



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 Staff Parish Relations Committee of First United Methodist Church hires the Directors of Neighborhood Ministries. 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.

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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. Please refer to our website for breaks in programming:

firstumc.org/neighborhood)

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-Thursday from 8:00am - 5:00pm

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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.

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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. (Please note: if person picking up is under the age of 18, they must be AT LEAST 16, and have written permission from you to pick up your student)

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. (Please note: student MUST be in Grade 3 or above, otherwise they will need to be picked up by an authorized individual)

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 Directors know as soon as possible so another child/youth can be given the opportunity to take part in our program.

Attendance Responsibility Cont'd:

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 Directors and staff. In the situation where Neighborhood Ministries is responsible for picking your child or youth up from school, you must notify the Directors or Administrative Assistant 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 Directors or Administrative Assistant 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 schoolwork and realize some children/youth may need extra help. Every Thursday 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 Directors 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.

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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 children and youth in need. Therefore, at each Chapel service we will be taking up an offering for the Florida United Methodist Children's Home. Thank you for helping us make a difference!

Contact Information:

Sean Hults, Co-Director	686-0855 ext 242	shults@firstumc.org
Eina Dorado, Co-Director	686-0855 ext 230	edorado@firstumc.org
Ivelisse Arman, Admin Assistant	686-0855 ext 212	iarman@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 and on social media. There will also be parent 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 Directors, Administrative Assistant, 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!

Sunday Mornings:

8:15am *Worship Service, Sanctuary

9:30am *Sunday School for children and adults

9:30am *Contemporary Worship Service, Fellowship Center

10:30-11am Connect Youth Ministries: Donuts and Discussion F101

11:00am *Worship Service, Sanctuary

11:00am *"The Current" Contemporary Worship Service, Fellowship
Center

Sunday Evenings:

5:00-7:00pm Connect Youth Ministries: Youth Group, Dinner (\$5 per
person,) Gym Games, Worship, and Small Groups.

5:00-7:00pm Children's Ministries: (K-5th Grade) Fellowship, Hands-
on interactive activities, and Dinner (\$5 per person.)

Tuesdays:

5:00-6:00pm Connect Youth Ministries: Youth Dance Team E22

Wednesdays:

5:15-6:00pm Midweek Meals, Fellowship Center (\$8 per person)

6:00-6:30pm Connect Youth Ministries: Open Gym/Cafe

6:30-7:30pm Connect Youth Ministries: Middle School and High
School Bible Study F301/404

**Nursery Provided*

Student Name



Attendance Policy

Our after-school ministry has grown rapidly in recent years. It is because of this that we are returning to a policy that we adopted in the 2004-2005 school year. In the past, we have kept track of attendance, but never really enforced any attendance policies. However, our waiting list has grown and our budget for staff, snacks and materials is strained. Please, if your child/ren will be absent call and let us know.

In addition to this, if your child is unable to attend the program consistently, we will be talking to you regarding your wishes to continue on the enrollment list. Perhaps you may want to consider withdrawing your child if s/he can't attend. Excessive absences become a problem when there are other children waiting to come into the program. Since our waiting list is predominately those waiting for a vacancy on one of our pick up routes, it is highly important that your child/ren attends the program daily if they occupy one of the seats on the bus. Therefore, if your child has more than 10 days of absences accumulated in a semester, you will receive a call to verify that you still wish to have him/her in the program.

If you still wish to have your child continue in the program, we will work with you to gain faithful attendance. Although, should absenteeism (without cause) continue to be a problem, we will withdraw your child/ren from the program.

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Student Name



Late Pick-Up Policy

Attention: The following page contains important information, please read carefully.

When signing a child up for the program, each parent signs and returns a letter stating that they are aware that their child needs to be picked up or walk home by 5:15PM at the latest. This time is set due to responsibilities that the staff have, outside of work, such as classes, that make it necessary for them to leave at that time.

The first offense will be a verbal confirmation that the parent is aware of the late pick-up policy. The parent/s will sign a form stating that they have been told that this was their first offense, and what will happen on subsequent offenses.

However, if the first offense is an extreme violation (past 6:00PM), a \$1.00 per minute charge will be accrued.

The following charges will begin accruing at 5:30PM.

The second offense will result in a \$1.00 per minute charge.

The third offense will result in a \$2.00 per minute charge.

The fourth offense will result in a \$2.00 per minute charge, as well as the parent/s appearing before the Neighborhood Ministries Council or directors with a plan on how they are going to eliminate the problem of late pick-ups for their child/ren to be able to continue in the program. Note that any late pick-up offences will count (toward the parent that initially signed the child up for the program), even if it is due to lateness of someone else on the pick up list.

Additionally, we understand that occasionally it is unavoidable to be late, and *individual cases will be dealt with on an individual basis*. In these situations, a phone call is greatly appreciated and needed. Please do not hesitate to call. It is always good to be able to tell the child/ren that their parent was simply delayed and that they will be here shortly.

