

July 21, 2021

Dear Parents,

In his infinite wisdom, the Lord has brought us safely to the beginning of another school year. As we look ahead to this school year, we might also be taking the time to look back. With a worldwide pandemic and school during this time, the last several years have no doubt seen unique challenges and stressors. Yet here we are! What a blessing it is that we are able to continue with Christian education in person this year and to continue rejoicing in the promises that the Lord has for us. As we look back and as we look ahead, we can say with confidence, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37). We can look at the cross and the empty grave and know that Jesus has already taken care of our worst problem for us - our sin and the condemnation we deserve because of it. And if Jesus has solved our biggest problem, he's definitely got the rest of them!

Your third grader might be very excited to begin a new school year. Your third grader might (also) be very nervous about this year and the challenges and changes that it brings. Third grade is a big step up - whether it be the big textbooks and chapter books, the growing level of independence each child has, or the longer homework assignments. Yet, whatever challenges may come, we can all say, "God's got this!" He has formed each child in this classroom and has brought them to a new school year. Therefore, I pray with confidence that God would bless your student as we embark on this learning journey together.

I earnestly want every student to succeed. I have been given the privilege and responsibility of helping your child cultivate their unique, God-given talents and abilities. Yet this is not something I can do entirely on my own. Therefore I ask you to share with me in this great responsibility of educating your child. Please pray with me that God would bless your student in their learning and that God would bless me in my teaching. Please also do not hesitate to contact me throughout the school year - I want to partner with you to work through any difficulties that your child may face and to celebrate their successes.

I am here for your child and I am here for your family. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions now or throughout the school year. I am so excited to see how God blesses each student and how we are able to grow together as a family in Christ. May the Lord bless and keep you always!

In the love of Christ,
Elizabeth Miller

Communication Plan

As mentioned above, please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns that you may have. It is vital that we work together to address any questions or concerns you may have. Please know that I do check all methods of communication at regular intervals and will respond as my schedule allows. Please know that I and other teachers do not check our cell phones or emails throughout the day. If you do need to reach me during school hours, please do so by contacting the office.

Email: I check my email several times throughout the day - usually before (approximately 6:30-7:00am) and after school (usually until about 4:30), as well as once in the evening. I will respond to you as quickly as I am able to. Typically, emails not related to homework that are sent out after I leave school will be addressed the following day.

Phone Calls or Texts: You are welcome to contact me via my cell phone as well. I am usually able to respond to texts more quickly than phone calls or emails, but I ask that you reserve texts for quick questions. For anything longer than a quick question, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Personal Conversations: While I believe that most communication can be addressed via the methods I have outlined above, sometimes personal conversations are preferred by you or me. Please note that immediately before and after school typically do not work well - I am focusing on getting students ready for the day and on closing out the day properly. If you would like to sit and talk with me, please reach out via one of the methods above and we can schedule a time that works for both of us.

Attendance

The school day begins at 8:10 each day. At this time, students should be in the classroom ready to start the school day. Children that are not in the building by 8:05 or in the classroom by 8:10 will be considered tardy for the day.

Students are expected to attend every day that school is in session. If your child is sick, has a doctor's appointment, or otherwise will be absent, please notify the school office by the time that school starts. Additionally, you may write down any appointments in your student's planner.

Classroom Management

Expectations

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Here are our classroom rules that will help guide us in how we show our love for God and for each other in our words and actions:

- L-Listen with your full attention
- E-Enter the room prepared and ready to learn
- A-Always give your best effort on all your work
- R-Respect yourself, others, and materials in the classroom
- N-No excuses!

Motivation

Ephesians 4:32-5:2 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

As Christians, we know that God’s Law is perfect and good for us. We desire to serve our Lord by keeping his commandments.

However, we have an even greater motivation to keep God’s Law: his Gospel good news - that Jesus has died for us and has taken away every single one of our sins.

This Gospel is what sets the tone for our behavior in this classroom. Everything we do in our classroom will want to be done out of love for our Savior and for our neighbors. This especially includes how we treat one another when we sin. We will want to remind each other of what God’s Law says, but also how we are forgiven and free to serve our neighbor in the Gospel.

