

# **LHM Handbook**

**2019-2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

Linworth Homeschool Ministry (LHM) is a Columbus, Ohio Christian cooperative homeschool support group. As a ministry of Linworth Road Church, LHM is rich with inspired and enthusiastic Group Leaders leading ideal-sized groups for students K-Middle School. Growth opportunities abound through field trips, group activities and special events. LHM meets two Fridays per month from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., September through May.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Linworth Homeschool Ministry is to support member families who home educate as they raise up their elementary and middle school-age children to their full potential as devoted followers of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19, 20) LHM exists to provide supplemental education, extra-curricular, social, and ministry opportunities for LHM students as well as provide support and encouragement to homeschool families.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### **THE BIBLE**

We believe in the Bible as the essential and ultimate basis of our beliefs. It was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, was written without error in the original manuscripts and God has substantially preserved its truths throughout history.

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### **GOD**

We believe in one God, infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, the Creator of the universe, existing eternally in three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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### **JESUS**

We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, that He was fully God and fully man, and after having lived a sinless life, voluntarily suffered and died to pay for the penalty of our sins, thus satisfying God's justice and enabling all those who trust in Him to experience complete forgiveness before God. Jesus Christ rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and is at the right hand of God the Father. At a future unknown date, He will return to earth personally, visibly, and bodily.

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### **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe the Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ, to convict men and women of their sins, and to impart new life to all who place their faith in Christ. He indwells believers from the moment of spiritual birth, seals them until the day of redemption, gifts and empowers them to live a life pleasing to God.

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#### **HUMANITY**

We believe that man and woman, created in the image of God were innocent before God, but they chose to defy God, and thus sin separated them from their Creator, incurring divine

condemnation. This alienation has corrupted human nature making mankind totally incapable of pleasing God in and of themselves. We believe marriage is designed by God and is a life-long, covenantal relationship between one man and one woman, and is intended to give a picture of Christ's loving relationship with his bride, the Church.

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### **SALVATION**

We believe that by God's grace through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, a right relationship with Him is eternally secured, and cannot be achieved through any human endeavor. Believers should be baptized not as a requirement of salvation, but rather in recognition of their newfound relationship.

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### **THE CHURCH**

We believe that the church is composed of all true believers and that its members should gather together in local churches to celebrate God's presence, learn from God's Word, commemorate the Lord's Supper, and seek to express their faith in meaningful ways.

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### **HEAVEN**

We believe in life beyond death and the bodily resurrection of every person: for those who have received Christ, eternal conscious existence in His presence; for those who have not believed, conscious existence in isolation from God, subject to eternal suffering resulting from the voluntary forfeiture of grace realized through Jesus Christ.

## **LEADERSHIP BOARD**

LHM is managed by a Leadership Board composed of three or more officers, depending on the size and needs of the group. The Board Members' work is divided and roles are created according to the gifts and talents the individuals bring to the board. Board members have been LHM members for at least one year and are in good financial standing with the group. Board Members are elected or chosen by the existing leadership board and serve a minimum of two (2) years and a maximum of four (4) years consecutively. Candidates for positions on the board demonstrate service and leadership. The board meets during LHM group time, so as to not take further time away from their family.

# MEMBERSHIP

**Membership Basics** – Application to join does not guarantee entrance. Space is limited.

Placement priority is determined as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> - Current LHM families and Linworth Road Church members, 2<sup>nd</sup> - All others.

There are both benefits and obligations for members of Linworth Homeschool Ministry. A breakdown of major points is outlined below:

## Obligations

To abide by the LHM **Statement of Faith**.

**A responsibility to become informed** regarding communication from and to LHM via handbook; LHM mailbox, website, phone, newsletters, sign-ups, and other forms of contact. This includes an obligation to attend the LHM Kick-off.

**Serve as a Parent Helper** during LHM group time the necessary amount of time, depending on LHM enrollment. Abide by the requirement to find a substitute helper should one be needed. Participate in child safety training.

**Commit to coordinating or assisting in required number of events or field trips** in service to LHM and its membership.

**Timely Payment** –The fees covers copier usage, administrative expenses, most supplies and event costs and related expenses.

**Prices and Payment Schedules** – Current prices are listed in “New Member Enrollment” on the website.

**Fees and Paperwork** – LHM fees are non-refundable. You may not attend group time until fees are paid, all paperwork has been received, your background check has been cleared, and you completed the online safety training session.