If we have not heard from the parent by 5:25, we will try and contact them. If we are unable to make contact with them by 5:45, the police will be contacted for their assistance in finding the parent. At that point, First UMC, the Neighborhood Ministries Directors, and/or Law Enforcement Agencies have full discretion as to what the outcome with the child/ren should be. A possible solution could be having the child/ren remain with or be taken by the Law Enforcement Agency.

Please make sure that we have updated contact information on file. This will make things much easier should a situation ever arise that the parent needs to be contacted about, such as an illness, an accident, or a disciplinary problem.

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

NHM BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT & EXPECTATIONS

NHM is using 4 agreements to base behavior expectations off from and consequences for not meeting those expectations

AGREEMENT 1 of 4...	BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS...	POLICIES...	CONSEQUENCES/NEXT STEPS...
Respect God, His house, & everything/everyone in it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use the spaces in the F-building as they are INTENDED to be used! -Clean up after yourself when you are done using a space (snack time, crafts etc.). -Return materials back to where they belong. -Be kind & mindful of the furniture and items in the F-building. -Remain seated with seatbelts on for the entire ride on buses. -Use appropriate language and volume while on the bus (no screaming). -Bathrooms are for pottying...nothing else! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Eating allowed in approved locations ONLY! -Climbing, sports, & running around are outside time activities. -Use games & game tables as they are intended. -Classrooms are for crafts & school work. -Chapel is for praise/worship. -No climbing up the slides. -Follow all directions given on the bus. -No food and drinks on the bus! -Students will use the bathrooms one-at-a-time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff verbal redirections and reminders of expectations. -Reset time and reflection of expectations. -Light change or mark. -Suspension from Bus

NHM BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT & EXPECTATIONS

AGREEMENT 2 of 4...	BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS...	POLICIES...	CONSEQUENCES/NEXT STEPS...
Treat others the way you would like to be treated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use kind language- no screaming. -Be compassionate. -Create a safe space for all people. -Use respectful appropriate language toward staff & volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No using profanity or name calling. -No roasting, intimidating, or bullying behavior. -Threatening is not tolerated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Verbal redirections and reminders of expectations by staff. -Separation from peers to avoid further conflict. -Reset time and reflection→ “meta moment” -Light change or mark

AGREEMENT 3 of 4...	BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS...	POLICIES...	CONSEQUENCES/NEXT STEPS...
Keep your hands and feet to yourself at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No horseplay inside classrooms, lounge, game room, stairs, elevator. -Be aware of your body and surroundings to avoid accidents. -Do not push your way through staff members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No ninja moves or karate practice on peers. -Football is for the lawn & b-ball is for the gym...not INDOORS! -No retaliations. -Use your words and not your limbs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hitting is a light change. -Separation from peer to avoid further conflict→ “Blueprint problem solving tool” -Loss of privilege/activity -Fighting is not tolerated and parents will be called and students will be suspended (# of days will vary). -Hitting staff or volunteers will result in suspension the following day.

NHM BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT & EXPECTATIONS

AGREEMENT 4 of 4...	BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS...	POLICIES...	CONSEQUENCES/NEXT STEPS...
Remember God loves you and so do we.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cooperate and follow staff directions. -Communicate needs or concerns to staff trusting that staff have your back. -Take responsibility for your actions and words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff want to help each student succeed while holding them accountable to their actions and behavior expectations. -We will forgive and extend grace to each other so there is room to grow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Verbal redirections and reminders by staff. -Light change/mark -Conversation with a ministry leader→ “mood meter” -Conversation or intervention with parent/guardian about further participation in our program.

NEIGHBORHOOD NON-NEGOTIABLES...

***No running out of rooms/areas without permission** -being “out of area” is a safety liability. Students are expected to stay in areas of activity and cannot roam/wander on their own or for the fun of it. If this is a repeated behavior (3 times in one day) then the student will have to sit with co-director’s office floor until dismissal. Directors will speak with parent/guardian at pick up and the student will be suspended the following day from programming as a consequence.

***No refusing to follow commands or refusing to stay with the group** -if a student is refusing to return to the area or refusing to follow directions, it is a disruption to programming and a direct hazard on the safety of NHM staff and students. A student who refuses to rejoin a room/group activity when asked by staff, then the ministry leaders will be called. If the student continues to be uncooperative even to the directors, then the parent/guardian will be called immediately to come pick-up the student and the student will be suspended the next day of programming as a consequence. If this is a repeated behavior and the student is not improving...then there will be further discussions with directors and parents/guardians about the student continuing to stay in our program.

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student(s) Name: _____



Policies Regarding Behavior and Consequences

The 4 rules of Neighborhood Ministries:

1. Please God!
2. Follow Directions.
3. Be Respectful toward staff, each other and self.
4. Be Kind.

For Clubhouse & Outreach Florida, consequences are handed out on a "light" system. The lights are progressively given out on behavior. Blue light = No problems, Green light = A warning was given out, Yellow light = A warning was not heeded and a rule was broken, and a Red light = Repeated problems with behavior that day. Each day every child starts with a blue light with the goal to stay on blue the entire day.

