

MISSION

As the homeschool ministry of GraceLife Baptist Church our desire is to encourage deeper relationships and wider educational experiences for Christian homeschool families of the New River Valley.

PURPOSE

By sharing our gifts and talents we offer a low cost co-op with academic and enrichment classes for the whole family. We recognize homeschooling is hard work and we want to lighten the load, not add to it. Our desire is to supplement what each family is already doing at home, not direct it.

We do this by providing...

- Nursery
- Preschool play & learning time
- K-1 students with interesting learning experiences
- Elementary students with classroom experiences to help foster respect for other adults and students. Our desire is that they would become more mature and more independent in their learning.
- Middle school students with opportunities to learn new topics or go deeper in subjects of interest. Our desire is that they would build strong friendships through teamwork and joint experiences.
- High school students with opportunities to build their faith and their transcripts. Our desire is that they would take ownership of their faith, their education, and their service to the Lord alongside positive peer relationships. They will also have the opportunity to work toward our co-op Excellence Award.

GOAL

We recognize that every homeschool family is different and use different curricula. Therefore, we offer the “extras” – those things that all too often get set aside at home because of time, ability, or the need for a group setting. We also work on incorporating field trips and fellowship events because aside from co-op classes, our children simply need time together in order to build strong Christian friendships, and so do the parents.

The co-op should help us to become authentic Christians through regular, transparent interactions and encourage our hearts to press on toward the prize. If we are so burdened by our children and their schooling, how can we be a light to our husbands, our children, and our community?

DAILY SCHEDULE

Tuesday mornings for 18 weeks of the school year

MORNING CLASSES

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Doors open at 8:40 am.

We recommend you arrive at 8:45 am.

Morning classes are followed by an optional brown bag lunch.
Families are encouraged, but not required, to stay and picnic together.

A LA CARTE COMMUNITY CLASSES

We have optional afternoon classes from 1–3 pm. These require an additional fee.

COST to join CO-OP

\$30 per family
plus
\$5 per child 2 and up

A few classes may have an additional supply fee or required textbook.

This is your cost for the entire year!

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Kerri Merrill	Director	540-449-1755
Nichole Pearman	Enrollment Coordinator	703-675-3761
Beth Ann Pelletier	Treasurer	540-641-1415
Kevin & Molly Entrekin	Website, Registration, and Special Events	540-728-0248
	Communications Coordinator	
	Class Planning Coordinator	
Courtney Bremner	Morning Coordinator	540-998-2662
Diane Cleland	Afternoon Coordinator	540-357-3565
	Fieldtrip Coordinator	
Michelle Simonton	Cleaning Coordinator	
Individual room helpers	Snack Coordinator	

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. In order for us to keep our costs low, class variety high, and workload balanced, we need EVERY mom or dad to teach or help. There is a job for everyone and, depending on your experiences and interests, we will work to find a good fit for you.
2. Whatever your responsibilities, you are expected to show up on time and be prepared for the day. If your family is large or has children who need time to transition into classrooms, please arrive with enough time to get everyone settled in their appropriate places.
3. **If you are a teacher/helper in the nursery – 1st grade area, please arrive early in order to be ready to receive your students at drop-off time.**
4. Be alert and aware of all classroom activities. We are ALL hall monitors.
5. As a way of saying thank you to GraceLife, you will be asked to help clean or monitor after co-op two times per semester. Look for the signup sheets during orientation and pick an assignment that works for you.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Please be prepared to teach your class each week by arriving in your room at least 5 minutes before the start of class. If you teach first block, please leave enough time to get your own family settled.
2. Please be as creative as possible when choosing activities and purchasing supplies in order to keep our overall costs low.
3. **If you are going to be absent, please make arrangements with your assistant to teach your class and let the Morning Coordinator know you will not be there so we can make arrangements for another assistant.**
4. If you have disciplinary issues in your class, please speak to the parent that day and if necessary, please inform the leadership team.
5. The assistant is there to help you in any way possible. Please use her/him as needed.
6. Always straighten up your room after class; leaving it as you found it.
7. NO child should switch classes without parent and leadership approval.

ASSISTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Your job is to help the teacher in any way possible. This may include taking students to the restroom, passing out items, helping students with projects, keeping the students' attention for the teacher, etc.
2. If the teacher is going to be absent, we would like to have you teach the class since you will know what is going on. We will give you another assistant for that time period.
3. **Please remain in the classroom and engaged with the teaching at all times.**
4. Please share any concerns you have about the class to the teacher and/or to someone on leadership. You and the teacher are partners in the class, and we would love for you to work as a team.
5. During class changes, please help the students walk in the halls and find their next class in an orderly fashion.
6. If you are not helping in the next class, please help the teacher straighten up the room.

PLEASE SHARE THE FOLLOWING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Be prepared and bring needed class supplies.
2. Walk in the halls and stairways. No running or yelling.
3. **Respect others** – parents, teachers, and students.
4. **Respect the church** – clean up after yourself, do not destroy property.
5. **Respect learning** – pay attention and be a part of the class, complete assignments to the best of your ability. If you find the class is too easy for you, rise up and be a helper!
6. No cell phones, other electronic games/equipment, or personal items such as Legos, trading cards, headsets, etc. should be out during class unless approved by the teacher. If found being a distraction, the teacher or assistant may confiscate the item until the end of the co-op day. If questionable items are found, the teacher may return the item to your parent.
7. Students old enough to drive are required to stay on property all morning and can only leave if permitted by their parent.

DISCIPLINE

Every adult, not just teachers, are expected to intervene if disruptive or disrespectful behavior is observed.

Guidelines for handling disruptive behavior:

1. 1st Offense – Speak to the child asking him/her to stop the particular behavior and give a warning if it is not stopped.
2. 2nd Offense – Remind the child to stop and seat him/her next to an adult or in a time out chair. Inform parent of any recurring issues.
3. 3rd Offense – Remove the child from the class and take to his/her parent. Discuss with the parent any possible intervention ideas.

If a student is excessively rude or aggressive, steps one and two can be skipped. If the student continues to act out during the semester, a special parent-teacher conference will be called in order to determine if the student may continue to attend co-op.

In order to avoid possible problems, please to talk to your student's teachers at the start of the semester if you feel they need accommodations. Be ready to share specific techniques that work or be willing to stay with your child to help them have the best day possible.

It is also important that teachers / helpers talk to parents about a child's misbehavior or difficulty in class as soon as possible. Parents may be able to give insight or help with a proactive plan. If you wait a few weeks, the situation could escalate, and the parent may be caught off guard.

MORNING CLASSES

We use an online system for our class registration. It typically opens the first Friday in August and the first Friday in January for the respective semesters. At that time, you will register your children based on grade level and interest. We understand that homeschoolers do not fit well into specific grade levels so please choose the grade level that best matches with their maturity level or graduation year.

We group classes into Elementary, Middle, and High School. And classes have specific grade levels assigned them. There may be other classes that look very interesting to your children, but they can only sign up for ones with a matching grade level.

We used to, but no longer can accommodate students taking classes above or below their grade level. Not even if the teacher says it is ok. We need those classes for the age group they were intended for. And we want our students to be developing positive peer relationships through their shared experiences. The only exception may be if you are teaching a class and you want your own child with you.

Every year we brainstorm as a group to come up with our class options for the following year. Please be active in this process to ensure we have the classes your children will be interested in.

AFTERNOON CLASSES

Our afternoon classes are optional. Please do not feel obligated to participate in them. Rather choose to use them if they will simplify your weekly schedule of extracurriculars.

These classes are typically taught by outside teachers and have additional fees. **These fees must be paid during the registration period to hold your spot in the class.**

If you choose to participate, please remind your children which afternoon classes they are signed up for and help them get there the first few weeks. Also remind your children that they cannot join a class they are not registered for.