## Benefits

**Groups** led by creative Group Leaders.

LHM families are invited to attend terrific **LHM events** such as field trips; parties, group events, etc.

Group benefits—such as **information about assessment options** offered locally and reduced rates for testing

**Receiving support and encouragement** that is available through formal as well as informal interaction.

**Ministering to others** is our benefit, not our obligation! We receive the privilege of giving encouragement and support to others in the body of Christ.

**Student & Family benefit - priceless!**

## COMMUNICATION

**Mailbox File** – A crate of hanging file folders with family names serves as LHM’s physical mailbox system. Please be sure to check your file to pick up your mail at least once each LHM day.

**Website** – The main hub of communication is our LHM website. The cost of the website is covered by your fees and is paid annually. The website has a public side and a private, ‘members only’ side. If assistance is needed, contact the website administrator.

By providing basic personal information, such as e-mail address and phone number, for inclusion in the LHM database on the website’s private page, members agree to give other members of LHM access to their information. Part of the purpose of belonging to a support group like LHM is, of course, to foster communication, community and networking opportunities.

LHM expects members to use any personal information obtained through the website in a respectful and responsible fashion but cannot dictate every detail of members’ conduct. LHM will not sell members’ information to other businesses and discourages members from using other members’ information for personal business unless they have received specific permission from an individual member to do so. Any personal contact information (such as email address or phone number) that a member does not wish to share via the website should not be provided.

**Conflict Resolution** – Guidelines if problems do occur...”Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.” -Galatians 6:1. Two things to keep in mind—

- 1) Always remember the purpose: **Restoration**: pointing out wrong someone has done is a good thing if and when it is done with a view to restoring the person.
- 2) Always remember the spirit in which reproof should take place. **Gentleness**: often the spirit in which correction is offered determines the outcome.

“And if your brother sins go and reprove him in private, if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.” -Matthew 18:15-17.

Procedure:

- 1) Handle it *privately*. This literally means between you and him alone. If this does not resolve the conflict, go to the next step.
- 2) *Get help* from others. Seek out a Board Member and make every effort to reach resolution.

## SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

**Linworth Road Church** – LHM has been a ministry of Linworth Road Church for over 20 years! LRC is a Great Commission Church. For more information about LRC, see anyone in the church office or go to their website at <http://www.linworthroad.com/>.

**Christian Home Educators of Ohio (CHEO)** – Christian Home Educators of Ohio (CHEO) is a non-profit state organization founded to serve the homeschool families of Ohio and to provide them with the tools to succeed. CHEO acknowledges that the Lord Jesus Christ must be central and supreme in the rearing of our children and that Biblical education is an inseparable part of the Christian faith. CHEO seeks to preserve the God-given, constitutional right to home educate, and to support and encourage families in fulfilling this Biblical responsibility.  
<http://www.cheohome.org/>

**Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)** – <http://www.hslda.org/> Home School Legal Defense Association is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Through annual memberships, HSLDA unites tens of thousands of families, providing a strong voice when and where needed.

## GROUP INFO

**Group Leaders** – The LHM leadership board selects Group Leaders on the basis of considerations including (but not limited to) teaching experience, positive references, educational background, subject interest and/or expertise. It is preferred that all candidates for teaching positions be a member of LHM for at least six (6) months and in good standing with the organization in terms of financial responsibility and other obligations. If you are interested in the possibility of teaching a group (in the event of an opening), please express your interest to a member of the board.

**Group Schedules** – Groups meet approximately 18 times during the academic session.

**Routine** – Please enter the building through the front doors of the church on group days. Students are encouraged to use the restroom and wash hands at this time. Students are to proceed to the Fellowship Hall, drop off lunches, hang up coats and stand or sit in their designated places as members arrive. Pledge, prayer, and announcements begin at 8:45. Groups begin promptly at 9:00 am. Families are strongly urged to arrive between 8:30 & 8:45.



## EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, and SERVICES

Note: LHM may not do all of these events and activities every year.

**Christmas Program** – This event has taken many forms over the years (such as program and luncheon, dinner theatre, buffet prepared and served by middle school students, holiday carnival, etc.).

**Academic Fair** – LHM students (or families) are invited to research a scientific principle, a hobby, an author, or a geographical location and create a display. Students are expected to make informal oral presentations concerning the project to/for observers. This is not a competition but an exhibition of knowledge learned. Comment cards may be given to exhibitors by fellow students and parents for purposes of encouragement.