Consequences

Luke 17:3-4 If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.

Although we want to show our love for God and all he has done, we are still sinful people who need correction. Out of love for God and for the students, these consequences have been set in place:

1. The student receives one or several verbal warnings, depending on the situation.
2. If the student has not corrected the behavior, they will be asked to take some time to think about the situation and then discuss it with the teacher. At this time, the student may be required to walk laps at recess. They may also be asked to write a letter home, explaining what they have done wrong and what they will do to improve their behavior. This letter will need to be signed by a parent and returned the next day.

3. If the student still has not corrected the behavior, they will bring home an “Infraction Notice” (sample found at the end of this handbook), which will require a parental signature. Three of these slips within one quarter will result in a detention after school. Receiving Infraction Notices can also impact the student’s eligibility in extra-curricular activities at Star.

Homework Policy

Homework is an opportunity for students to practice what they have learned and deepen their understanding. Assignments must be completed and turned in so that the child is able to demonstrate their understanding of the concept and their readiness to move on. There will be time given for students to complete assignments during school. Whatever is not done during the school day should be considered homework and brought home for completion. The following guidelines will be enforced regarding homework:

1. All assignments are due at the beginning of school the following day, unless otherwise specified.
2. Homework is not considered to be complete if three or more problems have not been answered.
3. Failure to complete an assignment will result in an infraction.
4. Failure to bring an assignment to school will result in an infraction.

You are asked to please contact me anytime throughout the year if you feel that your child has too much homework. I will work with you to remedy the situation. About 10 minutes of homework per grade level is considered appropriate, so that a 3rd grader is expected to complete 30-40 minutes of homework each night.

All students will be expected to keep track of their assignments in an assignment notebook. This will be filled out each day by the student and will be checked prior to first recess. Failure to fill out the assignment notebook will result in missing part of recess to neatly fill in assignments. Parents are asked to check their child’s assignment book and sign it each day.

Students will each have an assignment binder, which should be used to help organize homework assignments. If organized, the chances of receiving an infraction for incomplete homework should diminish.

I will assist the students in whatever way possible to make sure the homework is not only done on time, but also understood by the student. Those students who wish to seek additional help can arrange a time to meet with me after school at a convenient time for both. I will do my best to practice good communication with you so that we can work together for the benefit of your child.

Your child will be expected to follow these guidelines:

1. All work is to be complete using neat handwriting. Messy work will not be accepted. Papers turned in that are deemed “messy” will be returned to the students to redo.
2. Answers are to be given in complete sentences unless otherwise directed. This means that all answers must begin with capital letters, have ending punctuation, and must contain a complete thought.
3. Each paper is to be turned in with the required headings - name and number, date, and other information if applicable. Students may miss recess time to practice writing these items at the top of their paper.

Grading

When it comes to grading in 3rd grade, most grading is done based on percentage correct. Once the percentage is calculated the papers will be assigned a letter grade.

Occasionally a project may be graded with a rubric. Rubrics will be passed out at the beginning of the project, so that students understand what is expected of them and how they will be graded.

<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>LETTER GRADE</u>
100	A+
95-99	A
93-94	A-
91-92	B+
87-90	B
85-86	B-
83-84	C+
79-82	C
77-78	C-
75-76	D+
72-74	D
70-71	D-
00-69	F

Writing and Handwriting are graded using an ESNU system. This is done because third graders are still growing in these areas. There is a tremendous leap in writing expectations from second to third grade. With regard to Handwriting, cursive can take some time to master.

E = Excellent

S+

S+ = Satisfactory

S-

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.”

The teachers at Star strive to use our God-given abilities to their fullest to assist you in the Christian upbringing of your children. This is a partnership. We are a team. Please communicate with us any and all questions, comments, and/or suggestions. We are here to serve.

This policy is written with love for you and your children. It is our intention to help the students use their God-given abilities to their fullest. As we do this, we will overflow with love for them. This love will be shown with Law and Gospel. This policy is written using both.

