

Grace Homeschoolers
Family Handbook
2026-2027



Welcome to Grace Homeschoolers!

Who We Are

Grace Homeschoolers (GHS) is a supportive community for homeschooling families, offering enrichment opportunities for students in grades K–12. Our Co-Op provides weekly enrichment, a formal senior graduation ceremony, educational fairs led by students, field trips, picnics, Fine Arts Night, optional standardized testing, and a yearbook.

GHS is not an umbrella school—we do not maintain academic records, assign grades, or issue credits. All leadership and event planning is handled by a dedicated team of volunteer moms who work together to create meaningful experiences for our children. We have no paid staff—just families committed to supporting one another on the homeschooling journey.

How to Join

If you are interested in joining GHS, please fill out the GHS Membership Form. All members (new and existing) must complete a GHS Membership Form each year. This enables you to participate in all GHS activities. Please note, not all activities are offered every year, as we provide those activities that have volunteers to organize them.

All members/families who join GHS must read and agree to abide by the documents provided in this handbook which include our statement of faith, our dress code and our standards of conduct. These documents are also found on our website.

Communication

Upon joining GHS, each family will receive an invitation to join the BAND App (available for all phone/computer systems). BAND is the primary communication tool for GHS. On the BAND app, you will find a calendar of events, notices and other valuable information. *It is vital that each member check and/or respond to communication postings in BAND on a regular basis.*

Membership Requirements

All members are required to complete at least one *annual service position in addition to their weekly Friday responsibilities*. The annual position(s) will be assigned shortly after sign-up. These service positions can include chair/or helpers of Fairs, Fine Arts Night, Graduation, Student Testing, etc. These annual service positions will involve helping with planning, set-up, clean-up and serving during the event as needed. Assignment of positions is based on seniority. Once you have served one year, you are eligible to chair an event. Please note that in order for an event to run smoothly, when you are on the volunteer team for an event, someone else must be responsible for your young children - older siblings, another parent, grandparents, etc. You will have responsibilities at the event that will require focus away from your children.

Co-op Jobs

Please note that while we use the term “class,” *GHS is not a school*. Our classes are meant to supplement and enrich the education that parents are directing at home. Classes typically meet three Fridays each month, with the fourth Friday generally off. Please refer to the Calendar for the specific school days. All classes are held at First Baptist Church in Forest City from 9:15 AM to 2:25 PM. You can view our most recent course offerings on our website.

We offer classes for elementary, middle, and high school students. To participate in co-op, you will be required to serve **2 hours** during each Friday, helping in a variety of capacities (teaching, teacher's helper, set-up, clean up, lunchroom monitor, etc). Nursery is provided for nursery aged children during your assigned hours. After your initial year, you may teach a class.

Membership and Agreement Policy

We are Bible-believing, evangelical Christians who desire to serve the Lord Jesus Christ while teaching our children at home. This support group consists of home educating parents joining together to share our talents, resources, and time in order to enhance and enrich the educational experiences of our children. **Parental involvement is a necessity to avoid a deteriorating program and lost opportunities for our children.** A support group also provides a source of advice and encouragement for the parent/teacher.

Membership Benefits and Responsibilities

1. GHS will communicate dates for field trips, events, and standardized testing by a certified teacher. This standardized testing is optional for members' children, but non-member children may be included with the approval of the Grace Board. The testing fee is not included in the annual membership fee.
2. GHS provides a directory with an address, phone and email list for communicating with other member families. *This is not to be used for solicitation or business.*
3. Members will agree to abide by the behavior and dress standards adopted by the GHS Board.
4. Any teaching at GHS events must reflect a Biblical Christian worldview and must be consistent with our Statement of Faith.
5. Each family pays a nonrefundable fee to cover our combined expenses such as supplies, facility costs, and printing. Optional expenses (field trips, t-shirts, extra yearbooks, etc.) are to be assumed by families choosing to participate.
6. Each member is required to serve in at least one of our activities that benefits GHS as a whole. Renewal of membership in the group may be forfeited if the service commitment to GHS is not fulfilled and arrangements were not made. Participation in co-op classes requires additional service commitments each Friday that co-op is in session.
7. Each family agrees to respect the schedules of volunteers who establish deadlines for GHS activities. Members must fulfill commitments and be punctual. If you cannot attend a class/event, for GHS or co-op after signing up, **please contact the organizer in a timely manner.**
8. Parents are responsible whenever their children are attending/participating in a GHS function or classes.
9. Any facility damage is the responsibility of the student/family member that caused the damage. The family responsible for the damage is obligated to repair or pay for the damage.
10. In order to maintain the safety of our children GHS will compare our family membership database with the United States Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) files and the Florida Sexual Offender Registry (FDLE). Any known offender matches with the GHS family membership database may preclude the offender from attending any GHS function. This, however, does not exclude the family, only the offender. Should an offender attend a GHS function, the family members will be immediately and permanently revoked.

