



# St. Mark's Classical Christian Kindergarten

*Small ✂ Focused ✂ Joyful*

A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS  
2013/2014

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”  
(Proverbs 1:7)



## The Reformed Episcopal Church

In our modern society that seeks change for the sake of change, it is important to remember that God does not change, and that the Way to God has not changed. Only through Jesus Christ can men ever find abiding hope, peace, forgiveness and the acceptable way to know and worship God. In “keeping the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” The Reformed Episcopal Church is:

**BIBLICAL** - holding a faith and practice governed by the whole, unchanging, infallible and inerrant Word of God.

**LITURGICAL** - reverently worshipping God by using the liturgical forms practiced by the early church, restored in the English Reformation of the 16th century, and preserved in the traditional Anglican Book of Common Prayer of 1662.

**HISTORIC** - holding to the historic doctrines of the Christian faith founded upon the Holy Scriptures and summarized in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

Each person and all people need a place along their spiritual journey where they can know and sense the presence of God and truly worship Him, where they can receive spiritual strength and guidance for the week ahead, and where caring fellow Christians can encourage them along the way.

Rediscover the historic worship of the Christian faith —

Find out about the Reformed Episcopal Church!  
*Keeping the faith “once for all delivered to the saints”*

## St. Mark’s Reformed Episcopal Church

1162 Beverly Road, Rydal, Pa 19046  
(215) 884-7660 ☎ [www.stmarksrec.org](http://www.stmarksrec.org)  
Sundays - 10:00 am

Dear Parents,

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”  
(Proverbs 1:7)

There is no more enduring gift that a parent can give a child than a sound Christian upbringing, including a Christian education. St. Mark’s Classical Christian School endeavors to assist parents in this awesome calling, by providing an excellent educational foundation for children through utilizing the time-tested method of a classical education. Our ambition is to help parents build strong families, to the greater glory of God and the good of the students.

St. Mark’s Kindergarten provides an excellent foundation for grammar school and a classical education. Our goal is to provide a place for your child to develop spiritually, intellectually, socially and physically in a happy environment under well-trained and loving guidance. Toward this goal, we have compiled this Kindergarten Handbook to aid parents in understanding the policies and procedures which help make St. Mark’s School a delightful place for their children.

We believe that choosing the right school and the right people to care for your child will yield invaluable benefits for him for the rest of his life. We hope that we can work with you in the training of your special little one, and look forward to serving you in the near future.

Sincerely,

The Reverend Jason S. S. Patterson  
*Rector and Head of School*

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## What is St. Mark’s Classical Christian School?

St. Mark’s School is a co-educational classical Christian school in the Anglican tradition, currently offering classes for kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (progressively adding grades annually).

Our school is an educational ministry of St. Mark’s Reformed Episcopal Church that is committed to classical education and employs the time-honored medieval “trivium” as an educational philosophy and teaching methodology to equip pupils for the future with proven tools from the past.

We serve families from various church backgrounds (or no church background) who desire a Christian, morally wholesome and academically enriching environment for their young children.

Our purpose is to honor God who made us for Himself. In a school setting, we seek to do that by encouraging the children to use the talents and resources God has given each of them to the best of their ability and in a way which always shows love and concern for all of God’s creation.

We strive to maintain a well-structured and also a home-like atmosphere in our kindergarten. We want you and your children to be comfortable here. Children of this age blossom and thrive under warm, personal attention. It is our desire to see every one of our kindergarteners develop a lasting curiosity and joy in learning.

### What is “the Trivium?”

The classical approach to education is shaped by the Trivium, a carefully developed plan for cultivating the tools of learning – teaching students to *learn how to learn*. These tools enable students to educate themselves effectively through the rest of their life, no matter what they take in hand to learn. For a fuller description of the classical approach – read Dorothy Sayers’ essay *The Lost Tools of Learning*.

The Trivium (tri-vium) approach follows a specific three-part pattern in which:

1. the child's mind is first supplied with facts and images (the **Grammar** stage),
2. the child is then given the logical tools for organization of facts (the **Logic** stage), and
3. finally is equipped to express conclusions (the **Rhetoric** stage)."<sup>1</sup>

## **Educational Philosophy**

### ***Parents and the School***

In the Bible, God declares that parents have the primary responsibility of educating their children. For instance:

*And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.*

The church supports that role by encouraging and facilitating Christian nurture of a new generation in many ways. The church's aid in this endeavor proves successful only as parents assume their primary role. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate.

