

Welcome to Sixth Grade!

My goal as your teacher is that in some way you find the LORD's presence in your life each day in the classroom (and other places you go). The Lord is attending all the classes - we just need to remember to notice Him and include Him in what we are doing.

The school theme this year is:

"I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you."

Genesis 9:15

**What covenant does the Lord have with you?
What covenant do you have with the Lord?**

This is a booklet of information that will help you find your way around the classroom and become familiar with the routines.

When you get to school:

- Try to arrive promptly. You can get into school at 7:45. By 8:00 am, you need to be in the classroom or you will need to get a late slip from Mrs. Lambertus. (If you are late and we have already gone to chapel, please put your things in your locker and enter Heilman Hall from the **back door**. Walk quietly up to our row and sit down.)
- Every other Monday we help the first graders at the beginning of the morning, so try extra hard to be on time.
- Repeated lateness results in consequences (never fun, so just be on time, ok?).
- There is a morning routine posted by the door.
- Greet Mrs. Daum.
- Always read the board when you come in. There will always be instructions written there. Try to get right to work.

General classroom procedures:

- **“Always leave people/places better than you found them.”** Clean up after yourself (and others) if you need to. Leave each person you see each day better than you found them. Treat classmates with kindness and respect at all times.
- The whole school has a **“hands off”** policy, so keep your hands to yourself at all times.
- Try to **sharpen pencils** *between* classes. But if you get desperate, quietly go to the back of the room and do so. Try not to sharpen pencils when I am reading aloud or giving instructions.
- **Don’t draw on your desk, labels, or the schedules that are taped to your desk.** Nothing else should be taped or stuck to your desk.
- Only put stickers on your front nametag or some place in your binder, or you may have a long afternoon the day school ends, scrubbing them all off your desk.
- Please raise your hand when you need to get a drink or you need to use the bathroom. You will **not** be excused for at least 15 minutes following a break, so plan ahead. Take advantage of your breaks! If you are desperate, try to wait until after instructions are given.
- You may play with your beeswax/squishy quietly and **where I can’t see it** when I am talking as long as you are really listening. (I may ask you a question just to be sure you are 😊)
- When I ring the bell or say "ding, ding" as if I was the bell, all movement and speech is to **stop immediately and you need to be quiet**. Sometimes I clap and you all do an answering clap that should also be followed by quiet. (Hint: This is a great way to earn marbles!)

- Only 2 people in the loft so we can all be safe.
- When working in the hall, I expect you to work, using a quiet voice, or your hallway privileges may be revoked.
- Aim to follow the **dress code** in the school handbook and make sure what you wear meets the requirements. If you have a question about something, bring it to school and we can figure it out together.
- If you lose a **photocopied piece of schoolwork** you will need to pay 10 cents to replace it. This is what it costs the school to replace it. You may want to keep a few dimes handy; otherwise, your name goes on the board until you are able to pay me. (You don't want to fund Mrs. Daum's trip to Hawaii! 😊)
- Please take regular **showers** and **wash your hands EVERY** time you use the bathroom. This habit greatly reduces the risk of spreading unwanted germs. Soap is best - otherwise you are just giving the germs a drink.
- Hand sanitizer is available by both doors that you are strongly encouraged to use before eating or after blowing your nose, etc. Remember, we often "foam out."
- Cell phones are to be powered off and/or set in silent mode. Please keep them in back packs until the end of the school day.

Trash:

- Please put food trash in the large black trashcan by my desk. This will be emptied regularly so that our classroom doesn't get stinky! The clear bags in the gray can are for recycling only.

Classroom jobs:

- A list of jobs is posted at the back of the room. Jobs are done on Fridays during clean-up time.
- Jobs are assigned for a month, sometimes with a partner, sometimes not. That way you can get really good at it!
- People may be asked to help with trash throughout the week.
- There is a card that explains how to do each job. Read the whole card at the beginning of the month because many of the jobs have several parts to them.

You will **also** be asked to clean your desk every Friday during clean up time. First do your classroom job, and then you need to clean your desk before you can go home. If your desk is a real mess, you may have to stay late on Fridays which can be a real pain if all of your friends are going out the door and you are stuck there with a pile of junky papers. The good news is that there may be random desk checks in the middle of the night which may result in surprises being left behind in your desks.... but I can't guarantee anything. ☺

Recitations

- You are responsible for memorizing the current recitation by the Thursday of the week you receive it. That way you will have a whole week of saying the recitation from memory at chapel. A copy will be posted and given to you.
- I may tell you how many mistakes you can make when you say it.
- After you say the recitation, you will get a star to put on the chart on the door going into the closet.
- If memorizing is hard for you, we will come up with a plan for you to be successful.

