



1741 Essington Road · Joliet, IL 60435  
815.436.8200  
[www.firstassemblyjoliet.org](http://www.firstassemblyjoliet.org)

**Sunday Services**

Worship: 9 and 10:45 am  
Life Groups: 9 am & 10:45 am  
Wednesday Bible study: 7 pm

Nursery and children's programs are provided at all services.

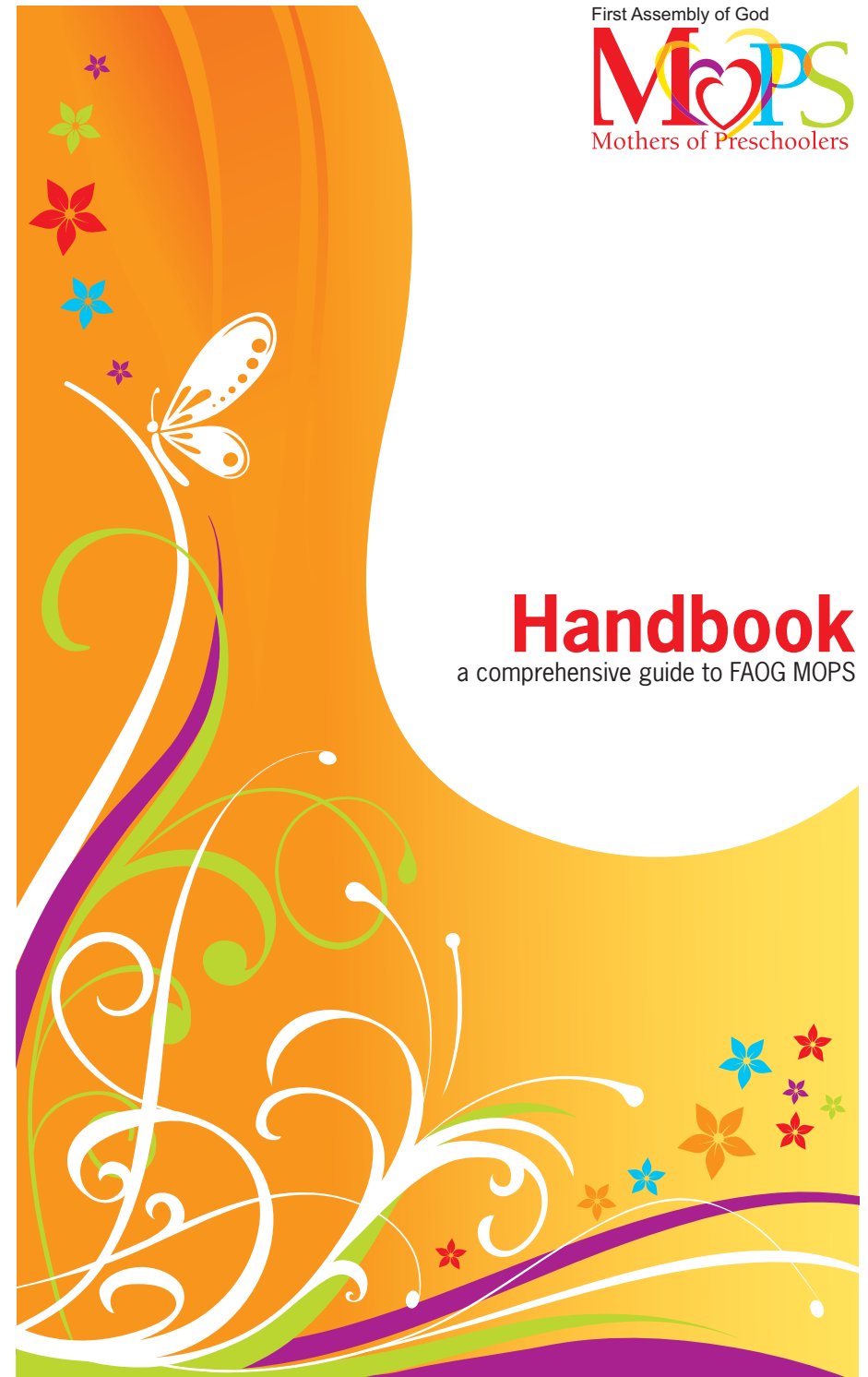
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To request a registration packet,  
call the church office at 815.436.8200  
or register online at [www.firstassemblyjoliet.org](http://www.firstassemblyjoliet.org)



# Handbook

a comprehensive guide to FAOG MOPS





We have compiled this handbook to answer some of the questions that you may have about MOPS and to outline our policies and procedures.