### ***The Holy Scriptures***

The particular standard by which Saint Mark's Classical Christian School seeks to structure and govern all that is done is the Bible, the written Word of God. The whole of Scripture provides the perspective from which our curriculum is taught, establishes the guidelines for the teaching methods we use, and is the basis for the discipline and environment maintained in the classroom.

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1 Susan Wise Bauer, *The Well-Trained Mind*.

## ***A Holistic & Christian Approach***

Saint Mark's School has as its goal the development of each student's potential by teaching him to use his God-given capacities to his fullest. This involves character development, meeting social needs through wholesome friendships, training in Christian values and perspectives, developing a love for learning, and above all, encouraging students to serve God and do all things to the glory of God.

Our motivation is our desire to see a generation trained that will love the Lord God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. Christ is Himself the example of such self-sacrificing love. We intend for our students and parents to witness this love in the life of our teachers and staff, and pray that each student will learn to love others enough to sacrifice himself for their welfare.

## ***A Classical Approach***

St. Mark's School, in following the model of classical education, progressively nurtures its students through the three fundamental stages of learning: Grammar (foundational and informational skills), Logic (thinking and reasoning skills), and Rhetoric (integration and communication skills). Our program is designed to help each child develop spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and physically. We are committed to the following principles:

*The Classical View of Reality* – Truth is objective and man is responsible to seek the Truth throughout his life.

*The Nature of Man* – A human being is a physical and spiritual unity, and education must reflect that truth.

*The Wisdom of the Ages* – Young scholars should be exposed to the finest minds in the history of the world and the great ideas that they discuss.

Because we recognize that the primary responsibility for the training of children belongs to parents, interwoven throughout the academic program are strong Christian family values of moral integrity, respect

for self and others, and the cooperative effort of school and home. At St. Mark's our emphasis is not only on the three R's of Reading, 'Rit- ing, and 'Rithmetic, but also the three R's of Respect for authority, Responsibility before God and man, and Resourcefulness in the execu- tion of assigned tasks. The St. Mark's School motto is from Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge."

## **Our Faculty**

The members of our staff are selected carefully for their Christian commitment, teaching ability, their love for young children and their desire to accomplish the same goal that we have as a school. We are investing a lot of effort in the training and supervising of our teachers and staff, because they are the key to the effectiveness of our program. They will have a real influence on your children for many years past the actual kindergarten experience.

We will maintain a low student-teacher ratio so as to provide an ef- fective, personal learning environment. In this setting our teachers act not only as instructors but also as mentors and Christian role-models.

We encourage you to get to know our teachers and staff. We be- lieve that it is essential that you feel relaxed and able to communicate freely with those caring for your children.

## **Admission Requirements & Enrollment Procedure**

We welcome all children of any race, color, national or ethnic group. Admission depends upon age, available class space, and the parents' desire for their children to be taught according to the curricu- lum and methods outlined in this handbook. Parents must keep their financial account with St. Mark's School current.



The following must be submitted to the office before enrollment into the Kindergarten program:

- Completed application form
- Completed medical form(s) and up-to-date immunization records
- Copy of child's birth certificate
- Annual Participation Contract
- Emergency Information form

### **Statement of Faith**

1. We believe the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe in one God, infinitely perfect and eternally co-existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the full deity and humanity of Jesus Christ.
4. We believe in the real, historical fall of man in the Garden of Eden, resulting in mankind being under the wrath and curse of God. Hence, all men are born with a sinful nature, are spiritually dead and under judgment, and are in need of salvation.
5. We believe that justification before God comes by grace through faith in the substitutionary atonement of Christ apart from our own works.
6. We believe in the literal, physical resurrection of Christ in a glorified body and His ascension to the right hand of God the Father, from whence He rules the universe and intercedes for His people.
7. We believe in the Church's obligation to live under the lordship of Christ by obeying the Ten Commandments, upholding godliness as set forth in the Bible, and to evangelize and spread His kingdom by making obedient disciples of all nations.
8. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers within the body of Christ.

