

# Preschool – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Music Curriculum

## OVERVIEW

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All Word of Life students experience the art of music through regular music classes and performance ensembles. Our early childhood campus provides music instruction through the classroom teachers who use age-appropriate materials and instruments to lay a foundation for music reading and learning.

All students in grades 1 - 8 receive a minimum of 60 minutes classroom music (or band) instruction. Various rhythm and melody instruments, music textbooks, music DVDs and videos, listening CDs and a wide variety of reproducible materials, along with the Internet and computer generated music help to make music learning accessible to many learning styles. We adhere to the Missouri standards for music instruction. One of our primary objectives is to teach our children that music is a gift from our Creator-God and that it should be used in thankful response as we worship and praise Him in our daily lives.

## Primary Campus Choir

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Our Primary Choir includes all 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd grade students. Here they learn the foundational skills of choral singing: good posture, rhythmic and tonal accuracy along with a sense of expression for the music and appreciation of various styles of music. They sing at various events during the school year including Sunday worship, weekday services for shut-ins, PTL meetings and other school functions.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Recorder Choir

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The classroom music for grades 3 and 4 focuses almost entirely on learning to play the soprano recorder (a flute-like instrument). This is a pre-band curriculum that teaches note reading along with the necessary skills to make a pleasing sound on an instrument. We use a sequential course of study called "Recorder Karate" where the students earn "belts" as they successfully complete each song level. Field trips involving performance opportunities are occasionally part of this curriculum. Recorder class meets twice weekly.

## Jubilee Singers

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Our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th grade choir meets once a week to learn the skills of good choral singing. Good posture, correct breathing techniques, tonal and rhythmic accuracy along with an appreciation for various styles of worship music is taught. Rounds and early two-part singing contribute to a foundation for more advanced music in the upper grades. This choir sings for chapel services, at our Christmas program and at other services and events as needed.

## **Celebrate Singers**

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This choir is made up of students in the 5th through 8th grade who enjoy singing and wish to improve their skills. Participation is optional. The choir meets once weekly. An important annual event is a city-wide choral festival held in October each year. Several schools participate in an all day teaching/learning setting that culminates in an evening concert for the public. A well-known and respected clinician is invited to work with the students to enhance their vocal skills. The Celebrate Singers perform at chapel services, Sunday worship, at Christmas and on special occasions as needed.

## **Hand Bell Choirs**

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Students in grades 7 and 8 have an opportunity to be involved in a handbell choir ensemble. We have a separate ensemble for each grade. They meet once a week, learning musical terms and notation, while also learning about hand bells and their uses. Students learn sacred selections that are played for chapel services, Sunday worship, Christmas, graduation and other school or church events.

## **Private Piano Lessons Program**

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We offer private piano instruction during the school day at a reduced price. This is both a convenience to parents and a money saving opportunity. Students receive 30 minutes of instruction during non-academic times of the school day or as mutually agreed upon with the classroom teacher and parents. Students receive opportunities for performance during the school year which culminates in an annual recital for all students. In the spring, students may elect to participate in an off-campus piano clinic to further enhance their skills.

## **5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Program**

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Students entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade have the opportunity to enroll in a beginning band program. Students participate in this program offered at Word of Life through Lutheran High School South. Families pay a participation fee as well as rental for instruments. A LHSS band instructor teaches group lessons/classes twice a week at Word of Life. Students advance from basic instrumental music to more difficult pieces as they progress through the program until 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students from Word of Life join with other area Lutheran elementary schools for mass band concerts held at Lutheran High School South both in the fall and the spring.



1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Music Teacher, Mrs. Carol Benninghoff - I teach classroom music to grades 1 - 8 and offer a recorder, choir and handbell program to students at various skill levels. I hold music education degrees from the University of Missouri - St. Louis and Webster University. I have taught music in both public and parochial schools for more than 30 years and have served several churches in the area of music ministry. I am presently serving Ascension Lutheran Church as Director of Music.

*OUR MISSION: Word of Life Lutheran School is committed to providing a high quality educational program in an environment where Christ prevails, where a child's human and spiritual needs are met, and where love, dignity and professional accountability are valued promoted and implemented.*