Students will have homework as we teach them a growing amount of personal responsibility. Please inform us of any comments or suggestions that you have. If your child does not have “homework,” we still suggest there still be time set aside each night for personal study. Memory work, spelling words, and math facts need to be studied and reviewed often. Certainly, a time for reading, either oral or silent, is important and needs to be done as well.

1. Homework Infraction

- a. Notices will be issued under the following circumstances
 - i. Any assignment not completed upon arrival to school on the day it is due.
 - ii. Any assignment that is not completely finished by teacher standards.
 - iii. Any assignment that is completed, but has not met the student’s ability.
- b. If the assignment is not completed the next day, the student will receive another infraction.

2. Behavior Infraction

- a. Notices will be issued under the following circumstances:
 - i. The student is behaving in a manner that is unloving, disrespectful, or inappropriate.
 - ii. The student continues this behavior after having a conversation with the teacher or another adult figure (i.e. classroom aid).

Records will be cleared at the end of each quarter. Students will start with a clean slate each quarter.

Homework Helps

Most every student, at some time or another, struggles to find the motivation to complete their homework. Here are a few suggestions that may help students in getting their homework done.

1. Children thrive on routine for any activity. Setting up a routine for your child to complete homework may assist them in successfully completing their assignments. Here are items that should be included in the routine:
 - a. Time: Select a time each evening that works best for you child. Keep in mind that 3rd graders have approximately 30-40 minutes of homework each night.
 - i. This time period should be selected for school nights, Monday-Thursday.
 - ii. Even if a student has no homework, forgets their books at school, or has forgotten how to do the assignment, they will still benefit from this time. Alternative study activities include reading, studying spelling words, and practicing memory work.
 - iii. Make it a habit to be firm about ending at the selected end time. From time to time, students may have a little more homework and this time may need to be adjusted. (If your student consistently goes past this time period, please do not hesitate to contact me.)
 - b. Location: Most students thrive in a work environment other than their room. The kitchen/dining room table is one great place for students to complete their homework. During independent or oral reading time, students may migrate to a more comfortable area to “cozy up” with their book of choice.
2. Set goals and create a plan with and for your child. This may include things such as:
 - a. Planning out the order assignments are done in
 - b. Setting a timer by which a certain assignment must be done
 - c. Selecting a strategy that will help the student complete the assignment. (i.e. reading questions or passages out loud)
3. Provide your child with coaching and encouragement. It is typically not beneficial for a parent to sit down the entire time with their child. Allow your child to complete work independently and check-in as needed. Offer praise and encouragement as your child makes progress.
 - a. A little struggling every now and then is okay, especially as your child progresses toward independence in homework completion.

Third Grade Class Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:10-8:25	Morning Activities	Morning Activities	8:10-8:40 Chapel	Morning Activities	Morning Activities
8:25-9:15	Christlight	Christlight	8:40-9:15 Hymnology	Christlight	Christlight
9:10-10:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10:15-10:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
10:30-10:40	Snack & Read Aloud				
10:40-11:00	Reading Comprehension Lesson	Reading Comprehension Lesson	Reading Comprehension Lesson	Reading Comprehension Lesson	(10:40-11:15) Reading Comprehension Lesson &/or Weekly Assessment
11:00-11:40	Reading Workshop	Reading Workshop	Reading Workshop	Reading Workshop	(11:15-11:40) First Chapter Friday/Book Talks
11:40-12:00	Language	Language	Language	Spanish	Language
12:00-12:20	Spelling	Handwriting	Spelling	Handwriting	Spelling
12:20-12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:00-1:35	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Shine Through/Spelling at the End of the Year
1:35-2:00	Maps	Music	Phy Ed	Music	Phy Ed
2:00-2:40	Writing	Writing	Writing	Technology	2:00-2:55 Art
2:40-2:55	Devotion	Devotion	Devotion	Devotion	
2:55-3:05	Pack Up & Close				

A Look at 3rd Grade

Word of God

The central part of our day, which influences how we think about every other subject, is our Word of God class. As we study God's Word, we are able to grow in faith and apply his truths to the situations we face in our lives. Our Bible stories will be told orally and read from our Christ Light booklets and directly from the Bible itself. Because connecting God's Word to our own lives is essential, we will spend time making applications each day. On days where we have a new Bible lesson, we will take time discussing lesson take-aways. On review days, students will both review the lesson and expand on the previous day's application through worksheets and activities.