We encourage families who are not comfortable with our standards to seek other like-minded homeschooling support groups.

Statement of Faith

I believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God, without error in the original manuscripts.

I believe in one God, the creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I believe that by one man, Adam, sin entered the world and death by sin, therefore, all men are born into sin, lost without hope of salvation apart from the grace of God and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the deity and virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. His sinless perfection and voluntary death upon the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice of all sinners, that He rose bodily from the dead and ascended into heaven, from whence He will return with power and glory.

I believe that marriage consists of one man and one woman and that this institution is a reflection of Christ's relationship with His Church.

I believe that there are only two genders, male and female, and that a person's gender is decided by God during the creation of each person in the womb.

I believe that salvation is a gift from God by grace through faith apart from any human merit or worth, that this eternal life is received by personal faith in Jesus Christ alone and that works of obedience to Christ are evidence of, not requirements for, salvation.

I believe in life after death; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; that the just will be raised to everlasting life in heaven and the unjust raised to eternal punishment.

I understand that anyone who would like to be a member of Grace Homeschoolers must be in full agreement with the above Statement of Faith and that their life will be consistent with these beliefs.

Conflict Resolution

All members should do their best to treat each other with respect, gentleness, kindness, patience, and love. They should train their children to do the same. Members should do their best to live in peace with all other members.

When a dispute occurs between two or more individuals (adult or child), the guidelines laid out in Matthew 18:15-16 must be followed, especially if sin is involved. One should immediately approach the individual face to face, in gentleness, speaking to one another in love. If the issue remains unresolved, bring it to the GHS Board. At this point, we will seek additional/outside Godly wisdom to help with conflict resolution.

If a teacher/helper/student has issue:

1. Address the individual directly in love. *"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens and pays attention to you, you have won back your brother."* Mathew 18:15

2. Bring the issue to a GHS board member. The GHS Board will speak with all parties involved either individually or in a group setting, whichever is most appropriate, at all times, maintaining confidentiality. *"But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two others, so that every word may be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses."* Mathew 18:16

3. If negative behavior continues, the entire GHS Board will meet with individual teacher/student(s) and their parents. *Extending extra grace.*

4. If negative behavior still continues, the entire Board will vote on if the teacher/student will/will not be permitted to return to GHS. *“If he pays no attention to them [refusing to listen and obey], tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile (unbeliever) and a tax collector.” Mathew 18:17*

Behavior Standards

The name, reputation, glory of God and His work will be protected and honored *at all times*. This pertains to field trips, classes, and all GHS functions.

All event attendees (visitors and participants) are expected and required to demonstrate cooperation, courtesy, and respect for hosts, instructions, officials, adults, and each other.

Property, furnishings, and supplies will be carefully maintained and respected.

Proselytizing of any religion that does not conform to the GHS Statement of Faith (verbal or written) will not be tolerated.

Inappropriate subject matter, gestures, and/or language (i.e. abusive, crude, or obscene), verbal, written, electronic or any verbal conduct that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual may result in immediate expulsion from the event.

Physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual will result in immediate expulsion from the event.

Students must be under teacher/adult supervision at all times during GHS functions. This includes Friday classes. If a student is not in a class during one of the hours, they **MUST** be with their parent(s) or another designated adult.

Students may not go on and off campus once they have checked into campus for their classes. The exception to this rule is for those upper classmen with signed paperwork that are allowed to leave for lunch. Lunch rules must be followed; this includes checking out with a lunch volunteer and returning by 12:20, 5 minutes **before** lunch is over to help with clean-up. If these rules are not followed, off campus lunch privileges will be revoked.

Students will not engage in any inappropriate display of affections also known as PDA (i.e. pairing off, romantic-type behavior, hand-holding, hugging, kissing, back rubs, etc.).

Students will not engage in physical violence or any physical contact that may be considered inappropriate by any party, even if their intention was joking or playful. This includes any hitting, boxing, wrestling, poking, or slapping, etc.

Electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, iPads, laptops, handheld video games, etc.) are not permitted during class time, unless specified by the teacher. *Cell phones must be on silent mode or turned off during class.* Teachers reserve the right to collect cell phones or devices during class.

