

Dear Families,

It's hard to believe summer is wrapping up, and we're ready to kick-off fall, but we are! For our children's programs, this year will be full of all of our old traditions as well as plenty of new and exciting moments.

As always, the first month of our programs has the purpose of allowing the children and their guides or aides plenty of time to get to know each other, to have fun, and to create important bonds. In order to do this, it helps if you and your family can make a commitment to attending as much as possible during this time. Some important dates are listed below, so be sure to mark your calendar.

Upcoming dates to be aware of:

August 28th - United Tribes Registration and Bounce House Fun Day

We need a newly completed registration form for every child in our program in order to provide excellent care and in order to keep everyone safe! How do you complete a form?

Simply come to Reimer Hall following the 9:15am service on August 28th. Forms will be available to complete and return. If you are unable to attend this day, please find our form and welcome packet on our website at ucgainesville.org/welcome-packet/. Print out and complete the form, and return it to the UCG front office no later than August 28th. The added bonus for the kids this day is the ever famous bounce house time.

September 4th- Labor Day Weekend Extended Activity Time

September 11, 18, 25, October 2, 9- Tribe Bonding

This September and October the Tribes will spend time getting to know each other, their guides, and the ministers of this church.

Week 1 will include our ever famous name games.

Week 2 will include a special presentation from UCG's own Deborah Hill on Backpack Safety.

Weeks 3 and 4 will include their special minister visits as some of our ministers take time to share about their way of connecting with their God, however known. We will introduce our theme for the year which is *Finding God, However Known*. This theme has been adopted from our larger UCC and tailored to fit the traditions of our own UCG. The children will learn about finding God through nature, religions, family, friends, and our church throughout the year. Corresponding games and fun-filled activities will round out our time together each week.

Week 5 will include an active service project that benefits a social justice program at UCG.

By the end of this month, our teams will be cohesive units that form an important part of our church family.

Returning this year... Mark your calendars for our Children's Sabbath on Sunday, May 21st. The past two years were amazing, and the kids are already looking forward to their turn to lead our church again!

Group outings: The United Tribes Groups K-5th grade will have their annual events that are a fun rite of passage for our kids if families volunteer to coordinate these events that occur outside of regular tribe time. Please carefully consider hosting one of these important events and sign up on the Children's Program Registration form. Our hope is for these events to occur in September or October while our tribes are focused on the theme of forming new bonds of friendship together. K -1 Group - Annual Water Related Event; 2-3 Group - Annual Field Trip; 4-5 Group - Annual Camp Out

Activity Time and Nursery Care: Most of you know by now that we have excellent care during activity time and nursery time.

Please also see the letters from Shay Smith, Director of Nursery Care and Summer Hartley, Director of Activity Time for all the information you'll need on what happens and when in those programs. Should you have any questions about any of our children's programs, please feel free to contact me directly. We look forward to sharing this year with your child(ren), and as always we thank you for sharing them with us!

Blessings,

Keri Trosper, Director of Children's Programs

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