



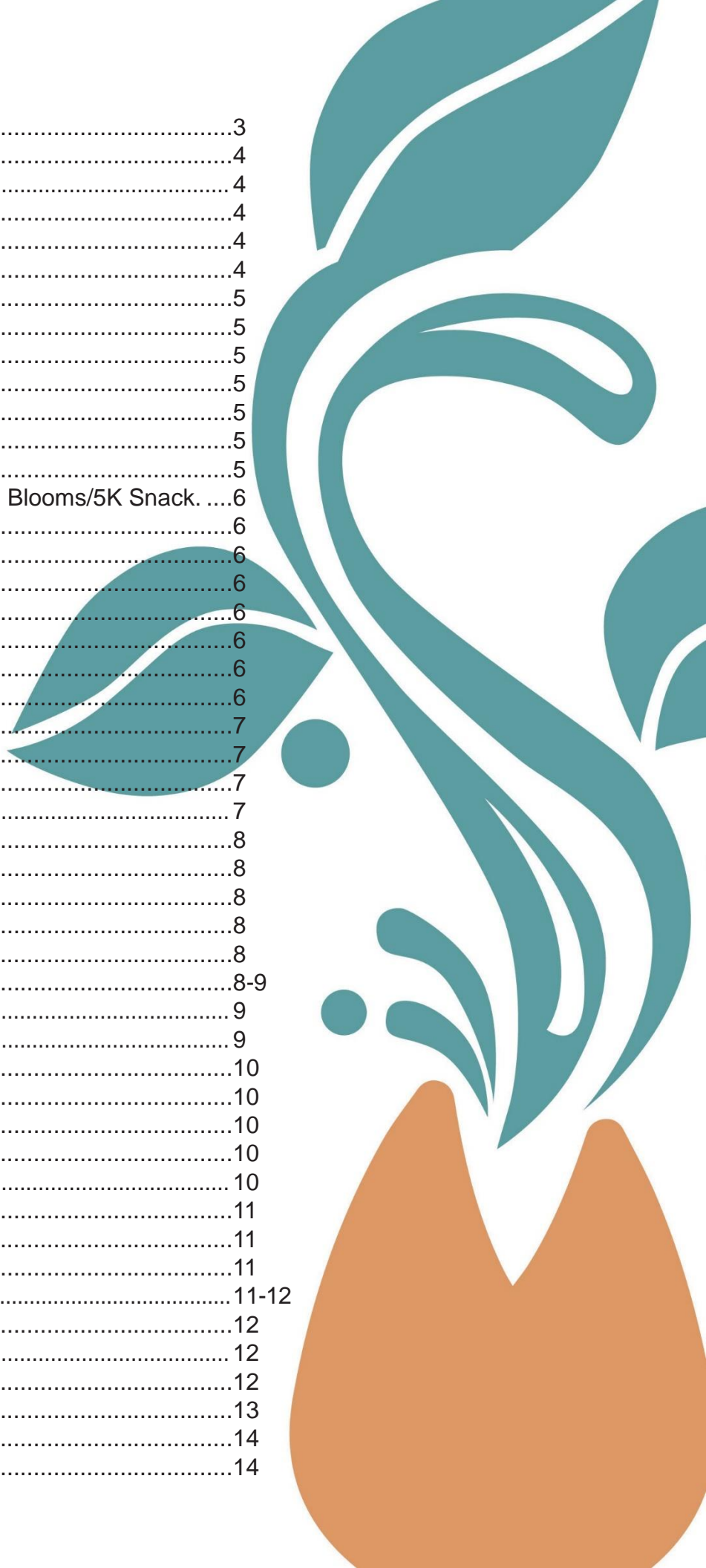
SERVING • EDUCATING • ENRICHMENT • DEVELOPMENT

St. John's United Methodist Church 803-648-4745 104 Newberry St. NW Aiken

DSS #903

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose & Goals.....	3
General Information.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Ages.....	4
Standard Hours of Operation.....	4
Types of Classes.....	4
Arrival and Departure.....	5
Afternoon Clubs.....	5
Blooms/Kindergarten.....	5
Entrance/Parking/.....	5
Tracking of children.....	5
Snacks and Lunch.....	5
No-Peanut Policy.....	5
Seedlings/Buds/3K, Sprouts/4K, Blooms/5K Snack.....	6
Lunch.....	6
Attendance.....	6
School Closings.....	6
Birthdays.....	6
Holidays.....	6
SEED Special Programs.....	6
Transportation/ Field Trips Policy.....	6
Communication with Our SEED Families.....	7
Individual Contacts.....	7
Group Email.....	7
Newsletters/Calendar.....	7
Health and Safety.....	8
Required Forms.....	8
Emergency Medical Forms.....	8
Medication.....	8
Illness.....	8
Clothing.....	8-9
Pick-Up.....	9
Discipline.....	9
Car Safety.....	10
Emergency Preparedness Plan.....	10
Exposure Control Plan (ECP).....	10
Confidentiality Policy.....	10
Insurance.....	10
Financial Policies.....	11
Registration Policies.....	11
Registration and Book Fees.....	11
Tuition.....	11-12
Late Fees.....	12
Drop-Ins.....	12
Leaving the Program.....	12
Holiday and Program Schedule.....	13
Appendix A.....	14
Online Payments.....	14



“Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Matthew 17:20 NIV

PURPOSE & GOALS

The purpose of St. John’s United Methodist Church SEED Program is to serve families of the church and community by providing a program for infants through kindergarten age children that is developmentally appropriate, intellectually stimulating, and spiritually nurturing in a safe, supervised environment, planned and directed by caring adults who are chosen for their skills with children and their commitment to Christian education.

Goals

- ◇ To provide each child with a basic understanding of what it means to be a child of God.
- ◇ To provide love and care to those we serve.
- ◇ To foster a positive self-image within each child.
- ◇ To encourage creativity and imagination.
- ◇ To develop social interaction skills.
- ◇ To promote independence and self-direction.
- ◇ To develop a love of learning.
- ◇ To increase language, cognitive, and large and small motor skills.
