

New Religious Education Class for Special Needs Children

Dear Parents,

I am writing to let you know about a religious education class for children with special needs that will be offered this fall at Good Shepherd through the Faith Formation program. It will ideally be scheduled during one of the Sunday night or Monday night religious education sessions.

Just to tell you a bit about myself: I am a clinical psychologist and am in private practice here in State College. I also teach at Penn State. I am a parishioner and the mother of a 5-year-old autistic son. He is in a special education setting that can accommodate his specific learning needs. I believe that the same types of accommodations can be made for other special needs children who want to participate in religious education. This class will be open to any child with special needs. Some examples of children who may benefit from this setting include those with autism or any other neuro-developmental disorder.

My plan at present is to pre-register families for the class and then have an informational meeting on **Wednesday May 28 at 7 pm at Good Shepherd**. At that point, we can discuss more in-depth your child and his or her individual needs, which will help in the planning and implementation of the class. My hope is that parents will be involved in the evolution of the class as well as participate in the class itself. I would love to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer to be a part of this class because the children will likely benefit from as close to a 1:1 ratio as possible.

Please fill out the pre-registration form below so we have an idea of the degree of interest in this class. Detach and return it with your other registration materials. Once we have a firm idea of the day and time for the class, we will have parents fill out a formal registration. The fee will be \$50, although scholarships are also available and the tuition cap of \$150 for multiple children in the religious education program will also apply.

Please feel free to contact me at Mpr12@psu.edu if you have any questions. Or contact Barb Ballenger in the Faith Formation office at Good Shepherd at 238-0649, dirred@goodshepherd-sc.org.

Sincerely,

Mary Riddle, Ph.D.

Special Needs Religion Education Class -- Pre-Registration

Parent or Guardian Name _____

Name of child _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ e-mail _____

Would you be willing to volunteer to work in this class either with your child or another child? _____

Does your child have an aide who could assist in his/her participation in this class? _____

On the back, please describe your child's current learning setting and explain how your child learns best (examples: visual supports, communication board, etc.).

May 2008