9. We believe in the literal second coming of Christ, a final judgment of all men by God, and an actual, eternal heaven and hell.

Below are listed the two most famous of the Church's statements of faith. They summarize the basic teachings of the Bible and what the Church has called, following Jude's lead, the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). These teachings are also commonly referred to in contemporary America as, the "basics of the faith."

### **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. Amen.

### **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And he shall

come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

*Almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, enlighten by thy Holy Spirit, those who teach and those who learn, that rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, we may worship thee and serve thee from generation to generation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who livest and reignest with thee and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*O Lord, open our eyes to see what is beautiful, our minds to know what is true, and our hearts to love what is good; for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

## **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy**

Saint Mark's Classical Christian School and Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all their rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship, and financial assistance programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **School Sponsorship and Oversight**

Saint Mark's School and Nursery School is the education ministry of Saint Mark's Church, a parish of The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC). The REC was formed in 1873 to preserve and promote the orthodox witness of the Episcopal church, reflecting the English Reformation. The Reformed Episcopal Church upholds the Bible as the very Word of God and final authority in all matters of faith and life; it

is adamant in declaring the Sanctity of Life and traditional Christian morality as rooted in the Ten Commandments and nurtured in the Sanctity of Christian marriage and family.

A board of Advisors has been appointed to assist the Rector in the organization of our new school. The Rector serves as the Head of School and is charged with the general oversight of the school. The Vestry of St. Mark's Church is responsible for the financial oversight of the School.

## **Associations and Memberships**

The year 2013 is the inaugural year of St. Mark's Classical Christian School. Our school is modeled after the classical Christian day schools of 4 other parishes in the Reformed Episcopal Church: Good Shepherd School (Tyler, TX), The Saint Timothy School (Dallas, Tx); Saint Stephen's Academy (Eldersburg, Md) and Christ Academy (Collingdale, Pa). In the next year we plan to become members of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) and the Association of Christian Schools Interational (ACSI). The ACSI has over 5000 member schools representing a total student enrollment of over 1,030,000. Both ACCS and ACSI are accrediting organizations.

## **Religious Instruction**

Our Kindergarten stresses the importance of spiritual development in children. We seek to train the students in the knowledge of and obedience to the Holy Scriptures. Our desire is to help the children realize that no area of life or truth can be separated from God. Thus we approach all of our teaching and activity from God's perspective as revealed in the Bible. Children memorize important Bible passages such as Psalm 23, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer.

In Bible class, children hear Bible stories every day. They also learn to sing many hymns and songs which Christians have sung for centuries in praise to God. We constantly seek to cultivate in our kindergartners a reverence and respect for the Lord God as they learn about His great majesty, holiness and love.

# Discipline

We have found that busy, actively learning children find little time for misbehavior. The focus of our training is on directing and guiding children toward listening and obedience, which, in the end, develops in them a self-control and self-discipline.

As we guide our students' behavior, we always point them to God's requirements as expressed in the Ten Commandments. Children are taught that it is ultimately God whom they are obeying or disobeying. Education is always about spiritual formation; the question is how they will be shaped and by whom. We wish to work with you, the parent, making use of every opportunity.

We try to be very consistent in explaining and enforcing our rules. If a child is asked to do something and ignores what we say, or does what we have asked him not to do, then punishment may become necessary. The punishment can be separation from the group for a time, missing a special activity, or a trip to the Office for a serious talk. We always try to make clear, at some point, why the punishment was necessary. We want the children to get the clear message that we are in control, and they are not.

We are here to help the children through their growing years. Our methods of discipline are never meant to humiliate, shame or frighten a child.

Please stay in close communication with us, as we will with you, the parents. Often, parents can inform us of difficult situations that their children are experiencing away from school which will help us prepare for possible behavior problems at school. We will also notify you if your child is showing continued disruptive behavior.

It is highly important that parents support our views on behavior and discipline. If we do not agree and cannot work together as a team, then we will create a situation that is not good for the children, the family or the school. The children need to know that we are working together.