- ◇ To expose children to developmentally appropriate pre-reading, writing, science/health, social studies, and math skills.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

St. John's United Methodist Church SEED Program is a ministry of our church governed by the SEED Board comprised of church members, staff, administrators, and parents of children in the program. The director, teachers, and staff of the program are employees of the church. Our program offers a Christian environment serving children of all ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. St. John's United Methodist Church SEED Program is not trained to instruct students with learning disabilities, and special needs. When learning disabilities and special needs are moderate to severe, a learning environment with specialized instructors is required. The SEED Board reserves the right to decline any application. Partial scholarships are available. Three-year-olds must be potty-trained to start in the Buds/3K room.

Ages

Pods/Nursery.....	Six weeks until walking
Pods/Toddler.....	Walking until two
Seedlings/2K.....	Two
Buds/ 3K.....	Three by September 1 + potty trained
Sprouts/4K.....	Four by September 1
Blooms/Kindergarten.....	Five by September 1

Standard Hours of Operation

Pods Nursery/Toddler.....	M-TH: 8:30am -12pm/2:30pm F 8:30-12
Seedlings 2K.....	M-F: 8:30am - 12pm
Buds/3K Sprouts/4K.....	M-F: 8:30am - 12pm
Blooms/5K.....	M-F: 8:30am - 12:30pm
Afternoon Clubs.....	M-TH: 12pm - 2:30pm

For an extra fee children may be dropped off as early as 7:30. Please see pages 11-12 for a listing of all fees.

Types of Preschool and Kindergarten Classes

Seedlings/2K.....	M/W/F and T/TH classes
Buds/3K.....	M/W/F, T/TH, and M-F classes
Sprouts/4K.....	M/T/W/TH and M-F classes
Blooms/Kindergarten.....	M-F class

Arrival and Departure

Carline for drop-off and pick-up of children enters and exits the parking lot by way of Chesterfield Street. We must not block through traffic on Chesterfield Street. Cars will circle the parking lot to drop-off and pick-up children under the covered entrance of the church. A teacher will walk your child to and from the car. Parents are responsible for getting children into and out of the car seat. Morning drop-off time is from 8:15 to 8:30 a.m. Pick-up time is 11:45 a.m. to 12 noon. It is **mandatory** that you be on time.

Afternoon Clubs

Drop-off is from 11:45 to 12 noon. Pick-up is from 2:15 to 2:30 p.m.