Dress Code/Hygiene Policy

- Students are required to demonstrate care with personal hygiene. This can include, but is not limited to, brushing hair, brushing teeth, wearing deodorant, washing hands in the restroom, including no excessive use of cologne or perfume.
- Members should dress appropriately, neatly, and modestly according to weather conditions and type of the event.
- Shoes must remain on feet at all times. Physical Education type of classes may require closed-toed shoes.
- For swimming events, modest one-piece swimsuits (or dark t-shirt over 2-piece swimsuits) are required for girls. **Shorts are required over ALL swimsuits.**
- Shirts that are low cut, see-through, with spaghetti straps, or tank tops must be worn with another appropriate garment. Tank top/sleeveless straps must be at minimum the width of a credit card's height.
- Hemlines of shorts, dresses, skirts and skorts should be no shorter than mid-thigh length. We recommend that shorts be worn under skirts.
- Jeans may not have rips, tears, or holes above mid-thigh that expose skin.
- A long shirt (that completely covers the backside) is required with leggings or workout pants, etc.
- Bare midribs (even when hands raised) or tight or revealing clothing is not allowed.
- Undergarment exposure, clothing with inappropriate writing or graphics, extreme faddish trends: i.e. gothic dress, gang-related paraphernalia, etc, will not be permitted.
- Only female students may wear earrings at GHS functions. *Students are not permitted to have facial piercings, ear gauges, or tattoos.*
- No GHS member's hair color will be of an unnatural color (such as primary colors; red, blue, green, etc). We may require that you wear a hat or other head covering. Please see the board with any questions or concerns.

Student's Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to:

1. Be informed of the GHS behavior standards/dress code policies.
2. A safe and orderly environment in which to learn.
3. Be treated with dignity and respect.
4. Be secure in their personal privacy.
5. Reasonable and fair treatment.
6. An appeals committee to voice their concerns for serious issues of conflict.

Student are required to:

1. Come to class or events with all the necessary materials and be prepared to learn.
2. Dress and act in ways that will not distract other students from learning.
3. Treat other people and their property with respect.
4. Have in possession only those items allowed by law and GHS rules or policies: i.e. no weapons, pocket knives, illegal drugs, or illicit materials.
5. Listen courteously to the opinions and points of view of others.
6. Maximize their learning opportunities at all GHS events.
7. Report hazardous or dangerous situations immediately to an adult in authority.
8. Report bullying and threats to do harm immediately to an adult in authority.

Absentee Guidelines/Sick Policy

We cannot operate without all hands on deck. Please do your very best to be present every week and to be on time with the obvious exception of illness and emergency situations. ***We do ask that your family be cleared of fever, throwing up, etc. for 24 hours before returning to Grace. Please be considerate.***

In case of an unavoidable absence please do the following:

Grace Annual Events:

1. The parent must find coverage for their service position, and change to another event to avoid putting their returning membership in jeopardy.
2. The parent then must notify the chairperson of the event and notify Kelaine Brothers with the date, substitute person, and the event they will miss.

Co-op Class Days:

1. The parent must find coverage for their service position. Verbally speak with others in person, or via phone/text to secure coverage. ***As a last resort***, you may post on the Band app seeking coverage.
2. Once you find coverage, post on the Band app on the day/class with the name of the person who is covering for you and tag Renee Rodriguez.
3. If you have a short-notice emergency situation, please text Renee Rodriguez at (407) 920-6985 before 7am the day of co-op. Take a moment now to add her phone number into your phone.
4. If your student will be out, please notify their teachers via Band.

If you miss more than 6 co-op class days, you may be asked not to return the following year to co-op. Please speak with the Board for special consideration.

Emergency Situation Policy

In the event of an emergency situation such as a major weather condition (hurricane, tornado or pandemic), we follow our local government agencies recommendations as well as our local school system (Seminole County) for canceling school. Stay in close communications. We will want to know you are safe and if we can help. Please notify us if you and your family evacuate.

Emergency Procedures at First Baptist Church of Forest City:

In the event of a warning, the following action should be taken:

1. All groups and people will move to the appropriate area, depending on the warning: All bathrooms, interior hallway area, or outside in case of fire.
2. Teachers, helpers, and leadership on site will immediately begin to assist all people in the designated areas. Teachers are responsible for guiding their students to these locations. Teachers will bring attendance lists if possible.
3. Leadership will monitor the emergency situation.

In the event of a fire emergency, the following action should be taken:

1. Leadership will immediately dial 911 and report that First Baptist Church of Forest City has a fire.
2. Teachers, helpers and leadership on site will immediately reference the evacuation chart on their classroom/office walls and begin to assist any class, group, volunteers or parents out of the building through the nearest exit. Parents should not try to get their children out of classrooms during a fire alarm. This will create confusion and difficulty in evacuation. Teachers will take attendance lists with them, if possible. All fire exit doors are unlocked from the inside at all times.
3. All groups evacuating will come together on the grass area past the parking lot near the dumpster, a safe distance away from the structure and emergency vehicles.
4. Parents must meet children in the designated area. Do not take children off grounds until they are accounted for. Any available adults will help supervise children. If there is direct knowledge of people still in the structure, inform the fire department immediately upon their availability.
5. Cars and vehicles should not leave the parking lot. This may cause a bottle-neck at entry, parking lot, and intersection. Let all emergency vehicles have the right of way.
6. Fire extinguishers are located in the following areas: Hallway by main bathroom, end of the hall by classrooms, and near the exit by the main doors.
7. One designated board member will begin a search of the building to determine if there is smoke or fire or if it could be a false alarm. Upon the sign of any smoke, immediately evacuate and inform the arriving fire department where the smoke was located. During a fire, evacuate directly outside through the nearest exit and proceed to the designated area.