Consequences will be a change in the "light" of the child who chooses not to abide by the rules. Green light results in the child losing some of the daily points and not receiving the "treat" for the day. Yellow light results in the loss of more points and the child not receiving the "treat" for the day. Red light results in no "treat," a consultation with their parent or guardian, and sitting on time out with a staff member during the next field trip or Friday activity. At the end of each day, we ask that you inquire as to the light of your child/ren and provide reinforcement from home.

Occasionally we have a "repeat offender," meaning a child that chooses not to abide by the rules and receives a red light more than once in a day or week. At that time, we find that it is most effective to speak with the parent or guardian and have the child stay away from Neighborhood Ministries for a day or the remainder of the week. We have found that by working with the parents like this, they can hand out the most effective discipline, as they know their child better than anyone.

The only other cause for temporary or permanent dismissal from the program would be endangering the welfare of others. We realize that sometimes children fight and we would never dismiss a child from the program for one slip up; however, should a child continue to "bully" or pick fights and arguments, s/he will be asked to leave the program for the safety and happiness of the other children.

In Club Christ, we feel the youth are more responsible and aware of the rules and regulations. We also have a zero tolerance for foul language and disrespect. We have created a "mark system" which penalizes the wrong and rewards those with good behavior. Each week the youth start with a blank slate. If a youth is heard having inappropriate discussions, using foul language, or disrespecting a staff member, the youth is given a mark. If a youth is given three marks in a day, the youth is immediately asked to leave the property and their parents are called. The youth is allowed to return to the program the following day, with an apology but if any additional marks are given that week, they will be asked to leave again. Club Christ staff holds the right to enforce a longer period of suspension consequent of the youth's behavior. Marks are based on a point system and for a youth to be eligible to attend summer camp, or any special trips, s/he must meet a minimum average requirement of four points. Good behavior and minimal marks are rewarded at the end of the week and year with special prizes.

There is a zero tolerance level regarding youth fighting. Should a youth "bully" or pick fights and arguments with other youth, s/he will be asked to leave the program for the safety and happiness of the others. The consequence of any physical fighting is an automatic suspension from the program with an apology upon return. A meeting may also be required by the youth involved and their parents to resolve the situation.

We hope that you find this informational sheet helpful. Should there be any questions please do not hesitate to call us at the Neighborhood Ministries Office ~ 686-0855.

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Clubhouse Schedule

Monday:

2:45	HW
3:30	Snack
4:00	Skills
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Tuesday:

2:45	HW
3:30	Sandwich Time
4:00	Chapel
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Wednesday:

2:45	HW
3:30	Snack
4:00	Boys/Girls Group
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Thursday:

2:45	Free Time
3:30	Snack
4:00	Tutoring
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Friday:

2:45	Free Time
3:30	Snack
4:00	Fun Activity
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Club Christ Schedule

Monday:

2:45	Homework Time/Free Time
3:30	Snacks
4:00	Life Skills
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Tuesday:

2:45	Homework Time/Free Time
3:30	Snacks
3:55	Chapel
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Wednesday:

2:45	Homework Time/Free Time
3:40	Snacks
4:15	Activities
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Thursday:

2:45	Homework Time/Free Time
3:30	Snacks
3:55	Community Service/Tutoring
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal

Friday:

2:45	Free Time/Fun Activity
4:55	Prayer
5:00	Dismissal



At each Chapel Service Neighborhood Ministries will be taking up an offering to support **The Florida United Methodist Children's Home**. Below you will find some frequently asked questions, for more information feel free to visit: fumch.org

What is the Florida United Methodist Children's Home?

The Florida United Methodist Children's Home was established as an orphanage in 1908 by Florida Methodists, and by the 1950's had changed its major emphasis to caring for abused, abandoned, neglected or dependent children. Boys and girls are accepted without regard to race, creed or national origin. The staff is composed of competent and dedicated professionals who share responsibility for caring for the children 24 hours a day. The beautiful 100-acre Enterprise campus is located on Lake Monroe, 30 miles north of Orlando and one mile east of the DeBary/Deltona 1-4 exit #108. With the Enterprise campus as focal point of activity, the Home assists children in other facilities, in independent living, in foster care, and those in vocational and institutions of higher education.

How long do children stay at the Florida United Methodist Children's Home?

The length of stay for a resident will vary, depending on the needs of the children and families in our care. The extensive counseling services of the Home available to children and their families have helped the Home to be responsible in reducing the time necessary for a child to remain in our care. Each child is an individual, and the time in residence will be influenced by the complexity of the problems they and their families face and the progress they can make in dealing with those problems. The best interests of the child are always of primary concern to the program of the Home.

How is the Children's Home funded?

Each year, on average, about 70-75% of our total funding comes from private sources. Strong church support enables the program of the Home to maintain its ministry as a significant Christian outreach committed to the well-being of children, youth and their families.