Blooms/Kindergarten

Kindergarten classes are dropped-off and dismissed from the same carline door as stated above in arrival and departure. Morning drop-off time is from 8:15 to 8:30 a.m. and pick-up time is 12:15 to 12:30 p.m. Kindergarten will close at noon on the designated days in bold on our Holiday and Program Schedule found on page 13.

Entrance/Parking

Doors entering into the school are locked for the safety of the children in the program. Key cards are available for purchase to allow entrance. If you walk your child into the building, use the doors on Newberry and Chesterfield Streets. No walk-ins are allowed through carline doors.

Tracking of Children

Upon arrival to the classroom the teachers will document the time the child arrived. The daily tracking sheet of children's names will go with the teacher everywhere the class goes (i.e.: the playground, gym, chapel). Upon leaving the classroom the teachers will document the time. The time will then be documented upon arrival at the new destination. When the child is picked up, the teacher will document the time departed on the daily tracking sheet.

SNACKS AND LUNCH

No-Peanut/Tree Nut Policy

In an effort to protect those with nut allergies St. John's UMC SEED Program does not permit peanut butter and peanut products. This policy means that no peanut butter or peanut products may be sent in for snacks, as well as in lunches. Peanut or tree nut allergies cause some of the most severe food-induced allergic reactions. The allergy is even more serious than other food allergies because the food does not have to be ingested to have fatal effects. Some patients react to inhalation of peanut products or even touching an object that has been in contact with the allergen.

Snack

The Pods/Toddler room provides a light snack in the morning. Parents may donate non-sugar snacks (plain Cheerios, saltines, graham crackers).

The following foods are not allowed for children under the age of 4:

Hot dogs	Popcorn	Marshmallows
Nuts and seeds	Chunks of peanut butter	
Chunks of cheese	Raw vegetables	
Whole grapes	Raisins	
Hard, gooey, or sticky candy	Chewing gum	

Seedlings/Buds/Sprouts/Blooms Snack

Parents provide the snack. Your teacher will notify you when it is your turn. Parents, please note the list of foods not allowed for children under the age of 4 (see page 5).

Lunch

All children staying for Afternoon Club should bring a lunch clearly marked with child's name. Please keep the following in mind when packing your child's lunch:

- ◇ No peanut butter and peanut/tree nut products.
- ◇ We will not heat lunchables.
- ◇ Warm-up foods must be sent in a separate, microwavable container.
- ◇ We can only reheat food. We cannot microwave foods that take over 30 seconds in the microwave.
- ◇ We cannot refrigerate lunches. Use a cool pack in the lunch to keep food from spoiling.
- ◇ Cut foods for children under the age of 4 into pieces no larger than one-half inch.
- ◇ Please note foods not allowed for children under the age of 4 (see page 5).
- ◇ No glass containers

Attendance

Establishing good school habits at an early age can mean success in the years to come. It is important to your child to be present at school. When children are absent or late, they miss valuable opportunities to develop intellectually, emotionally, and socially to their fullest potential. Please keep absences for sickness.

School Closings

If Aiken County schools announce that they will be closed for inclement weather, St. John's SEED will also be closed. If Aiken County schools open on a delayed schedule, St. John's SEED will open at 10:30.

Birthdays

Parents are welcome to bring simple refreshments to celebrate a birthday. Teachers should be advised of plans at least a week ahead of time. Please do not bring balloons, cakes, cupcakes, or room decorations. If treat bags are sent in, please only include age-appropriate items in the bag. All summer birthdays may be celebrated during the school year. Check with teachers so we can avoid too many celebrations on one day. Please do not send birthday invitations to school unless every child in the class is receiving one. This is disruptive and can cause hurt feelings.

Holidays

We celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter with special activities. Dates for holiday parties for each class are announced in class calendars and in the newsletter.

Special Programs

We have special programs for parents at Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Donuts for Dads, and Kindergarten Graduation. Other special programs and Bible studies for parents may also be provided. Information will be sent home.

Transportation/ Field Trips Policy

St. John's SEED does not transport children from home to school or from school to home. Field trips are only taken by the Blooms/5K.

COMMUNICATION WITH OUR SEED FAMILIES

The director and teachers of the SEED programs strongly believe open communication is a key component for the effective care and education of the children you entrust to us. Bearing that in mind there are several different ways we use to communicate with you.

Individual Contacts

In the event of an issue regarding your child the Director will call you directly or send you a text message, based on your preferences and the nature of the issue. Please make sure your contact preferences are noted and we have the most current phone number to use.