Fire Alarm or other drills:

- When the fire alarm goes off, all talking is to immediately **stop**. Sometimes instructions are given over the intercom and they can be hard to hear, so the classroom needs to be quiet so we can all know what we are to do.
- Usually we will line up at the back door to go out to Simons' Field. I keep a class list there so please do not remove it, so I can make sure we are all safe.
- Be quiet and co-operative and remember not to talk until I give you permission. (Hint: another place to earn lots of marbles!)

Color Groups and Class Numbers:

- Every student in the class has been assigned to one of the four "color groups". I will be using these groups to organize you throughout the year. For instance, I may say, "I will conference with the yellow students this week about the books they are reading." These groups stay the same for the whole year.
- Also, each student has been assigned a "class number" for the year. Your number will begin with a six hundred before it. Please memorize your class number.
- Class numbers are written on many of your school materials (textbooks, calculators, etc) and identify them as yours for the year. You are responsible for taking care of these things. If you lose or damage them, you will need to bring in money to replace them.
- If something has your name on it, you can doodle on the cover and/or put stickers on it, etc. ☺

Binders:

- You should have a tabbed section in your binder for all subjects.
- Place all sheets of paper given to you directly into your binder when you receive it (i.e. history in history section, etc.). **DON'T JUST STUFF THEM IN YOUR DESK!** If you learn this habit this year, you will always be grateful. ☺
- All papers are to be kept until you have been tested on that unit. After a test is passed, all papers can then be removed from that section of your binder and disposed of at home.
- Binders are to be neat at all times. Occasionally I may check everyone's binders to see:
 - that papers are where they should be
 - there aren't loose papers floating around
 - old papers have been thrown away
- If I see that your binder is messy, I will put you on a "Binder Check". This means that your name goes up on the board and you have 24 hours to show me your beautifully organized binder. If it isn't neat, you will stay at lunch or after school until it meets my approval.

Lunch:

- Lunch is to be eaten at a desk or a table or the floor, sitting down.
- No trading food. Your parents think you are eating what you bring to school.
- No asking other people for their food. No begging. It is really hard to enjoy a McDonald's lunch if 8 friends are drooling over your french fries.

- Remember that all food trash goes in the large trashcan beside my desk.
- If you need to use a classroom utensil or mug, go ahead, but you must wash it and put it away when done. I do not do your dishes. I am not your mother! ☺
- **Hot lunches** - especially in the cold weather it is nice to have a hot lunch!
 - Each student will be assigned a day that they can use the microwave for lunch. The list of days is posted on the microwave by color groups.
 - Please, do not bring food that requires more than 2 1/2 minutes of cooking time. There just won't be time for everyone to cook if you do.
 - Clean the microwave if your food spills in it.
 - Bring something to cook it on, like a paper plate.
 - Be careful not to overcook your food (it stinks!) and/or burn yourself (ouch!). If you need help, please ask.
 - The privilege of using the microwave, etc. can be taken away if you do not use it responsibly.
 - If it's **not** your day and you have something to heat, you will need to wait until everyone whose day it is has gone and then cook yours. But if you do this, you need to be aware that you may not have time to eat your lunch.
- I also have a kettle and toaster you can use any day.
- I am often willing to stay with you during lunch recess, if you need extra help in any area or you want a quiet place to work.

Reward/Management System:

- The class will start the week with 5 “marbles” on the board.
- Marbles are given for good behavior and taken away for poor behavior performed by the majority of the class.
- I usually do not award marbles if students ask for them.
- Examples of behaviors that may earn marbles include being quiet (especially if I am helping another student), being helpful, doing an extra good job on an assignment, finding a spelling mistake, being remarkably clever, being kind, having a positive attitude on a challenging assignment, etc.
- Examples of behaviors that could make the class lose marbles off the board include the class not settling down, a majority of students talking out of turn, other poor behaviors performed by a group of students, etc.
- At the end of the week, the "marbles" on the board will be totaled and the number of marbles on the board will be matched and added to the jar. Once marbles are in the jar, they can't come out!
- When the container is full we will have some sort of celebration party (pizza, ice-cream, whatever). You can help decide what kind of party to have over a lunch period. You may be asked to bring in \$2.00 to cover the cost of whatever we decide to do.
- If an individual student’s behavior is not acceptable, the whole class will not usually lose marbles. Instead, a card system is used. After each warning, you will flip a card at the front of the room. Every day you start with a green card. The following cards are blue, yellow and red. If you flip to a red card, you will be serving a 30-minute detention in the intermediate math room the next day. If warranted, each additional infraction will result in more detention.