**Service Projects** – It is our duty to teach our children everything Jesus has commanded us. We have a responsibility to be wise stewards of time and money placed in our charge. LHM offers opportunities to teach our children that serving and giving to others is a large part of our calling as we live for the Lord. Watch for service project announcements and prayerfully consider participating in a service opportunity through LHM. Know of a project that may be suited to LHM's mission and desire to serve? Contact anyone on the LHM Leadership Board.

**Speech Meet** – Speech Meet gives students a chance to shine as they select and memorize a poem, famous speech, Scripture verse, or original piece (less than 4 minutes in length) and present them publicly. Whether your student has experience or is brand new to the idea of speaking in front of a (friendly and encouraging) group, Speech Meet will help him or her practice communication skills and techniques and learn to be comfortable speaking and listening in group settings. How do you help your student to prepare? Glean LOTS of helpful tips in our own Speech Meet Booklet—CLOSE UP.

**Valentine Parties** – In February, Valentine parties for students are typically held in the group rooms or art room. Your child's Group Leader will inform you about how their group will celebrate this holiday.

**Assessments and Testing**– Each year, LHM provides members with information about assessment and testing options in the area.

**Field Trips** – Parents may be asked to assist with details pertaining to individual outings and are always encouraged to arrange additional field trips for the group.

**In order to offer each of these quality services and events, LHM requires active participation and leadership from all LHM parents. Without the commitment and cooperative effort of our member families, some of these programs will not go forward.**

## STUDENTS

**Dress Code** –Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we need to treat them with honor and respect. Foul language, questionable pictures or words, or off-color sayings or pictures on clothing will not be tolerated. Halter-tops, short shorts, tummies or underwear showing are also inappropriate. Neither hats nor sunglasses should be worn in the building. Simply put, if you find yourself asking if a clothing choice is okay, it probably isn't. If a student's clothing choice is questionable, a board member will call a parent, and the student will be required to change clothes before participating in LHM groups/events. These guidelines aren't meant to discourage students but to support them in making wise choices. Please discuss questions or concerns with the LHM leadership board.

**Student Conduct** – It is our goal to provide a loving, caring, positive, growth experience for every student who participates at LHM. The following rules have been adopted to foster character growth and to benefit people of all ages. They apply to groups, field trips, and all LHM events, and include LHM students and siblings.

**ATTITUDE** - Strive for a positive, helpful, cooperative attitude. Show respect for Group Leaders, helpers, group mates, the belongings of others, and the building. Look for opportunities to include others.

**SPEECH** - Let all speech be pure. No coarse jesting, teasing, sassy or silly talk. Be honest; no lying or boasting. Be respectful; call Group Leaders Mr., Mrs., or Miss. Speak quietly and respectfully to all. Be an encouragement to others; do not insult others or put each other down. Do not interrupt or talk out of turn. When in your group raise your hand and wait to be called upon!

**BEHAVIOR** - Exhibit good manners; follow LHM rules and instructions courteously. With the exception of physical education, running in the building will not be permitted at any time. No rough play. No pushing or shoving. No fighting. Exhibit good sportsmanship; lose graciously, win humbly.

**RESPECT** - Exhibit respect for property. Don't touch what is not yours. If you take it out—put it away; if you open it—close it; if you mess it up—clean it up. It is a privilege to use the church building. Let's work together to keep Linworth Road Church looking its best.

**PROHIBITED ITEMS** - Do not bring toys, books, games, electronic devices or any other items not required for groups. Cellular phones must be set to silent or vibrate mode during groups unless advance approval from an LHM Leadership Board Member has been granted. Outgoing text messaging or phone calls are not permitted without prior approval.

**Reproof & Discipline** – First to Parents: discuss student conduct requirements with your children. Be sure they understand what is expected of them and the consequences of not following rules. Group Leaders will present and review specific rules for students.

It is our policy that children shall **NEVER** be physically disciplined (spanked or otherwise struck) by any LHM Group Leader or Parent Helpers. Dialog between Group Leaders, Parent Helpers, and students must remain calm at all times, with plenty of recognition and praise of good attitude, speech, and behavior. Proper correction is also a part of training in righteousness. These steps are based on LHM's Conflict Resolution guidelines (see in Section I) and to that end, this is the process by which correction is administered at LHM:

**Step ONE** - When a rule is broken, the Group Leader or helper shall speak (calmly, yet firmly) directly to the student (at their level with eye contact) to relate the specific rule that was broken. Then, the Group Leader or helper shall ask the student for corrected behavior or action.