As your Steering Committee, it is our goal to create a MOPS program to meet your unique needs. If at any time you have any questions, comments, or concerns please see one of us.

## What is MOPS?

MOPS is an acronym for Mothers of Preschoolers, a program designed to nurture mothers with children from infancy through kindergarten. MOPS groups meet in churches throughout the United States, Canada, and 35 other countries. The women are of many ages and backgrounds, but share the same desire to be the best mothers they can be.

MOPS is dedicated to the message “Better Moms Make a Better World” and that moms of young children need encouragement during this challenging, yet very special season of life. MOPS at First Assembly of God (FAOG) provides encouragement, support, teaching and friendships. One of our goals is to help each other survive the preschool years and find joy in this journey.

FAOG MOPS registration fees are paid each semester and cover costs for childcare (MOPPETS), speakers, craft activities, and an annual registration fee for MOPS International, Inc. that includes your membership benefits.

### Registration Fees

FAOG MOPS Dues . . . . .	\$50 per semester
MOPPETS Dues	
One Child . . . . .	\$10 per semester
Two Children . . . . .	\$20 per semester
Three or more Children . . . . .	\$25 per semester

- Allergies/special needs: If your child has food allergies, please prepare a snack for your child. The standard snack is apple juice or water, animal crackers and/or pretzels. If after turning in your child’s registration form, you learn that your child has developed a food allergy or has new special needs, please notify the greeter at the Welcome Center and the MOPPETS Coordinator.
- Children should be picked up by 11:15 am. You must present your pickup tag or pager to retrieve your child.
- If you need to be contacted during a meeting, a MOPPETS worker will buzz your pager or find you in our meeting area. Be assured that we want your child to be happy and safe. We will contact you if your child cannot be comforted within 10 minutes.
- Children who show signs of illness such as fever within the last 24 hours cannot be accepted in MOPPETS. Children who show signs of contagious diseases\* must remain at home until symptoms are gone. Any child who has these conditions listed or shows extreme discomfort from teething, earaches, stomach problems, etc. is considered “ill”. Moms will want to be sure their children are free from the signs of illness before bringing them to the MOPPETS area. We reserve the right to decide if a child should be removed if he or she appears “ill” on arrival or becomes “ill” at the program.

\* Contagious diseases include, but are not limited to, the following: common cold, chicken pox, measles, mumps, influenza, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, whooping cough, fever, croup, and runny nose (not due to allergies).

- No medication of any kind (not even Tylenol) will be given by any MOPPETS worker. If a child must have medication, it must be kept with you until needed and then given by you only.

### Checking on Your Little Ones

Mothers are encouraged to enjoy MOPS. If you do decide to check-in on your child, please do so quickly and quietly, trying not to disturb the other children. If possible, wave to a worker and talk by the door. Some children may think it is time to go home if they see other moms at the door, so please be considerate and try to limit the check-ins as much as possible.





### Children in the Meeting

Please understand that for everyone's safety, enjoyment, and relaxation you are encouraged to place all children older than 6 months in the MOPPETS program. We understand that some children may need to be with their mothers. However, we request that you be considerate of the speaker and the other moms. If your child is crying, talking loudly, or otherwise causing a distraction, please attend to them in the childcare area. Remember, even a happy baby can be a distraction.

## MOPPETS Policies

1. Check-in procedure: Children 6-24 months check-in at the nursery counter, "The Ark". Moms with a child in the nursery or toddler room will be given a pager so the MOPPETS staff can contact you. Please return the pager at the end of each meeting.  
  
The MOPPETS staff may request that you check the items your baby needs like diapers, pacifiers, bottles, cups, etc. into a basket marked with your child's name. As you know, diaper bags can be bulky and it can be difficult for staff to find the items your child needs.
2. Two's, Three's and 4/5's children check in at the Welcome Center located in the main foyer. You will tell the greeter your child/children's name and you will receive your child's name tag and corresponding parent tag. Then you will take your child/children to their respective classroom where they will be welcomed by a MOPPETS.
3. Visitors: If you are bringing a new mom with you to visit or join our group, please direct her to the Welcome Center. She will need to fill out a MOPPETS form for each child before they can be admitted into The Ark or a classroom. For this reason, please consider contacting the MOPPETS Coordinator before hand.
4. Diaper bags for potty trainers: Please pack extra diapers and a change of clothes, clearly labeled, as many look alike. We appreciate your help in making sure that your child is clean and comfortable while in MOPPETS, so pack accordingly. Disposable diapers only.
5. Other items: Please label cups before arriving to MOPS. This will help the check-in process go more smoothly. Refrain from bringing toys from home into the MOPPETS classroom.