Teachers do not have their cell phones on when they are on duty and therefore, cannot accept phone calls or read text messages during those times. However, the Director is available during school hours to take your call and give a message to a staff member in an emergency. We will make every effort to help you promptly. **Our direct dial number is 803-648-4745.**

You may also email the director at mpearson@stjaiken.org. Email is checked promptly each morning and will be responded to in a timely manner.

Teacher conferences may be arranged whenever a parent or teacher senses the need. Please don't hesitate to let the director know if you would like to schedule a conference.

The school cannot accept verbal messages from children. Any communication must be written and delivered to a teacher.

Group E-mail

There will be occasions when the school will send a group email. Please make sure we have at least one email address for your family.

Newsletters/Calendar

A newsletter and calendar will be posted on the website: stjaiken.org each month. Please refer to the Connect link and then SEED. These documents detail the happenings and upcoming events for the school and the individual classes. It is very important that parents take the time to read these so their children will not miss out on activities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Your child's health and safety are a major concern to us. All teachers and staff are required to have Infant/Child CPR and First Aid Training. Please read these policies carefully. Every child benefits when all families understand and cooperate.

Required Forms

Please make sure your child has had all necessary immunizations and bring copies of current forms to the SEED Director for our files. No child will be allowed to attend without a current SC Immunization Form on file.

Emergency Medical Forms

We maintain a medical form with emergency medical permission and child information on file. Please note any allergies, regular medication, your physician, and any other special instructions.

Medication

Only emergency medicine, such as benadryl, epi-pens, inhalers will be administered by the Director or lead teacher.

If a child is diagnosed with an allergy that requires an epinephrine pen or inhaler, one must be kept on the premises at all times. These are kept in the medical cabinet in the director's office. A medical form must be filled out with exact instructions. All medicine must be in original containers and labeled with child's name.

If a child requires any other medication during school hours a parent must come to the school to administer the medication.

Illness

If your child is ill, please keep her/him at home and do not needlessly expose the other children. We cannot accept a child with fever, colds, cough, rashes, vomiting or a green-yellow discharge from the nose or eyes. A child must be fever-free with no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours prior to returning to the program. If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will notify the responsible party immediately to pick up the child.

Please notify the Director if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease so other parents may be informed. If your child test positive for COVID they will be required to follow current CDC guidelines.

If your child has chronic sinus problems, seasonal allergies or asthma, we must have a physician's statement so we know that your child is not contagious to other children.

Wounds must be treated and covered at all times. Chap Stick, cough drops and individual hand sanitizer is not allowed.

Clothing

PLEASE dress your child in comfortable, play clothes that can get dirty. Put closed-toe shoes on your child. The playground has wood chips and open-toe shoes are not safe. Children's clothing should be easily accessible for the bathroom. Remove or secure strings on all clothing as a safety precaution. No jewelry, including teething beads, are allowed to be worn. All coats, lunch boxes, book bags, etc. must be plainly marked with your child's name. Parents of children up to and including 3-year-olds should bring an extra change of clothing including underwear and gripper socks in a bag clearly marked with name.

Clothing (cont.)

Please no umbrellas or rolling book bags. Children in diapers should have wipes and their own diapers (at least 5) daily. If your child is potty-training, we ask that you use pull-ups with velcro sides for easy off during this process. PLEASE MARK all diaper bags, wipes, bottles, sipper cups, and clothing with your child's name.

The diaper changing area is disinfected after each use per DSS guidelines, using 1-3 tablespoons of bleach to each quart of water.

Pick-Up

If anyone other than the parents/legal guardians are to pick-up a child, the Director must be notified IN WRITING. "Parent substitutes" who are unknown to our staff must provide a Photo ID.

Discipline

Discipline at St. John's UMC will be provided in a manner consistent with our philosophy. Each situation is an individual one and is addressed in a manner which takes into account the child's age, developmental stage and individual needs. Our goal is to know each child well enough to redirect misbehavior. Acceptable behavior is encouraged through positive reinforcement. If a negative behavior continues, removal from the group will be our next step. After an age appropriate time out, a child will be allowed to rejoin the group. Corporal punishment is never used at St. John's. Likewise, we cannot allow a child to be violent with other children. If the staff has exhausted its options with a child's negative behavior the parent/guardian will be called to remove the child from the school for the remainder of the day. Should the behavior continue the child may be excluded from school for a day or two or possibly indefinitely. The safety of all children and staff is our number one priority.