**Step TWO** - If the student does not respond appropriately to this correction, the Group Leader or helper shall separate the student from the group for 5-10 minutes. Also, the Group Leader shall discuss the incident with the student's parent (either in person at LHM or by telephone). The Group Leader is provided with a "Character Development Form" which they may use at their discretion and which will aid them in alerting the Board to an issue with a student and in initiating a conversation with a parent.

**Step THREE** - If the student persists in ignoring LHM conduct expectation(s), the Group Leader and LHM Leadership Board shall see that the student is removed from the group for the remainder of the LHM day. The parent shall be sent for immediately. The student shall be turned over to the parent's care. Numerous offenses will require a meeting between the Leadership Board, Group Leader, and Parent(s) with the purpose toward resolution and correction of behavior. If marked improvement is not realized, the student may lose group participation privileges.

**Lost & Found** – Please clearly label personal items such as jackets, lunch bags, etc. with your student's name. A lost and found box is displayed weekly during LHM groups. If an item is lost, please check here first. Items that are not claimed by the end of the LHM session will be donated, so check through the lost and found box from time to time to claim your belongings.

## PARENT HELPERS

**Parent Helpers** – Linworth Homeschool Ministry is a *cooperative* homeschool support group. We are blessed to have gifted Group Leaders in our midst who give of their time and talents to our children for nominal return. But our parents are the ones who make LHM work. With this in mind, LHM parents are required to help in LHM groups every week. The LHM parent (or parents) who will help in the group must complete the online safety training.

**IMPORTANT:** Failure to meet membership obligations (particularly to help in the group's room) will result in the loss of your family's *first* priority placement in registering for the next LHM year and may jeopardize future participation in the group. Of course, if there is a family hardship that makes serving difficult, the LHM board will give consideration on a case by case basis.

Each week during LHM group times there are many helper positions that need filled in order to have at least 2 adults in each room.

Main objectives for each helper position are provided--along with some do's and don'ts. Please take initiative to ask questions and anticipate the Group Leader's needs.

**Child Care** -- Main Objectives: To deliver quality care for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers under age three.

### **Please DO:**

- Arrive in the Child Care room on time to allow Group Leaders and LHM members to drop off their children.
- Welcome young ones eagerly and enthusiastically. Give compassion and comfort.
- Take instructions and ask questions of parents to be informed of needs and to give the best possible care.
- Get down at the children's level and play, read books, sing songs together, etc. Interact.
- Snacks (graham crackers/cheerios) will be provided.
- When accompanying youngsters to the restroom, please be sure that toilets are flushed, hands are washed, sinks are clean, and pick up any paper.
- Using the cleaning checklist, please return the room to proper neatness and cleanliness.

### **Please DON'T:**

- Spend too much time talking with the adults in the room.
- Have a movie or television playing for more than 45 minutes during the shift.

### **Parent Helper – Main Objectives:**

- Arrive at 8:40 and check the white board for your Parent Helper position.
- Take your children to their group chair.
- Sit with your assigned group during LHM announcements. After announcements, lead the children to their assigned room.
- Take attendance.
- Deliver proficient support for Group Leaders in the rooms (see do's and don'ts below).
- Become familiar with group locations in order to lead children to the proper room.
- During the last few minutes of group time, help with cleanup until it is complete. Turn in supplies to the designated area, empty the trash can, sweep the floor and wipe off the tables.

### **Please**

#### **Please DO**

- Arrive early!
- Begin with a good attitude toward the group and the children in it. Present a godly role model.
- Ask questions about what the group will be doing and be willing to jump right in.
- Be aware of the tasks expected of you as a helper and take the initiative to do them.
- Don't be afraid to enforce the LHM rules concerning discipline.
- Be sure to fully understand our policies.
- Be assertive, not aggressive, when it comes to crowd control.
- Follow posted evacuation routes and other safety instructions.
- PLEASE be willing to stay at the end to help clean up the room!

#### **DON'T**

- Not show up at all
- Show up late.
- Come to group with a bad attitude.
- Just observe.
- Use your cell phone excessively during the group. (Please set to vibrate or silent mode)
- Overstep the Group Leader's authority over the group.
- Leave before materials are put away and the room is completely cleaned up

**Roamer** – The Roamer is mainly stationed at the entry end of hallway wings. However, as the name implies, the Roamer monitors hallways periodically. Roamers check each group to see if help is needed and may be required to contact parents in the event of illness, accident, or discipline incidents. A list of helpers and a phone list will be available.

