will happily pass out inedible items such as pencils, bubbles, erasers, stickers, etc., due to allergies and health conditions of our students, we are unable to distribute any food or candy. Food or candy that is sent in will be sent back home with you. Thank you for your cooperation as we keep all of our students safe!

**HOME LANGUAGE**

Given the steady increase in the number of families and children whose home language is one other than English, as well as in the number of languages spoken, our school is committed to serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations. This ensures a high-quality program for all children and families. We achieve this by labeling of classroom items and using pictures, when necessary, and by providing
access to classroom materials in the home language. Our school is also open to allowing families to provide home materials in the child’s language to support the child and teacher during their time with us.

**COMMUNICATION**

In order to facilitate successful partnerships with parents and students, we will regularly communicate student observations with families. Observations and activities will be shared after each school session for our 3 year olds and on a weekly basis for 4 year olds. We also use several methods of communication with our families for announcements:

- **Announcement handouts:** notices are sent home with our students at the end of the school session.
- **Remind:** We utilize Remind.com/the Remind app to keep parents up-to-date with our current events and to send personal messages. More information on how to begin using Remind will be given out our Meet the Teacher sessions.
- **End of session announcements:** Teachers will often alert our families to important announcements at student pick-up at the end of the school session.
- **Social media:** We will post on Facebook and/or Instagram with exciting news, events and other school happenings. Refer to our separate *Social Media and Technology Policy* for more information on how we use social media.
- **Email and phone calls:** If it is necessary to communicate with parents one-on-one, we will occasionally reach out via email or a phone call to parents. Parents are also encouraged to email or call the director/school office with any questions or concerns.
- **Conferences:** Parent/Teacher Conferences are sometimes scheduled with parents if parents have questions for the teacher or the teacher has something to discuss with a student’s parents. Conferences may also be scheduled in the winter to discuss parents’ plans for a student for the following year.

**TUITION**

Tuition is based on an annual rate and then broken down into 10 equal, monthly installments for your payment convenience. We kindly request that you do not deduct money from the tuition payment for illness, family vacations, school holidays, field trips or emergency school closings. Tuition payments are due the first week of each month beginning in August. If you would like to make weekly or bi-weekly payments, please make arrangements with the director. All checks can be
made payable to “St. John’s C.N. School.” If you choose to pay with cash, please be sure to get a receipt. Never leave a cash payment in the classroom or office without obtaining a receipt. You can pay tuition online using a credit or debit card at www.discoverstjohns.org.

There is a $35 fee for returned checks. After two returned checks in a school year, you will be asked to pay with cash or pay online for the remainder of the school year.

Accounts of students who are withdrawn from St. John’s Christian Nursery School after September 1 of the current school year may be subject to a withdrawal fee in the amount of one month’s tuition. The fee is in addition to any tuition payments owed for the student’s attendance at the school.

**DISCIPLINE**

Our school uses “take a break” for discipline purposes. When a child’s behavior becomes harmful or distracting to himself or others, he/she will be asked to “take a break.” The rule of thumb for “take a break” is three minutes for a 3-year-old, and four minutes for 4-year-old. The child will be asked to “take his/her break” in the classroom but away from the group. When the “break” is complete, the child will be encouraged to rejoin the group. At no time will a child be isolated in a corner or put outside in the hallway. If the teacher finds that the child is not responding to “take a break,” she will notify the parent(s) and a parent-teacher conference will be scheduled.

St. John’s Christian Nursery School will not deprive a child of his/her snack as a means of discipline. Nor will any staff member engage in corporal punishment to discipline a child. We do reserve the right to remove a child from our program should he/she continually engage in behavior that is harmful to him/herself and others, or shows an un-readiness for a nursery school experience.

Refer to the *Guidelines for Positive Discipline* and *Expulsion Policy* documents for further information.

**HOW CAN WE HELP?**

Once you have chosen St. John’s Christian Nursery School, it becomes our responsibility to work along with you to meet your child’s needs, whatever they might be. Our teachers and director are always available to speak with you. We will
keep you updated on your child’s school adjustment, progress, growth and development. We will gladly arrange a conference at any time during the school year.