## Daily Activities

*Morning Prayers.* Each day officially begins with a time of committing ourselves to God in prayer and praise and hearing a small portion of His Word. Teachers and students alike acknowledge dependence on and accountability to God. Our service of Morning Prayer (sometimes called Matins) is the Anglican worship service that has been prayed at the beginning of the day for centuries. This daily routine nurtures orderliness, respect and a continual awareness of God's presence in the culture of our school. It also reinforces traditional Christian virtues, which are so vital to our school families and the many church traditions represented at St. Mark's School. Within the context of our daily prayers, the students will learn the 10 Commandments, the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

*Class Time.* Group instruction in the core curriculum will take place each morning. At "seat-work" time, students will participate in all sorts of enjoyable activities to develop their abilities and skills. (We will be using a curriculum published by Memoria Press. For more information about our curriculum, please visit [www.memoriapress.com](http://www.memoriapress.com) or speak with Fr. Patterson.)

*Bible Instruction.* Each day children will listen to a Bible story and work on memorizing verses and Christian hymns. In addition to receiving religious training during Bible time, the students will also develop good listening comprehension skills and memory skills.

*Free Play.* The students will have time to play, either outside or inside. The classroom also contains numerous toys, books, puzzles, blocks and other items to enrich the children's play.

*Music, Poetry and Stories.* Throughout each day, children are taught fun songs, poems and stories. The teacher will read to the children each day as well. We regard these activities as absolutely essential in helping kindergarteners become joyful learners, good readers and articulate adults.

*Art, Science, History and Geography.* In addition to our core curriculum, students will be instructed in a variety of enrichment areas.

*Self management skills.* Children are encouraged to take responsibility for cleaning up their own play areas and to help in general pick-up. We also help them learn to pack their own bags and put on their own jackets. The class is then led to a designated area to await the arrival of parents.

*Extended Care.* Though our time of formal instruction ends at Noon, students may stay until 2:30 pm daily. During our “Stay and Play” program, students will eat their lunch (a bag lunch is required every day but Friday, when pizza is ordered) and be supervised in relaxed play by well-trained, caring adults. Various enrichment activities are scheduled for each day during stay and play.

*Field Trips.* The Kindergarten class will take part in a variety of field trips throughout the year. These are important times of learning and becoming acquainted with our community. Parents will always be notified in written form of the location, date, time and purpose of the trip at least two days in advance. Parents are always welcome to join us on these trips.

## **Policies**

### **Medication, Illness and Emergencies**

Parents are expected to administer medicine to their own children. If, however, a Doctor’s instructions for the prescription indicate that the medication must be given while the child is at school, parents must send written permission, explanation, and their signature along with the medicine in its original container and with the pharmacist’s instructions intact.

Non-prescription medicines (Tylenol, etc.) will not be administered except in emergency situations. Throat and cough lozenges may be used by the student under as teacher’s supervision if a note is sent to the teacher stating the need for them.

Parents are urged to keep their children at home if they show any sign of illness (sore throat, upset stomach, rash, fever, etc.). This is for the sick child's own protection as well as the good healthy of the other children and teachers. If a child develops a temperature of 100 degrees or seems ill while at school, the parents will be called and asked to provide alternative care for the child.

A child has been absent because of a contagious illness may be asked to obtain doctor's confirmation that he is no longer contagious before returning to school. Any student should have been fever free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

### ***Emergencies***

In the event of a medical emergency, school administration will either call 911 or transport the child to the nearest hospital and contact parents as noted on the emergency contact information form. Parents are responsible for all costs after insurance has been applied.

### ***Snacks and Lunch***

Snacks are provided by the school each day. If the child is staying for our extended care, a nutritious lunch should be sent in a standard size lunch box.

### ***Allergies***

Be sure you have noted any food or other allergies which might affect your child's day at school. You will be informed should the class need to avoid certain foods for the sake of violent food allergies in other children.

### ***Uniforms***

An important aspect of achieving the high personal, academic and moral goals we set for students is for them to view their educational duties as their calling before God. The uniform is a way of reminding them of that. Beyond this central purpose, many parents find addi-



tional benefits to their children wearing uniforms. The children at this age especially enjoy having a uniform, as wearing it underscores the importance of school to them.

### ***Inclement Weather***

School closings due to bad weather will correspond to the decisions of the Abington School District. There is no need to call the Head of School or teachers for this information if it has been posted publicly.

