

First United Methodist Church
72 Lake Morton Drive
Lakeland, Florida 33801

Neighborhood Ministries
Parent Handbook

Neighborhood Ministries is a ministry of First United Methodist Church of Lakeland, Florida. The Neighborhood Ministries Council provides direction and guidance for Clubhouse, Club Christ and Outreach Florida programs. The Director and Associate Director of Neighborhood Ministries are hired by the Staff Parish Relations Committee of First United Methodist Church. All paid staff are employed by First United Methodist Church.

Mission Statement: The mission of Neighborhood Ministries is to share the love of Jesus Christ with the community by providing a safe, recreational, and spiritual experience.

Goals:

1. To foster a *safe* Christian environment in which children and youth can grow spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially, with Jesus Christ as our example.
2. To have open communication with the children, youth and their parents, by means of written and/or verbal correspondence.
3. Everyday to provide a nutritious snack that has two food groups.
4. To work together and play together as a Christian family.

Clubhouse:

After School Programming for Kindergarten through 5th grade students from the hours of 2:00 to 5:00pm.

Club Christ:

After School Programming for 6th through 12th grade students from the hours of 2:00 to 5:00pm.

Outreach Florida:

Summer Programming for rising 1st grade through rising 6th grade students from the hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Registration Requirements:

1. The child must be in Kindergarten through 5th grade to be a part of Clubhouse or a youth in 6th to 12th grade to be a part of Club Christ.
2. The child must be a rising 1st through rising 6th grader to be a part of Outreach Florida.
3. All enrollment forms must be filled out and notarized (if applicable).

Hours of Operation: (Exceptions being some Holidays and when school is not in session.)

School Year

Clubhouse – Monday-Friday from 2:00pm - 5:00pm.

Club Christ – Monday-Friday from 2:00pm - 5:00pm.

Summertime

Outreach Florida – Selective Weeks, Monday-Friday from 8:00am - 5:00pm

Fee:

There is no fee, but we do ask that you help pay for your child's field trips. However, if you cannot afford to help that week, we understand and your child is still invited to participate. Please remember that we are part of the ministries of First United Methodist Church and we exist because of donations. If you can afford to give something, please do.

Reporting Child Abuse:

Our staff is required by law to report any suspected abuse to the Director, the Senior Pastor, and the Department of Children and Families.

Discipline Policy:

1. Age appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for the children and youth in care.
 - a. Discussion with the child/youth about appropriate behavior.
 - b. "Time Out" from ongoing activity.
 - c. Consultation with parents to seek answers or understanding of the problem.
If the problem is not resolved by these means, temporary or permanent suspension may be enforced for the well-being of the program.
2. Children/ Youth are not subjected to discipline, which is severe, humiliating, or frightening.
3. Discipline will never be associated with food or toileting issues unless it infringes on the rights of others and if so, refer to No. 1 above.

Dismissal Policy: Dismissal starts at 5:00pm and ends at 5:15pm.

I agree to either pick my child/youth up or have one of the persons authorized to pick my child/youth up from **Clubhouse, Club Christ, and/or Outreach Florida between 5:00pm and 5:15pm** daily.

OR

My child/youth will walk home from Neighborhood Ministries (Clubhouse, Club Christ, and/or Outreach Florida) programs and I release First United Methodist Church and church staff from any legal responsibility once my child leaves prior to or after 5:00pm. I understand that once my child/youth has left the church, he/she is my sole responsibility and thus, I will instruct my child/youth of where to go and to leave the church grounds promptly.

Attendance Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of Neighborhood Ministries to keep accurate attendance records. However, the child or youth is not our responsibility if they do not arrive at our program. **Any day that the child or youth arrives at the program it is understood that the child or youth will be there until dismissal.** It is helpful for the staff to know if a child is going to be absent for more than 2 days. If for some reason the parent/guardian decides to remove the child/youth from the program, it would be helpful to let the Director know as soon as possible so another child/youth can be given the opportunity to take part in our program.

Additionally, children should not attend Neighborhood Ministries after school programming if that child or youth has not attended school that day due to illness or suspension. Occasionally, exceptions are made when a child has gone to school for part of the day, but left early for an appointment. These situations are handled on a case by case basis, and are left to the discretion of the Director, Associate Director, and staff. In the situation where Neighborhood Ministries is responsible for picking your child or youth up from school, you must notify the Director or Associate Director if they will not be attending. You can easily leave a message by calling 686-0855.

Contagious Illnesses:

Any child who contracts chicken pox, head lice, pink eye or any other contagious illness, may be asked to provide a written note from a physician (stating that s/he is no longer contagious) before re-entering the program. Please also be considerate and do not send your sick child/youth. Please inform the Director or Associate Director if a child/youth will be absent for more than 2 days.

Mentoring Program:

We feel it is very important for all children and youth to excel in their school work and realize some children/youth may need extra help. Every Monday we have arranged for volunteers to tutor and mentor children/youth who may need some extra help with their school work. If you are interested in volunteering please let the Director or Associate Director know.

Field Trips:

There will be information sent home or mailed regarding the upcoming field trips. Parents will be reminded of the cost of the field trips and any other important information. Since most Club Christ youth do not arrive at the church until after 4:30pm, the field trip day may be extended to allow ample time for play and transportation.

Offering:

Each week your child/youth is exposed to an hour of "praise time" and chapel where a different speaker delivers a message. We have made it a point for the child/youth to be aware of world hunger and poverty. Therefore, at each Chapel service we will be taking up an offering for Compassion International. Attached is an information sheet on Compassion and their cause, along with biographies of our two sponsored children. Your child/youth will have the opportunity to bring just \$1 a month (or \$.25 a week) to help us sponsor a child from Kenya and a child from Rwanda! Thank you for helping us make a difference!

Contact Information:

Corey Jones, Director 686-0855 ext 242 Cjones@firstumc.org
Rebekah Krahe, Associate Director 686-0855 ext 230 Rkrahe@firstumc.org

Let's Keep in Touch:

The Neighborhood Ministries Program staff will sometimes send messages home for you in a backpack or lunchbox. Notices also may be mailed, given to you when you pick up your child or youth, or even communicated to you over the phone. There will also be parents meetings throughout the year to give you the opportunity to see the program as well as address any concerns you may have to the staff and Committee. Also, please feel free to contact the Director or Associate Director of the programs or talk to any staff members if you have any questions.

Opportunities For Families:

You, your family, and your friends are invited to fellowship, worship, and experience Christian education opportunities with us!

Sundays:

8:15am *Worship Service, Sanctuary

9:30am Sunday School for all ages
9:30am *Contemporary Worship Service, Fellowship Center

11:00am *Worship Service, Sanctuary
11:00am Music & Media Class, Youth, 6th through 12th grade

11:20am *Eleven20 Worship Service, Fellowship Center

5:00pm UMYF (United Methodist Youth Fellowship)

5:00pm Route 66 (Children's Programming)

Wednesdays:

5:30pm *Phoenix Dinner for families

6:00pm Youth, "Reel to Real Bible Study"
6:00pm Phoenix Kids

6:15pm *Phoenix Classes

**Nursery Provided*