## Welcome to MOPS at First Assembly of God

We are excited about the upcoming year. We hope you find our meetings informative, encouraging, and inspirational. Most of all, we want you to find fellowship with other moms experiencing the same joys and frustrations that you are during this season of motherhood.

Our group is led by a steering team of moms just like you that plans each meeting as well as other activities. The meetings follow a regular format which includes a pot-luck breakfast, time to talk and get to know other mothers, an inspirational speaker or creative activity time, and small group discussion.

### MOPS is about...

- Celebrating motherhood
- Meeting needs
- Building relationships
- Changing lives
- Making connections
- Experiencing God's love... through relationships and resources.

**Let us encourage one another in our walk through motherhood!**

**Our Group's Story**  
MOPS at FAOG began in 1995 with a few moms who had a vision to minister to other mothers of preschoolers. Over the years our group has grown and ministered to many moms and their families. Our FAOG MOPS group is chartered with MOPS International, Inc.





### History of MOPS

The first MOPS meeting took place in February, 1973, with only eight women in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. Growth began as word spread in churches, conventions, and magazine articles. Soon came the first handbook, incorporation, logo, and in 1981, a Board of Directors. In 1984, the first MOPS Convention took place. In 1988, MOPS expanded beyond US borders and was renamed MOPS International to reflect the international impact of the ministry. The MOMSense radio program began in 1993. MOPS became even more available to moms when it went online in 1997. For over 30 years, MOPS has been nurturing moms and telling them that mothering matters.

## MOPS International, Inc.

MOPS International is a nondenominational Christian organization that reaches out to all mothers of children through kindergarten. MOPS helps moms... and MOPS makes a difference in the lives of families.

MOPS International exists to encourage, equip and develop every mother of preschoolers to realize her potential as a woman, mother and leader in the name of Jesus Christ.

MOPS International offers a wonderful array of resources and benefits such as books, a daily MOMSense Radio program, a web site, MOMSense Magazine, and the MOPShop. We are part of a larger vision and program with over 3,900 MOPS groups reaching out to moms around the world.

### Waiting List

In the event we must start a waiting list for moms due to childcare space limitations, we will put the following absence policy into effect. If you miss any three MOPS meetings in one semester without notifying your table leader, we reserve the right to give your seat to a mom from the waiting list. We understand that life happens, especially with children, but out of respect for the women waiting to join our group, we ask that you please notify your table leader.

If your name is placed on the waiting list, you will be able to join the group when space to accommodate your children becomes available.

### Fund-raisers

You may wonder why our group needs to do fund-raisers when we pay dues. The reason we ask for your participation in fund-raisers is primarily because our childcare costs far exceed what we pay with our dues. We also provide scholarships for new moms that would benefit from MOPS and otherwise would not be able to attend. Please make every effort to participate and support your FAOG MOPS.

### Lend-a-Hand

Throughout the year one or more of the moms at your table may need a helping hand. Meal drop-offs are usually coordinated by your Table Leader for moms who have just given birth, had a medical procedure or other trying event.

Oh, no – you don't cook. No worries. You can provide a restaurant or store bought meal or find another way to lend-a-hand, maybe offer childcare.



## Procedures

At FAOG MOPS, we meet alternating Wednesdays of each month and begin our meetings at 9 am. Our meeting usually conclude at 11:15 am.

### Refreshments

There will be a regular rotation for bringing food for the MOPS breakfast. Your Discussion Group will pass around a sign-up sheet when it is your table's turn to furnish food. The sign-up sheet includes spaces for dishes to share, drinks, set-up, and clean-up. Everyone at your table will need to sign up for a set-up or clean-up time (either 15 minutes before or after). Bring enough food to feed 12-15 people (or a 9 x 13 pan). Please have your food in the kitchen or on the table before 9 am so we can start on time. Also, please bring a copy of the recipe for any dish you make so that we may share it with other moms or in the next newsletter.

Food Day Absences: If you know in advance that you will miss a meeting when it is your turn to bring food, either switch with someone from another table, or make arrangements to drop food off before the meeting. That way, we can be sure there will be enough food for everyone.

### Helping in MOPPETS

You may be called upon to help in MOPPETS during one meeting this year. We strive to have volunteers for all MOPPETS classes, but sometimes we need to call on MOPS moms to help. Please view this as an opportunity to experience the ministry of MOPPETS and serve your fellow MOPS moms.