### ***Records***

Please notify the office of any changes in address, phone number, place of employment, health status of your child (allergies etc.) or individuals approved for the pick-up of your child(ren). This notification should be submitted in writing to ensure its proper recording.

### ***Fire Drills***

Fire drills are held regularly and recorded in the office.

### ***Birthdays and Parties***

Your child's birthday may be celebrated at school if you wish to provide special birthday refreshments during snack time. Please arrange this with your child's teacher ahead of time.

Since St. Mark's School is a Christian School, our emphasis in seasonal observances is around the Church calendar and Christian themes.

### ***Pick-Up Procedures***

The Emergency Information Form which is completed upon enrollment will inform our staff regarding exactly who will be pick up each child. It is up to the parents to make us aware of any changes to this information. We will ask to see the driver's license of anyone not familiar to us. We will not release students to anyone that does not

have the parent's authorization.

## **Financial Information**

### **Contributions & Donations**

The cost of education is high, but worth it, and civil nations, especially Christian ones, have always placed a high value upon it. Every tuition dollar you spend goes directly to the tuition of your child. Of course, there are more costs to operating the school: expenses related to occupancy, scholarships, or capital improvement. The additional funds needed for these come from donations, fundraising, or other sources. All donations to Saint Mark's School or Saint Mark's Church, a 501(c)3 organization, are tax-deductible. If you would be interested in making regular contributions to the Saint Mark's School Annual Fund, or to the our Scholarship Fund, or designate a donation for a special project, we would be happy to speak with you and make the necessary arrangements.

### ***Tax-Deductible Ways to Give to Saint Mark's School***

Tax laws intentionally encourage charitable giving. Here are some of the ways families and individuals can make a gift to St. Mark's School and enjoy tax benefits. Please remember, every person's tax situation is different and St. Mark's is not advocating a specific tax position. Please consult with your individual tax advisor to determine the deductibility of your contribution.

*Gifts of Cash:* Many families choose to write us a check. Such gifts are fully deductible, for federal income tax purposes, up to 50 % of your adjusted gross income. Consider making a monthly commitment.

*Gifts of Stock:* Gifts of appreciated stock represent a two-fold savings opportunity. You avoid paying any capital gains tax on the increased value of the stock, and you receive a tax deduction for the full market value of the stock as of the day of the gift.

*Bequests:* These may be earmarked for a specific use or left to the

discretion of the school trustees. A bequest of funds or property is exempt from federal estate tax and inheritance tax in most states.

*Designated Gifts:* Make a contribution to one of Saint Mark's funds:

- Annual Fund—Gifts to the Annual Fund are used to sustain and enrich the overall educational program, improve and expand facilities, and ensure the financial stability of the school.
- The Scholarship Fund—Saint Mark's is committed to helping any family that desires a classical and Christian education to overcome the difficult financial obstacle.

*Gifts-in-Kind:* Contributions in the form of material goods or services for which the school would otherwise have to pay, help reduce the school's expenses and thereby strengthen the overall financial structure.

*Matching Contributions:* Many employers have a matching gift program in which they will match your contribution to an approved non-profit organization. It provides them with a tax benefit and "doubles" the significance of your gift.

Please check with your accountant, tax attorney, or tax advisor to discuss the gift method that best suits your situation.

## **Delinquent Accounts**

In order to meet the school's financial obligations, it is imperative that tuition payments be kept current. The school is financially unable to extend credit to parents.

Monthly tuition payments are due on the first of each month. Payments may be paid by check or cash. Payments made after the 8th day of the month will be considered late and a fee will be attached to the next month's bill.

Student records may not be released to parents or another school until all financial obligations have been met.

## **Financial Assistance**

Saint Mark's School desires that all parents who want a Christian education for their children might receive it regardless of family finances. The cost of private education is high, but we believe a Christian education is priceless. Therefore, St. Mark's endeavors to offer tuition assistance to those families who have had their children enrolled for one year and have a proven need. Financial aid may be awarded to new enrollees; preference, however, is given to returning families.

Requests for financial assistance are brought to the Head of School who will issue applications and an evaluation form.

