

OUUMC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

DISCOVERY DAY SCHOOL is a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church. Established in 1983, DDS provides a nurturing, safe environment in which three and four year old children feel loved, respected and valued while they are encouraged to develop to their fullest potential socially, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually.

FIRST DISCOVERIES (formerly Mother's Morning Out) is a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church designed to provide quality child care in a nurturing environment, thus giving mothers and other caregivers a regular block of time to meet personal and family needs. Mother's Morning Out is for children from 21 months until they are ready for preschool.

At **OUUMC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS**, we **believe** that each day should be filled with joy in learning, wonder, curiosity, and engaged investigation. We **believe** that children need time to acquire play skills so that they can learn to investigate, invent and problem-solve with complexity. We **believe** that the whole child – body, soul and mind – should be nurtured and challenged. We **believe** that teachers and families working together in partnership provide the highest quality preschool experience. We welcome children of all faiths and nationalities.

OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS STAFF

A quality staff dedicated to providing each and every child in our program with a positive preschool experience is vital to the success of our program. Knowledgeable, nurturing teachers are essential to positive and stimulating learning atmosphere.

Our Director of OUUMC Preschool Programs, Susan Phillips, has a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and certification in Educational Leadership. Prior to becoming OUUMC Preschool Director, she had twelve years combined experience as a classroom teacher, university instructor and elementary school principal.

Our Discovery Day School teachers are experienced classroom teachers, certified in elementary or early childhood education, and / or related areas such as music education, art education, gifted education and counseling. Several teachers on staff hold additional certifications in science, math or reading.

Discovery Day School assistant teachers, as well as Mother's Morning Out staff, include certified teachers, experienced moms and college students studying education or a child-related field. Staff members are certified in CPR for children and adults, and in first aid. All Discovery Day School teachers and assistants receive 15 hours or more of continuing education annually.

FIRST DISCOVERIES

(formerly Mother's Morning Out)

OUR MISSION

First Discoveries, a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church, is designed to provide quality child care in a nurturing environment thus giving families and other caregivers a regular block of time to meet personal and family needs. First Discoveries provides opportunities for toddlers and preschoolers to interact with a small group of children their own age on a regular basis and to enjoy happy learning experiences at church. Children of all nationalities and religions are accepted and welcome.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Our program is designed to provide opportunities for children to:

- 1) Grow in understanding and love for themselves, their families and others in their world.
- 2) Grow in awareness that God loves them and that Jesus is a special friend.
- 3) Grow in the ability to think, solve problems, and develop language skills.
- 4) Enjoy creative expression in music, art and play.
- 5) Develop age-appropriate social skills by playing with the same group of children and adults on an ongoing basis.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD DO AT FIRST DISCOVERIES?

We believe in the value of play and child-directed activities, rather than teacher-directed, for young children. Our toddlers and two-year-olds are busy each morning making friends, exploring how toys work, looking at books and being read to, making music and learning new songs and learning that important lesson of separation - Mommy leaves, but she always comes back!

Through group play experiences, young ones begin to learn the concept of sharing – even if it isn't easy. They expand their language abilities and learn to share adult attention. They develop the social skills needed to play games and make friends. Children use messy art materials in a space made for experimentation and try on different personalities with different costumes.

We adhere to Maria Montessori's philosophy. Play is the work of the child. What a lot of work our children do in a busy morning at Mother's Morning Out!

Children's Chapel - Each First Discoveries class attends children's chapel once weekly in the OUUMC sanctuary. The Children's Chapel Ministry Coordinator plans age-appropriate lessons with Bible stories and music/movement activities. On Chapel Day, parents receive a written synopsis of the chapel lesson along with suggestions for discussion and activities for those families who wish to follow-up at home. We believe that through brief, engaging opportunities to learn about God in our sanctuary, we help build in our children a positive foundation for spiritual life.