On Wednesdays we also have the privilege of gathering together to worship as a school family during our weekly chapel services. This service involves the singing of one or more hymns and a devotion from one of the pastors or male faculty members. Each week we will be taking a mission offering. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to give back to God what he has given them, and to support efforts to grow his kingdom.

Hymnology

Following our Wednesday chapel services, we will spend time studying various hymns from our hymnal and songs that we will be singing in church. These hymns are a treasure and blessing because they give students a voice to sing praises to God and to rest on his promises through the ups and downs of life.

Memory Work

To help us cement the truths of the Bible in our hearts and take God's promises with us, we will memorize a variety of Bible verses and portions of Luther's Small Catechism throughout the year. These memory treasures will be included in a packet that will be sent home at the beginning of the year. In addition to these memory treasures, students will also be expected to memorize one or several stanzas of our hymnology hymns. Regular memory treasures will be due on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (other than during short weeks); hymn stanzas for hymnology will be due on Wednesdays. Memory work will be included in the weekly newsletter to help your family keep track of this homework.

Mathematics

Our third grade math lessons will usually follow a regular format. We will begin with a review of the previous lesson. After this, we will work on the new concept that is being taught that day. During this time, students will approach the new concept in a variety of ways, including the use of modeling, hands-on activities, and games. Afterwards, students will be given time to practice the concept learned through the completion of homework.

Third grade students will cover numbers up to 10,000, addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, data analysis, length, weight, capacity, money, fractions, time, geometry, area, and perimeter.

Reading

Reading will cover a wide variety of short stories, novels, and author studies. Monday through Thursday, there will be whole group lessons focusing on a particular skill (i.e. main idea, character traits). The whole group lesson will be followed by time in different reading centers - guided reading, read to self, reader's response, and word work. Students should always have multiple "fun" books at school for read to self time. These books will be used in the formulation of their reader response homework.

On Fridays, students will complete an assessment to show their understanding of the week's focus skill. Following the assessment, students will participate in sharing a quarterly book report or will enjoy some extra read-aloud time on "First Chapter Fridays."

Writing

During writing class, students will spend time learning to write using a variety of formats. Our units of study include narrative writing, persuasive writing, adapting fairy tales, informational writing, and writing poetry.

Language/English

Our English classes will help students master certain grammatical concepts and will introduce them to other ones. Our studies include the 4 parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), sentence structure, usage, and other areas of grammar.

Spelling

Students will complete a variety of different spelling units throughout the year. At the beginning of each unit, students will be given a pre-test and then given a spelling list based on the results of this pre-test. Students will be given a checklist of activities to complete each week; some activities will be done at school and some at home.

Handwriting

Our study of penmanship will begin with a review of manuscript. Once we have successfully reviewed the manuscript alphabet, we will then proceed into cursive writing. We will begin our study of cursive with lowercase letters and conclude it with capital letters.

Science

Science will take us through a variety of units - light energy, sound energy, human body, plants, and animals. Connected to our units on plants, animals, and the human body will be a Project Lead the Way module on traits.

Social Studies

The focus of our social studies class will be on communities. For the most part, we will be studying American communities past and present. In addition to these, we will also be sprinkling in studies of world countries and their communities. We will also be taking time this year to study basic United States Geography.

Technology

Students will learn to complete basic functions on a computer - including printing, typing, and basic word processing . Students will also do one PLTW module using coding. Technology skill practice will also be incorporated into other subjects as we use our computers to write, communicate, and research.

Maps

This year students will continue growing in their knowledge of globes and flat maps, continents and oceans, hemispheres, longitude and latitude, time zones, compass rose, legends, scale, political maps, physical maps, product maps, climate maps, and grid maps.

Music

Students will do a lot of work learning to read music. This work includes learning to read music on the treble clef as well as identifying different note lengths and their duration. Students will also learn basic song patterns. They will also become familiar with the music of Peter Tchaikovsky. In addition to these items, students will practice music for singing in church.