Families on scholarship are expected to contribute in some form (time or work toward their child's education).

Contributions to the Scholarship Fund are tax-deductible. But more than that, they are an investment in the future. We are training the mind and building the character that will lead tomorrow's generation. One child can make a difference. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Scholarship Fund.

## **Tuition/Miscellaneous Payments**

Monthly invoices are sent out around the 20th of each month. Invoices will include the next month's tuition charge, any past month's lunch charges, late stay charges, and any late payment or similar charges. Invoices do not reflect payments or previous balance due. Statements of the same are available but are normally sent only to accounts that have not been paid or have a credit showing. Students enrolling midyear may have their tuition prorated monthly or quarterly.

Please make payments in the tuition envelope included with your billing. Payments are late if they are received in our office after the 8th. The school office will not accept postdated checks, nor will it hold them so as to avoid a late charge. Alternative financial payment plans must be arranged with the Head of School.

Students cannot be enrolled in the following year's classes or have transcripts issued until financial obligations are fulfilled.

## **Annual Participation Contract & Financial Terms**

A parent or guardian of the student(s) enrolled must sign the *Participation Contract* for each year of the student(s) enrollment at St. Mark's School.

### ***Full Year Obligation for Tuition***

Saint Mark's School incurs expenses of a continuing nature, including year-long financial commitments to faculty, staff, vendors, facilities, maintenance, and others on behalf of students. Thus, in order for the school to plan and maintain these services over the entire academic year, it is essential that the total annual income from tuition and fees be ensured. For this reason, it is understood and agreed that the obligation to pay tuition and fees for the full academic year is unconditional and takes effect upon the date specified in the annual Participation Contract. No portion of any tuition and/or fees, paid or payable, for the above student(s) will be automatically refunded or canceled for any reason, other than for those exceptions listed below. The School shall have the right to legal action for collection of all school fees, and the parent/guardian agrees to be responsible for all costs of collection, including court expenses and reasonable attorney fees.

Exceptions for refunding or cancellation of this obligation are:

1. The student's permanent place of residence changes during the term of this agreement to a location that is more than 40 miles from the campus and is more distant than the student's place of residence on the date of this agreement, which change could not have been reasonably anticipated on the date of this agreement. Satisfactory evidence of such change may be required.
2. A change in the student's health necessitates withdrawal from

the school for medical reasons. The school may require a written opinion from the student's attending physician stating that the student's withdrawal from the school is necessary for medical reasons.

Appeal for partial relief of this obligation due to extraordinary circumstances, may be submitted in written form for consideration to the School Board, understanding that such appeal carries no assurance that any relief will be granted, given the primary responsibility of the Board to guard the financial stability of the school.

### **School's Rights Reserved**

All members of Saint Mark's School consent to the rules and regulations of the School as stated in the current handbook and published literature. It is further understood that the School reserves the right to insist upon immediate withdrawal of any student who in conduct, industry, or progress proves not to be in harmony with Saint Mark's School standards or policies.

### **Release of Liability**

Saint Mark's School members agree to release and hold harmless the School, its agents and employees from all claims, damages, or other liabilities for injuries to his child which are not the result of gross negligence by this school, its agents, or employees. A Member of Saint Mark's School also agrees to indemnify the school for all damages caused by his child.

## **PARENT/SCHOOL RELATIONS**

### **Home & School Communication**

A healthy parent and teacher relationship is vital for a wholesome, well-ordered school experience. Parents should watch for daily Home-work sheets, which require a daily signature, test packs and other work which is sent home.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Open communication between parents and staff is vital for a positive, well ordered school experience. Saint Mark's encourages its families and teachers to share information whenever needed regarding a student's progress at all times of the year. To share information or ask questions, parents are asked to use the following procedure:

1. Call the office and leave your name, number, and the name of the teacher with whom you wish to speak. The teacher will contact you within one day.
2. If a telephone conversation is not sufficient to discuss your concerns, the teacher will make an appointment with you at school.
3. If a further communication is necessary for the resolution of a problem, make an appointment with the Head of School and the teacher by calling the office.

Please do not call a teacher at home unless an emergency arises that will have an immediate effect on the student's coming school day.