Our staff will provide a safe, secure, loving environment for children, where parents can feel comfortable leaving their child. We also recognize that God has appointed parents as the primary religious instructors of their children and it is our responsibility to support the family in the spiritual nurturing and growth of their child. Let us know if there is anything we can do to further support your child or family.

**HOW YOU MAY HELP US**

We would like you to understand and discuss our goals and beliefs with us. Feel free to observe our classes and see our children and staff in action. This is a happy place to be, with much learning taking place! We want you, as well as your child, to feel a part of the St. John’s Christian Nursery School family. Educating children is a cooperative effort between parents and nursery school staff. We can’t do it without you! We depend on you for new ideas or suggestions that might help our program become even more successful.

Parents are always welcome to participate in our class trips, party days, and special events. We welcome parental participation throughout the school year and hope you will take part in as many of your child’s activities as possible. You will have the opportunity to sign up for some of these activities at our annual Open House in September. We also invite you to come into the classroom to read a story, do a craft or any other activity you think the children might enjoy. Your child’s teacher will be happy to make arrangements with you to accomplish this.

If, at any time, you have questions or concerns regarding your child or you have feedback of any kind, please don’t hesitate to speak with your child’s teacher or the director. We believe in the slogan, **“If you like what we’re doing, tell others. If you’re not happy with what we’re doing, tell us.”**

Finally, we would appreciate your prayers. We cannot do this job without the Spirit of God working in us and through us to minister to His kids. We also ask for His love and protection to be poured out on each and every one of our students day by day.
OUR BELIEFS

We believe…

- Children are a gift from God and should be handled with love and care.

- Children deserve a safe, positive, nurturing and age-appropriate learning environment that is free of fear, prejudice or pressure to grow up.

- That nursery school ministry is not just *to* children but *with* children. We learn from the children as we teach them.

- That God has appointed parents as the primary religious instructors of their children and our role is to assist in the cooperative effort of that task.

- Successful nursery school ministry is the shared responsibility of children, nursery school staff and parents.

- Nursery school ministry should be creative, innovative and in-touch with the children and families of our community.

- Jesus has called children to follow Him and children can be equipped to serve Jesus and others.

- Children are important in the Kingdom of God and Jesus died to redeem children, as well as adults, from their sin.

- Effective teachers and staff are the most important component of our nursery school ministry.
TUITION RATES & SCHEDULES

Tuition is based on an annual rate and then broken down into 10 equal, monthly installments for your convenience.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday AM Nursery & PreKdg. Classes
  • 9 AM to noon
  • Annual tuition of $2920.00, 10 monthly payments of $292 each

Monday, Wednesday, Friday PM Nursery & PreKdg. Classes
  • 1 to 4 PM
  • Annual tuition of $2920.00, 10 monthly payments of $292 each

Tuesday/Thursday OR Wednesday/Friday AM Nursery & PreKdg. Classes
  • 9 AM to noon
  • Annual tuition of $1940.00, 10 monthly payments of $194 each

Tuesday/Thursday OR Wednesday/Friday PM Nursery & PreKdg. Classes
  • 1 to 4 PM
  • Annual tuition of $1940.00, 10 monthly payments of $194 each

Nursery classes are for children turning 3 years old by Oct. 1, 2019.*
PreKdg. classes are for children turning 4 years old by Oct. 1, 2019.*
*Exceptions cannot be made for this age requirement policy.

REGISTRATION FEE
Our school charges a $100 ($50 for returning students) non-refundable registration fee, which is due at the time of your child’s registration. Fifty dollars of the fee (new students only) can be credited towards your tuition payment any month after October, when your child begins our program. Notify the director as to which month to which you would like it applied to receive the credit.

WITHDRAWAL FEE
Accounts of students who are withdrawn from St. John’s Christian Nursery School after September 1 of the current school year may be subject to a withdrawal fee in the amount of one month’s tuition. The fee is in addition to any tuition payments owed for the student’s attendance at the school.