This year students will also have the opportunity to participate in the Link Up Program through the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Students will learn to play the recorder this year.

Physical Education

Physical Education will be taught using the Spark program. This program focuses on cooperation, unity, and developing physical fitness. Units of study include flying disc, football, fitness activities, dance, hockey, and softball.

Spanish

We will be getting a taste of Spanish through a variety of themes. This course is taught by a volunteer. No grade will be given on the report card.

Art

Students will complete a variety of art projects throughout the year. Some projects will introduce students to famous artists and art movements; others will allow students to explore a variety of art mediums. Others still will give students an understanding of the seven elements of art. Most projects will be completed during class time, although some students may need to finish up projects throughout the following week.

Shine Through

During our Shine Through lessons, students will discuss how to address bullying by putting their Christian faith and love into words and actions.

Other Items

Church Attendance

You have chosen to send your child to Star of Bethlehem. This shows that a Christian education is important to you. While we spend time studying God's Word each and every day, more than our study is needed. It is important that students see their parents as role models in how to live their Christian faith and daily be disciples of God's Word. Your family is encouraged to spend time each day reading daily devotions. In addition, it is expected that every child will attend church on a regular basis. Please take advantage of every worship opportunity that is given to you. Setting this pattern for your child early in life is important in having them continue church attendance later in life. Our faith is the one thing we take with us from this life to eternity!

Singing in Church

As part of our Christ-centered curriculum, students will express their faith by singing for church services throughout the year. We realize that some conflicts cannot be avoided, but we do expect all children to be present when their classroom is singing. If your child must be absent for a service, email or written communication is required. If your child is not properly excused, please expect follow-up communication from me.

Newsletter

A classroom newsletter will be sent home each Friday. This newsletter will contain important dates, upcoming memory work, an overview of our studies from the past week, and any special notes or announcements. Additionally, this newsletter will be made available on our classroom website each Friday. Please make sure that you read through the newsletter, so that you can stay up to date with all our third grade happenings!

At Home Reading

Your child will be given a reading log to fill out five times per week. They should be reading 20 minutes each night. Students should have personally selected and fun books to read - either from home or the classroom library. We will have discussions throughout the year on what a "just right" book looks like. From time to time, your student may bring home required reading for reading class or another subject. This will count as their required reading for that evening. (Please make sure that all Star of Bethlehem books are returned to the classroom when your child has finished reading them.)

At Home Math Practice

Each child is to practice their math facts. We review addition and subtraction, and then go on to add multiplication and division to our math fact toolbelt. We will use a variety of methods to help students grow at school - timed math sheets, online resources, and oral fact quizzes. For multiplication, students may be assigned a fact family (i.e. 7's, 8's) to memorize as homework.

Book Orders

Each month your child will be receiving book order forms. Books are always a great gift for your child. You can never read too many books!

Birthdays

Your child is welcome to bring in treats for their birthday, if they would like. If your student's birthday falls during summer, we will celebrate with them on their half-birthday. Please send me a picture of the treat label with the ingredient list, preferably several days ahead of time. This enables me to forward these pictures along to parents of allergy-sensitive students.

If your child is having a birthday party outside of the classroom, please also send invitations outside of the classroom. This prevents any hurt feelings on the part of any classmates who are not invited.

Policy for After School

If your student regularly rides the bus, I ask that you email me or make a note in your student's planner if there are any changes to your student's transportation schedule. I also ask that if students are receiving rides from classmates or a different adult, that this be emailed to me or a note is made in their planner for the appropriate day.

Children are **NOT** to stay after school if older siblings are involved in an activity. The only reason children should remain after school is for piano lessons or a sport that they are in, immediately after school. Otherwise you are asked to make arrangements for your child to be supervised at a home or daycare. We offer after school care. If you would like information on this program please contact the office.

I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you this school year! May God bless our efforts, as we work together to serve the children in our classroom. Once again, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me!

School Phone: (262) 786-2901

Cell Phone: (414) 339-1392

Email: emiller@starofbethlehem.org

In the love of Christ,
Elizabeth Miller