Main Objectives: To monitor hallways and provide security and assistance to:

- Assure that students remain in their proper groups
- Assist in groups momentarily as needed
- Assist Group Leaders & helpers with reproof and discipline incidents
- Supervise helpers with student restroom breaks
- Stop intruders from penetrating group rooms

PLEASE DO: Remain alert and ready to assist.

PLEASE DON'T: Use this time to socialize.

## SAFETY & HEALTH

**Adult Safety Training** – Because LHM values the safety of our children, a screening/application process for LHM adult helpers has been implemented (in coordination with Linworth Road Church’s Children’s Ministry programs and policies). Participation in safety training is mandatory. The screening process includes the following steps:

1. Parent’s completion of Volunteer Personnel form
2. Reference check and background check
3. Interview with LHM Board Member
4. Handbook review and Online Safety Training completed.

Once these steps are completed, you are ready to help at LHM!

**Check-in & Pick-up Procedure** – When you arrive at LHM for group, make sure that your children sit with their group helper in the Fellowship Hall and the helper will mark their attendance. At the end of the day, Group Leaders will take the group back to the fellowship hall where children will be released to their parents. Parents must check out with a board member once they have all of their children.

**Building Security** – LRC generously permits our use of rooms we have reserved. This does not give us full run of the church building, all its rooms, and outdoor property. Parents, please keep your children with you at all times.

**Cleaning Checklist** – The Parent Helper will have a room clean-up checklist located in the group binder. Please ensure the checklist is complete before you leave the room. Thank you for your help in keeping Linworth Road Church neat and tidy!

**Sickness Policy** – In order to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for all students, we ask that you keep your child at home anytime he or she exhibits the following symptoms:

- Persistent coughing
- Persistent sneezing
- Any colored nasal discharge
- Vomiting (within 24 hours)
- Inflamed throat
- Earache
- Diarrhea (two or more loose bowel movements)
- Fever (over 99°; must be fever free for 24 hours)
- Runny nose and/or eyes
- Unusual fatigue or irritability
- Complaints of stomach ache
- Swollen glands
- Rash (except diaper rash)

**Allergies – Please mention any allergies that your children may have on the Activity Permit. When working as a Group Leader or helper, observe any allergies that the children in your group may have. These are noted on the Attendance Sheet. Note: There is no peanut butter or anything with peanuts allowed in any of the rooms. Please keep this in mind when buying/preparing snacks.**

**Emergency Procedure** – Group Leaders are responsible for escorting their groups to safety. The door in each room posts a fire evacuation route. Follow quickly and calmly to exit through the proper door. After exiting, go to the grassy area that is across from the back parking lot and remain with your group until given further instructions.

**Accident / Illness** – Every effort will be made to promptly and properly treat accidents and illnesses that occur during group times. Parents may be contacted depending on seriousness. An Accident/Illness form will be completed and copies given to parents and the Leadership Board.

- **Medications** – LHM must be notified of any kind of allergy a child has via the Activity Permit form. Parents must inform the LHM Leadership Board and Group Leaders of conditions that may require students to self-medicate (i.e. inhaler, insulin, etc.). Only parents give medicine to their children. No antibiotic ointment should be used on children without parental approval.

**Two – Adult (Two-Deep) Rule** – The policy of Linworth Road Church and LHM is to always be with at least one other adult when working with children. This provides protection for both the child and for those working with them.

- **Report any situation or observation that makes you uncomfortable to a board member or to an LRC church pastor.**



# RESTROOM GUIDELINES

## **Childcare**

- Use changing tables in visible area
- Use toilet adjacent to room – prop door open
  - Please thoroughly clean the area and wash your hands after changing a diaper or helping children use the restroom

## **Preschool**

- Encourage parents to take their children to the restroom prior to group time
- Check to see if there are other adults in restroom
- Two female adults escort children – no students
- Adults stay in visual contact
- No closed doors
- Prop outside and inner door open
- Help children wash and dry their hands
- Thorough clean up the area and wash your own hands

## **Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade**

- One adult escorts student
- Use extra hallway monitor, if possible
- Check to see if other adults are in the restroom
- Wait outside the restroom door or watch from group room door (if the room is close to restroom)

**No closed doors!**