Biting Policy

As a preschool, we understand that biting, unfortunately, is a part of a preschool setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that were bitten. If a biting incident occurs, the parent of the biter and the parent of the bitten will be notified via a bite report sent home at the end of the day. Names of the children are not shared with either parent. Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior.

When Biting Continues:

1. If the child inflicts 2 bites in a one week period in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one week period in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked to take a one week break from the school.
3. If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one week period in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the parents will be asked to make other child care arrangements.

If a child, who has been through step 1 and 2 and then goes 3 weeks without biting, we will go back to step one. If a child bites twice in a 1 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from preschool for the remainder of the day.

Car Safety

Seat belts are required by law for all persons in vehicles. Car seats are expected for all children meeting car seat requirements. A teacher will walk your child to and from the car. Parents will be responsible for putting child in and taking child out of the car seat. Dogs should be left at home. Please do not allow children to stand while in the car, out of the sun roofs or windows. Cell phone use is discouraged in carline.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

We conduct monthly fire drills that teach the children the correct way to exit the building during a fire. The children exit their back doors, onto the playground, or by the gym. The children on the playground will exit the playground through the gates located on the far end of the playground. They will then be led to a secure area outside of the danger zone.

In the event of dangerous weather, the children will be taken to the basement. They will sit in the hallway of the basement until the weather radio gives an all clear. If time does not permit the children to be taken safely to the basement, they will sit in the interior hall of the Ebenezer (school) building. The Aiken County Emergency Preparedness Services has advised us that the interior hall is the safest in the building (along with the basement). These plans are in conjunction with the Aiken County Emergency Preparedness Services. In the event than an “off-site” evacuation is necessary, the children will be relocated to First Presbyterian Church. We will transport the children on foot. The children will remain at this alternate site under the care and supervision of our staff while parents/guardians are contacted for pick-up. The staff will remain with the children until all children are released to designated guardians.

Medical emergencies that require immediate medical care by a health professional are as follows: Semi or loss of consciousness, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding, seizure, neck or back injury, repeated forceful or bloody vomiting, possible broken bones, and shock. Staff has been trained in basic first aid and will provide treatment until medical personnel arrive. 911 will be called immediately upon recognizing symptoms of illness or injury. The parent/guardian will be called immediately following the call to 911. A staff member will accompany the child to the emergency room at Aiken Regional Medical and stay until the parent/guardian arrives. All medical/contact information of the child’s will be taken along with the child.

Exposure Control Plan (ECP)

St. John’s United Methodist SEED Program is committed to providing a safe and healthful environment for our children and staff. In pursuit of this endeavor, all employees of St. John’s UMC SEED Program are required to annually attend a Blood Borne Pathogens/Infection Control class. All employees are required to comply with the procedures and work practices outlined in training. A copy of the St. John’s UMC SEED Exposure Control Plan is located in the Director’s office.

Confidentiality Policy

Children’s records are accessible to the owners of the child care facility, child’s teacher, Director(s), Assistant Director, Director Designee, the child’s parent or legal guardian and authorized employees of the Department of Social Services. Staff files are accessible to the Director, Assistant Director, Director Designee, the owner and authorized employees of the Department of Social Services. All files will be kept in the Director’s office when not in use. Parental permission must be obtained to use photographs of children on the internet and in any and all publications.

Insurance

St. John’s UMC SEED Program liability insurance is covered by the Guide One Insurance through the Hutson- Etheredge Insurance Company.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Registration Policies

A non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee is required to enroll each child in the program. Registration fees are used for supplies, toys, books, etc. In order to receive membership priority during registration day, you must be a member of St. John's UMC or enrolled in the program before December 31 of the prior year. All accounts must be current in order to register for the next school year.

Teacher requests will be considered, but cannot be guaranteed. Class rosters will be determined based on gender ratio, birth date, and overall best interest of the classroom. You will receive confirmation regarding your child's class placement. Class placement of all children are left to the discretion of the Director and staff.

In order to keep your child's placement for the next school year, all accounts must have a zero balance at the end of the current school year in May.