Independent Country Study:

- This is the big deal in sixth grade. We start working on it in January and the final celebration, the Country Fair, this year is on Tuesday, May 14.
- We will choose countries sometime in January.
- Work to keep your mind open to what country you might like to do, but if you really have your heart set on one I may try to accommodate you if you have a good reason (for instance “I was born there” or “I have always dreamed of doing Japan and I will absolutely DIE if I can’t do it”). Only one person can do each country. Resources could be hard to find if there are five people in both halves doing Sweden. Research is also difficult if you choose an obscure country like Kazakhstan. Most of the countries students do end up being in Europe, so consider expanding your horizons!
- Most of the Independent Country Study work is done at school. We do lots of different projects like pretend travel journals, charts, maps, and collecting pictures. The final project is a 5-7 page paper that covers three topics of your choice. It really isn’t hard and there is an opportunity for you to design some of your own projects as well.

Homework:

This is the big subject I am sure you are all interested in. I assure you that I am always aiming for an amount is reasonable. I will be asking for feedback from both you and your parents throughout the year to make sure that everything is working well for you.

Homework is used to practice, prepare and enrich work we are doing in class. I never use homework to introduce new ideas or just to fill your time. Homework can be an essential tool for teaching

you independent organizational skills, responsibility and accountability. (I'm really big on these qualities too. You will see them come up again and again.)

- You may have up to 60-65 minutes of homework Monday through Thursday nights. Some nights you may have less. If you leave long-term assignments until the last minute, you will likely have more than an hour of homework.
- This includes 15 minutes of credit reading that is required every night. (Your literature reading can be your credit reading some nights.) Reading from the WORD each day is such a valuable habit, that you are given triple credit for reading from It. ☺
- Every student works at a different pace. The above time is geared for the average student who is working at a steady pace without watching Netflix and/or taking regular ice cream breaks. ☺
- There is usually no homework over the weekend, but occasionally you may need to work on a long-term assignment. I encourage you to read, though, if you have the time.
- All homework is expected to be handed in at 8:00 a.m. the day it is due, with your name on it. NO EXCUSES! Well, okay there are actually two excuses...1.) A note/email from your parents saying that you worked too long (or some other good excuse) or 2.) An excuse from me over the phone/email because you contacted me and I said it was okay. Both of these excuses demonstrate to me that you have been accountable and responsible for your work even if you could not get it done.
- Late assignments often result in a grade deduction.
- If a homework assignment is not handed in, you will be expected to do a 30-minute study hall in the upper computer lab the following day. You may need to do the

assignment prior to that time. Each missing homework assignment earns a study hall. Ten study halls in a term results in a daily study hall for the remainder of the term. (Again, this is a road you don't want to go down, so it's best to avoid it.)

- An email will be sent to your parents, letting them know this. You may not be allowed to participate in after school sports the day the study hall is served.
- If homework incompleteness becomes a regular issue, I will work with you and your parents to develop some kind of program that meets your individual needs.
- I will try to write the homework for the week on the board and on the website over the weekend so that on Monday you can look ahead and see what is coming. This may be helpful for those of you who have other fun things you like to do in your day.
- I will try to give you at least one week's notice for big tests; cramming at the last minute rarely is successful!
- A monthly calendar is also posted on the website. It will have the approximate date of major deadlines and events. These dates aren't always exact, but they are close.
- If you have a question about homework, first please check with a classmate or the website. If you are still unsure, you can call me either here at school in the afternoons usually until 5:00 p.m. (215-947-4086 ext. 233) or you can call me at home in the evening up until 9:00 p.m. (215-938-7704). My email is Sheila.Daum@bacs.org.
- To access the classroom website, go to brynathynchurchschool.org. On the right, you will find quick links...click on "class websites" and then find "6th grade—Mrs. Daum".

Let's have a great year in Sixth Grade!