Our teachers carefully plan each day's class activities. In order that they might educate our students in the most effective manner, the school asks that parents avoid dropping by their child's classroom to talk with the teacher immediately before, during, or after the school day. These seemingly minor interruptions can add up to a substantial reduction in class time. The interruption may also prevent our teachers from supervising students adequately at these times. Please use the communication system outlined above; you will find our teachers responsive and eager to help in every way.

## **Grievance Guidelines**

If the occasion arises where a parent is unhappy about a particular situation or circumstance, proper steps shall be taken to clarify or correct the perceived problem. If the remedy is not satisfactory, under no

circumstance may the parent conduct their own “friendly investigation” with other parents, unsettling the peace of the school community. Rather, the principles of Matthew 18 shall be followed in reporting their concern to the proper school officials first of all, using the procedure below.

The following biblical guidelines are to be followed for bringing resolution whenever there is a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of Saint Mark’s School’s operations between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school. This includes students, parents, staff, volunteers, administration, and board.

### ***Student or Classroom Concerns***

1. All concerns about the student or classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents or, if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. If the student presents the concern, a respectful demeanor is required at all times.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may then bring the concern to the Head of School.

### ***Concerns over General Operation of the School***

1. If the concern is about the general operation of the school, it should be brought to the Head of School directly.
2. If a satisfactory settlement of the matter is still not reached, a written summary of the complaint, signed by the Head of School and the aggrieved party, is submitted to the Board, who finding merit to the matter, forward this document(s) to the designated Reformed Episcopal Bishop for final resolution. If the Board does not find sufficient merit in their review, the ruling of the Head of School shall stand.

### **Twenty Ways Parents Can Help:**

1. Bring students to school on time.



2. See that students receive proper amounts of sleep on school nights.
3. Schedule some no-TV hours after school for homework completion and extracurricular reading.
4. Make reading your own habit. Encourage students to read by giving them books and trips to the library.
5. Do not discuss differences you have with teachers in front of your children (even at home). Nothing makes it harder for a child to give a teacher the respectful obedience the Lord requires of him than to overhear, or take part in, a dressing-down of his teacher. We are very careful at school not to speak of you, the parent, disrespectfully or to diminish your authority in the mind of your child. We ask that you return the courtesy for the sake of your child. Please talk to the teacher directly and privately.
6. Offer to be a room mother. Room mothers are invaluable aides by arranging field trips and classroom parties, and assisting the teacher in other ways as needed.
7. Send treats or beverages for scheduled class parties or celebrations. Room mothers will call you when this is desired.
8. Volunteer to help out in special events throughout the year: fundraisers, speech meets, math Olympics, costuming for programs, etc.
9. Talk about Saint Mark's School to your friends. Word-of-mouth is our best advertisement.
10. Chat with your child about what he does at school.
11. Encourage politeness and good manners in your child. Teach him that this is merely being thoughtful of the other person.
12. Make tuition payments on time.
13. Sponsor another child to attend Saint Mark's School by making a contribution to the financial aid fund.
14. Attend PTF (Parent-Teacher Fellowship) meetings. Informed parents and teachers make better parents and teachers.

15. PRAY FOR US. This is God's work, and He is faithful in answering the prayers of His people as they seek to build His kingdom.
16. Cultivate a healthy marriage and attend church regularly with your child.
17. Understand that all children are sinful and will need corrections at times.
18. Help your children start the school day out right by resolving parent-child conflicts before bringing them to class.
19. Remember to thank and encourage your child's teacher for the work and care they invest in your child.
20. Look at Saint Mark's as assisting, not replacing, you and your responsibility to train your children.



We meet on the campus of St. Mark's Reformed Episcopal Church:

1162 Beverly Road  
Rydal, Pa 19046  
(215) 884-7660  
[www.stmarksrec.org](http://www.stmarksrec.org)

The Reverend Jason S. S. Patterson, *Head of School & Rector*

**Board of Advisors:**

The Reverend Walter Banek, *Head of School - Good Shepherd School (Tyler, Tx)*  
The Reverend John Boonzaaijer, *Head of School - St. Timothy's School (Dallas, Tx)*  
Mr. Stephen Hoopes - *Headmaster, Christ Academy (Collingdale, Pa)*  
Mrs. Jana McCann