### Inclement Weather

The MOPS meeting will be canceled due to bad weather based on Joliet/Plainfield Schools. If schools are on a delay or canceled, there will be no MOPS meeting. You will not be called. Please listen to the radio or television to see if the weather has affected the school system.

## Membership Benefits

### MOMSense Magazine

Bimonthly magazine for a full year of mothering expertise, parenting tips and fun things to do with your preschoolers.

### Mom-E-Mail

Weekly bursts of encouragement.

### My MOPS Online Benefits

Special online Membership benefits updated each month with mom and kid activities, contests, coupons, author discussions and FREE music downloads.

### Theme Book

This book corresponds with the MOPS theme for the year. It's usually an easy to read book that provides reflection, perspective and inspiration to you through excerpts of the lives of many different women. As you read accounts of how moms just like you have made their way through this season of mothering, you will gain insight into your own adventure.

### www.mops.org

The MOPS International website is an incredible resource for moms. There is a wealth of information about MOPS as well as feature article. You can also join moms from all over the world in discussions groups on the community forum. Other features include the latest MOMSense radio program, the MOPShop, and information about upcoming events.

### Newsletter

FAOG MOPS publish a newsletter that is a source of information and encouragement. Submissions are always welcome testimonials, poems, book reviews, tidbits, recipes, etc. All submissions are subject to the approval of the Steering Team of FAOG MOPS. Ads will be published based on space availability. Please submit your material to the Publicity Leader.



### **Shelia Schutter Lending Library**

Sheila Schutter was the original mentor mom at FAOG MOPS. Sheila had a passion for ministering God's love to moms of preschoolers. When Sheila passed away in 2006, she gave a gift to our MOPS group that was used to establish the Sheila Schutter Lending Library.

This library contains resources for you to use on a two week basis. Please check out a book, CD, or DVD by filling in the card inside the book jacket (just like the public library). Return the materials when you are finished, so others can enjoy our resources.

You are always welcome to make donations of gently used books or multi-media that relate to topics of women, children, mothering, health, faith or leadership to Sheila's library. You may also make a monetary donation that will be used toward the purchase of more books and/or multi-media materials.

## **What to Expect at MOPS**

### **Teaching**

Presentations from MOPS Mentor Moms and outside speakers offer information that is relevant to our many roles as mother, woman, and wife. Mentor Moms share wisdom from their own experience in practical and meaningful ways.

### **Discussion Group**

The intimate and accepting atmosphere of a small group offers moms a chance to share their successes, questions, and concerns. It is during these times that a mom realizes she is not alone, and lifelong friendships are formed.

### **Creative Activities**

Moms are also given the opportunity to express themselves creatively during MOPS meetings. Through craft projects women are encouraged to experience the sense of accomplishment that comes with trying and finishing new things.

### **MOPPETS**

Children are cared for during MOPS meetings in a parallel program called MOPPETS where they experience love in a nurturing setting.

### **Leadership Development**

Moms gain confidence in their leadership skills through the training and experience they receive from MOPS. MOPS groups are not only specifically for mothers of preschoolers, they are also organized and run by mothers of preschoolers who often move into other areas of leadership in their church or community after graduating from MOPS.

## **MOPS Leadership Structure**

### **Coordinator**

Leads the Steering Team and facilitates MOPS meetings. Keeps our MOPS group focused on our purpose and mission.

### **Creative Activities Team Leader**

Plans, organizes, and teaches creative activities.

### **Discussion Group Team Leader**

Coordinates and trains Table/Discussion Group Leaders and organizes related activities.

### **Finance Team Leader**

Collects money, manages group finances, and keeps records of MOPS members.

### **Hospitality Team Leader**

Organizes meeting themes, food, and decorations.

### **MOPPETS Coordinator**

Oversees MOPPETS staffing, and recruits volunteers, and organizes Moppets curriculum

### **Publicity Team Leader**

Creates newsletter and publicity materials and updates FAOG MOPS website.

### **MOPS Mentor**

Mentors Steering Team members and acts as a liaison between our MOPS group and the FAOG Charter ministry.

### **Mentor Moms**

Mentor MOPS moms from their own experience and occasionally speak at MOPS meetings.

### **Getting Involved**

Interested in using your skills or developing new ones? Want to get more out of MOPS? Get involved!

If you are interested in serving in any of these areas, please contact a team leader. We would love to have your help and input. One of the goals of MOPS is to give moms leadership training and an opportunity to grow and gain confidence in their abilities.

Your participation is appreciated and encouraged!