If your family is not participating in the afternoon classes, we ask that you head home (or to a park) after lunch. While we would love to continue to fellowship with you, it is hard to have so many children on property with unstructured activities.

Siblings of those participating in classes may continue to play outside or in the foyer. They should not be in the hallways of the building upstairs or downstairs.

NOTE: If the afternoon is rainy weather, we will need to cancel outdoor classes and families may need to head home sooner than normal. We simply cannot all fit in the foyer.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Although most of our time and efforts go into our co-op classes, we desire extra fieldtrips and fellowship times. In order to accomplish this, individual families are encouraged to plan activities as the ideas arise. If more activities are your desire, please feel free to plan an event and invite the group along. If you need help posting your event on the web site, please contact our web administrator.

HIGH SCHOOL EXCELLENCE AWARD

We would like to challenge our high school students on toward excellence. Beginning the summer before their 8th grade year, students may begin earning points as listed below. Upon completion of 100 points, we will award them with our Excellence Award. Through this process they should learn valuable life skills and be able to use this award as proof on higher education applications. Points can be earned in or outside co-op. Please see Kerri Merrill for an Excellence Award Form.

How to earn points:

25 points	Teach a class at co-op, VBS, or similar setting
	Serve as Student Gov President
15 points	Serve as Student Gov Vice-President or Secretary
10 points	Help in a class at co-op, VBS, or similar setting
	Serve in any other Student Gov position
5 points per day	Mission trip (not including travel days)
1 point	For every volunteer service hour worked

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

We are glad to offer a high school graduation ceremony at the end of each school year. To be clear, it is not co-op graduating your student, YOU ARE, but we offer a group ceremony so we can lighten each family's load and share this special event together.

AFTERNOON CLEANING

After co-op each week we all help to tidy up for the next ministry at GraceLife. We need to do the following things:

- Pick up rooms
- Wipe down high contact areas
- Spot vacuum
- Take out food / diaper trash

To start with, all 4th block teachers are responsible for picking up their rooms and wiping down the tables.

Then **we need everyone to sign up for 2 cleaning jobs per semester.** There are a variety of jobs and specific times the jobs should be done. Pick what works best for you.

AFTERNOON MONITORING

With more students on campus there is just more going on. We would like to be proactive and put monitors in place to help keep everyone safe. If you stay for the afternoon, we are asking you to **sign up for 2 monitor spots**. All spots are for 1.5 hours.

All students not in a class should be in the front foyer or outside on the south side (front field) of the building. No one should be behind the building, or on the north side playing basketball or on the big rock. If students stay in the designated areas, we can monitor them easier. Please let your children know where they should and should not play.

Playground Monitor – responsible for monitoring the fenced in playground.

- No hitting, pushing, or throwing mulch
- No one on the outside or roof of the ark
- Older children are allowed in the playground if they can play appropriately. If they are not, please tell them to play outside the fence.

Field/Pavilion Monitor – responsible for the play that goes on outside the playground.

- No hitting, pushing, or throwing rocks
- No one on the lawnmowers, 4 wheelers, or trailers
- All students must play between the building and the field. No one should be behind the building or down the hill. You may need to periodically check these areas.

Inside Monitor – responsible for knowing what is going on in the building.

- Students not in class should be outside or in the front foyer.
- They should not be in the hallways of the building upstairs or downstairs.
- No running in the hallways or playing on the elevator.
- You should periodically walk through the building to check on this.
- We will be locking the downstairs classrooms around 1pm to help.

Parents, you are still responsible for your children in the afternoon. Adding monitors does not mean you do not need to watch them. The monitors are just extra eyes. Please try and know where your children are and what they are doing. But we understand that when we start to fellowship our children have a way of wandering.