GHS 2026-2027 Board Members

Dana Brenyo	Co-Chair
Harmony Montanez	Co-Chair/Hospitality Coordinator
Cathy Burk	Treasurer
Renee Rodriguez	Secretary/ Absentee Coordinator
Kelaine Brothers	Special Needs Coordinator/ Events Coordinator
Rosanne Hofstatter	Church Liaison/Logistics Coordinator

Grace Homeschoolers

2026-2027 Family Signature Pages

(Must be signed and turned in at the Mandatory Members meeting)

Your signature below indicates that you and your family have read and agree with the Grace Homeschoolers:

- Membership Benefits and Responsibilities
- Statement of Faith
- Conflict Resolution Policy
- Behavior Standards
- Dress Code/Hygiene Policy
- Student's Rights and Responsibilities
- Parent Absentee Policy
- Absentee Guidelines/Sick Policy

All of which are accessible on the GHS website. By signing below, you also agree that you will hold harmless anyone associated with Grace Homeschoolers, Inc. and/or Forest City First Baptist Church from any cost, liability or expense.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature Page:

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

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Student Signature

Grace Homeschoolers

2026-2027 Family Liability Waiver

(Must be turned in at the Mandatory Members meeting)

Event: Grace Homeschoolers Inc. Co-Op Days and Special Events

Participant's Name(s) (Please print ALL participants from your family):

In consideration for permitting Participant to participate in Grace Homeschoolers, as directed by the relevant volunteers and staff, the undersigned, for themselves, and for their respective heirs, personal representatives and assigns, agree as follows:

-Assumption of Risk: The undersigned hereby acknowledge and agree that they understand the nature of the Event; that Participant is qualified, in good health, and in proper physical condition to participate therein; that there are certain inherent risks and dangers associated with the Event; and that, except as expressly set forth herein, they, knowingly and voluntarily, accept, and assume responsibility for, each of these risks and dangers, and all other risks and dangers that could arise out of, or occur during, Participant's participation in the Event.

-Release and Waiver: The undersigned hereby RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE Grace Homeschoolers, Inc. and its member institutions, Forest City First Baptist Church and its member institutions, or any subdivision thereof, and each of them, their officers and employees, (collectively, the "Releasees"), from and for any liability resulting from any personal injury, accident or illness (including death), and/or property loss, however caused, arising from, or in any way related to, Participant's participation in the Event, except for those caused by the willful misconduct, gross negligence or intentional torts of the above parties, as applicable.

-Indemnification and Hold Harmless: The undersigned also hereby agree to INDEMNIFY, DEFEND AND HOLD the Releasees HARMLESS from any and all claims, actions, suits, procedures, costs, expenses, damages and liabilities including, but not limited to, attorney's fees, arising from, or in any way related to, Participant's participation in the Event, except for those arising out of the willful misconduct, gross negligence or intentional torts of the above parties, as applicable.

-Permission to Use Likeness/Name: The undersigned further agree to allow, without compensation, Participant's likeness and/or name to appear, and to otherwise be used, in material, regardless of media form, promoting Grace Homeschoolers, Inc., and/or its events and activities, including those of its representatives and licensees.

-Acknowledgement of Medical Insurance: The undersigned further agree to have obtained proper medical insurance and will assume full responsibility for any Accident/Medical Insurance needed to cover Participant in the case of accidental injury, or the like, while Participant is attending Grace Homeschoolers, Inc.. The undersigned will not hold Grace Homeschoolers, Inc. or its members responsible in any manner for injury.

-Severability: The undersigned expressly agree that the foregoing assumption of risk, release and waiver of liability and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the State of Florida and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

-Acknowledgement of Understanding: The undersigned have read this assumption of risk, release and waiver of liability and indemnity agreement, and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the same. The undersigned fully understand this assumption of risk, release and waiver of liability and indemnity agreement, that the undersigned are giving up substantial rights in connection therewith, and that its terms

are contractual, and not a mere recital. The undersigned acknowledge that they are signing this agreement freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Parent/Guardian of Minor (if Participant is under the age of 18) Date

Printed Name

Signature of Parent/Guardian of Minor (if Participant is under the age of 18) Date

Printed Name