Registration and Curriculum Fees

Nursery, Toddler, Seedlings/2K.....	\$100.00 per child
Buds/3K 2-day class.....	\$130.00 registration
Buds/3K 3-day class.....	\$150.00 registration
Buds/3K 5-day class.....	\$170.00 registration
Spouts/4K 4-day class.....	\$160.00 registration*
Sprouts/4K 5-day class.....	\$170.00 registration*
Sprouts/4K Curriculum Fee.....	\$50.00
Blooms/5K 5-day class.....	\$190.00 registration*
Blooms/5K Curriculum Fee.....	\$90.00

Tuition

The monthly tuition fee is due on the first of each month and is past due on the tenth. There are no deductions made in tuition for holidays or illness. Additionally, there are no deductions made in tuition for days closed due to inclement weather or unusual conditions. Efforts will be made to make-up the days but make-up may not be practical. Checks should be made out to St. John's SEED. Credit/Debit cards may be used. You may also pay online using a credit card. **If using a charge card there will be up to a 3% credit card administration fee.** Please see Appendix A on page 14 for instructions. A monthly statement will be sent home.

Tuition (cont.)

Extended Care.....	\$8.00 per morning 7:30-8:30am
Nursery/Toddler Morning/ 2-days per week.....	\$150 per month
Nursery/Toddler Morning/ 3-days per week.....	\$225 per month
Nursery/Toddler Morning/ 4-days per week.....	\$285 per month
Nursery/Toddler Morning/ 5-days per week.....	\$345 per month
Nursery/Toddler Afternoon/ 2-days per week.....	\$115 per month
Nursery/Toddler Afternoon/ 3-days per week.....	\$160 per month
Nursery/Toddler Afternoon/ 4-days per week.....	\$205 per month
Seedlings/2K 2-day class.....	\$150.00 per month
Seedlings/2K 3-day class.....	\$175.00 per month
Buds/3K 2-day class.....	\$150.00 per month
Buds/3K 3-day class.....	\$175.00 per month
Buds/3K 5-day class.....	\$230.00 per month
Sprouts/4K 4-day class.....	\$205.00 per month
Sprouts/4K 5-day class.....	\$230.00 per month
Blooms/5K 5-day class.....	\$250.00 per month
Lunch/Clubs 1-day per week.....	\$60.00 per month
Lunch/Clubs 2-day per week.....	\$115.00 per month
Lunch/Clubs 3-day per week.....	\$160.00 per month
Lunch/Clubs 4-day per week.....	\$200.00 per month

Late Fees

A late fee of \$10.00 is required if your child is not picked up by the designated pick-up time. An additional \$20.00 is required if a parent is more than 15 minutes late. PLEASE BE ON TIME SO WE NEVER HAVE TO COLLECT A LATE FEE. We want to respect our staff member's time and allow them to finish their duties and leave on time. A \$40.00 late fee is also added for overdue tuition or returned checks.

Drop-Ins

Drop-in reservations will be taken when space is available and may be made up to two weeks in advance by calling 803-648-4745. Drop in rates are \$23.00 per morning (8:30am-12pm) and \$18.00 per afternoon (12pm-2:30pm). Once a reservation is made, you will be responsible for payment regardless of use.

Leaving the Program

If a child moves or drops out of the program for any reason, please notify the Director as soon as possible so that we may fill the vacancy.

HOLIDAY AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

2023-2024 School Year

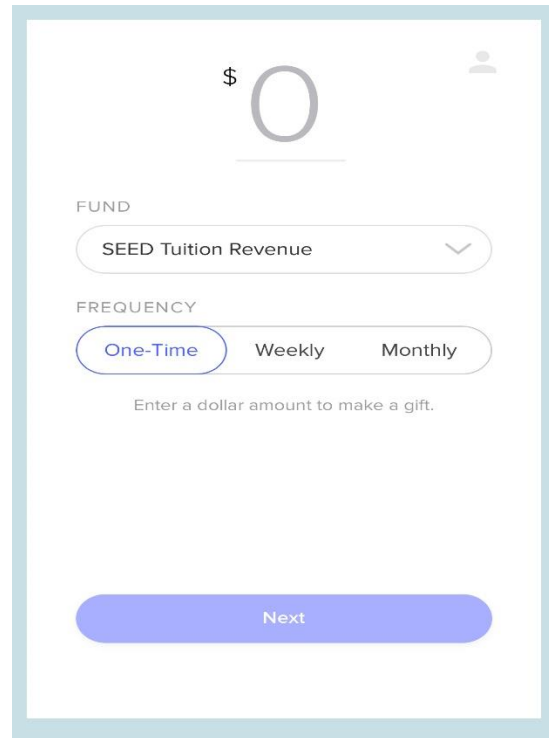
St. John's UMC SEED Program observes no holidays other than those listed.