LOST AND FOUND

Any items that are left at GraceLife will be placed in the Lost and Found area by the elevator. Items that are not claimed after a couple of months will be donated. Please check there regularly.

EMERGENCY / SNOW DAY POLICY

In case of severe weather or other extenuating circumstances, you will be notified by a group email by 8:00 am on the day of closing.

*** If Montgomery County Schools close for snowy or icy conditions we will automatically cancel co-op for the day. If it is delayed for cold weather, we are likely to still meet. ***

HEALTH INFORMATION

Participants **should not attend** co-op if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever (within last 24 hours – unmedicated)
2. Virus or infection known to be contagious
3. Questionable rash
4. Persistent cough
5. Diarrhea, vomiting or nausea (within last 24 hours)
6. Chicken pox, Measles, or Mumps
7. Conjunctivitis or Eye drainage
8. Head lice

If there is any question about a child's health during the co-op day, the child will be removed to the parent's care immediately.

We like to err on the side of caution. If you or your child has any of the above conditions, we ask that you keep the whole family home.

Please keep in mind that this policy is essential for the health and protection of all our families. We have a number of students with serious health issues. What may seem like a little inconvenience for you would put some of these students in the hospital.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Unfortunately, personal conflicts and misunderstandings can happen. Though rare, it is important we agree on how to deal with these situations before they arise. We've chosen to base the structure of this policy on Matthew 18:15-20 and the spirit of this policy on 1 Corinthians 4:21.

"Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 18:15-20)

*"What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?"
(1 Corinthians 4:21)*

Many disputes/differences can be properly resolved by overlooking an offense and forgiving the person who has offended. Because of this, we ask that you pray about the issue to decide if it is important enough to deem confrontational. If, after prayer, God gives you the peace to dismiss the issue, then it is passed and forgotten and is NOT to be discussed with others.

If, however, after prayer, you feel the offense must be addressed, the offended party must first seek to resolve conflict between the two individuals involved. If either party is unsatisfied or a resolution cannot be agreed upon, they must seek the assistance of an objective party (typically a member of the leadership team) to mediate.

As a last resort, the conflict will be taken to the pastors of GraceLife Baptist Church, and they will help to make a final resolution.

MEDICAL RELEASE & WAIVER OF LIABILITY

In order to participate in co-op, you must sign to release GraceLife Baptist Church and its employees and volunteers from any liability for damage or injury. This is a notarized form that is kept on file at GraceLife Baptist Church. This form needs to be renewed each year and may be the same form used for Awana or Upward.

SAFETY & BACKGROUND CHECKS

In order to help ensure the safety of our children we will follow the safety guidelines set forth by the church.

1. Any adult working with children must have a background check on file.
2. All rooms must have at least 2 adults.
3. Only females are allowed to change diapers at GraceLife.

Remember, everyone is a hall monitor and should address issues as you see them. Some will be assigned to watch specific areas, such as, parking lot, lobby, & playground. We all are concerned with the safety and upbringing of our children. Let us work as a community to raise them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES

We believe the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God and that men were moved by the Spirit of God to write the very words of Scripture. Therefore, we believe the Bible is without error.

ABOUT GOD

We believe in one God who exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity (the Son of God) who became flesh to reveal God to man and to become the Savior of the lost world.

ABOUT MANKIND

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him but became alienated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, man is incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through his own effort alone.

ABOUT SALVATION

We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, salvation occurs only when people place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment of their sin.

ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We believe that every Christian should live for Christ and not for himself. By obedience to the Word of God and daily yielding to the Spirit of God, every believer should mature and be conformed to the image of Christ.

ABOUT THE CHURCH

We believe that the church is the body of Christ, of which Jesus Christ is the head. The members of the church are those who have trusted by faith the finished work of Christ. The purpose of the church is to glorify God by loving Him and by making Him known to the lost world.

ABOUT MARRIAGE

We believe that the only biblical marriage ordained and recognized by God is a union between one man and one woman.