August 8-10	Parent/Teacher Conferences
August 15	School Starts
September 4	Labor Day Holiday
October 2-13	Fall Break
November 3	School CLOSED for Apple Fest
November 17	Thanksgiving Program at 10 am
November 22-24	Thanksgiving Holiday
November 29	Donuts with Dad
November 30	Donuts with Dad
December 19	Entire School Closes at NOON
December 20-3	Christmas Break
January 15	Martin Luther King Holiday
January 29-1 (12:30 pm-2:00 pm)	Open House for 2024/2025 school year
January 31	Current 4K family registration
February 1	Church members enrolled in program registration
February 2	Current program members registration
February 5	Church members not enrolled in program
February 6	Public Registration
February 9	Valentine's Program at 10 am
February 19	President's Day Holiday
March 29	Good Friday
April 1-12	Spring Break
May 10	Mother's Day Program at 10 am
May 23 at 6 pm	Blooms/5K Graduation
May 24	Last Day of School

APPENDIX A-ONLINE PAYMENTS

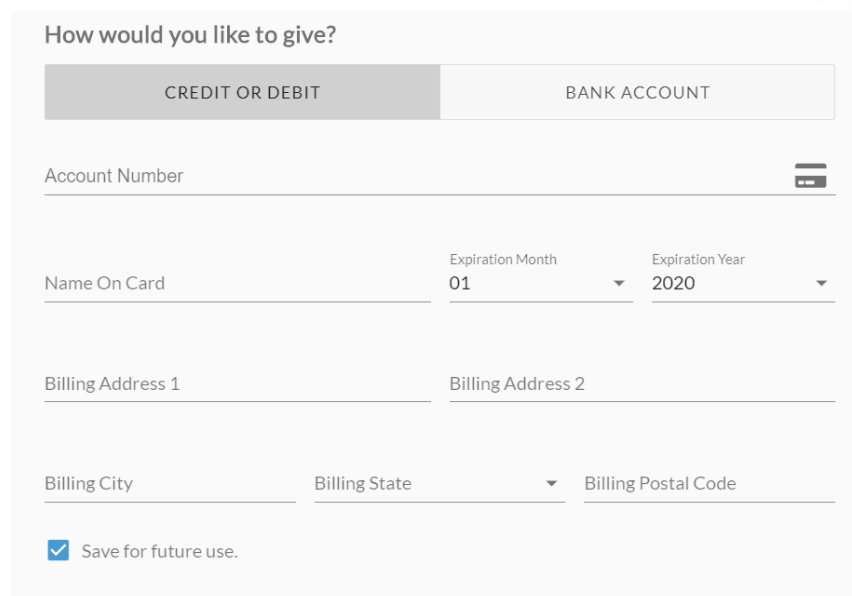
Visit our website **stjaiken.org** to pay your SEED bill online, using a debit/credit card, withdrawal from your checking or savings account.

On the website, click the **Give** button located on the top. The following will appear:



The screenshot shows a payment form with a balance of \$0. The 'FUND' dropdown is set to 'SEED Tuition Revenue'. The 'FREQUENCY' options are 'One-Time', 'Weekly', and 'Monthly'. Below these options is a text prompt: 'Enter a dollar amount to make a gift.' and a blue 'Next' button.

Select 'SEED Tuition Revenue' as *Fund*. In the Optional *Memo* field, please enter the child/children you are paying for. You will also have the ability to set up recurring payments and save your information for future use. Press Continue and you will see the following screen:



The screenshot shows a form titled 'How would you like to give?'. It has two tabs: 'CREDIT OR DEBIT' (selected) and 'BANK ACCOUNT'. The form includes fields for 'Account Number', 'Name On Card', 'Expiration Month' (01), 'Expiration Year' (2020), 'Billing Address 1', 'Billing Address 2', 'Billing City', 'Billing State', and 'Billing Postal Code'. There is a checkbox labeled 'Save for future use.' which is checked.

There is up to a 3% credit card administration fee when using a charge card.