

# A Community Service Ministry of Reasoning Tree Church

# ROOTS

Jeremiah 17:7-8

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.  
He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream,  
and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green,  
and is not anxious in the year of drought,  
for it does not cease to bear fruit.



# ROOTS HOMESCHOOL CO-OP

## Handbook

**We at Reasoning Tree Church:**

- Affirm the Five Solas of the Reformation.
  - Recite the historic creeds/catechisms.
  - Have Christ exalting music program.
    - Read and preach God's Word.
  - Maintain time-honored Christian beliefs.
- Defend traditional values with a comprehensive approach to Scripture.
- Provide Biblical instruction that is culturally engaging.

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## Roots Information

### Purpose of Roots:

- To offer a Christ-centered homeschool program to Shenandoah County and surrounding areas.
- To have a group focused on growing in their wisdom of the Lord and growing in relationship with believers.
- To offer a place for meaningful and healthy friendships for parents and children.
- To come alongside parents to encourage them and help them in raising their children.

### Name:

- Roots CO-OP
  - He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jer. 17:8)

### Who Can Attend:

- We are aimed towards Christian families but not limited to Christian families.
  - Anyone interested in attending our group that are not Christians need to understand that we will not waver on our stance of the truth of Scripture or our commitment to Biblical living and teaching.

### How Many Families Can Attend:

- **Limit to 20 families per year**
  - To keep the group more intimate.
  - Not allow the group to become too large and impersonal.
  - Each family must sign up at the end of each school year to be on the list for the next fall's family limit.
  - All current families will be given priority, we will then announce if we have other openings.
  - If a family must leave for a year but wants to hold their spot for the following school year, they will need to fill out a **Leave of Absence** form.

- If a family has decided not to continue attending Roots a **Letter of Resignation** form needs to be filled out so an opening is available to the families on the Waitlist.

### Age Range:

- **Pre-K – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**
  - Class divisions will be:
    - Pre-K: Potty trained and 4 years old
    - K-2
    - 3-5
    - 6-8
- **9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade**
  - Will be utilized in the program in the following ways and need to sign up for the area they want to serve in:
    - ✓ teacher assistants
    - ✓ welcome crew
    - ✓ set up helpers
    - ✓ snack time set-up
    - ✓ photobook/yearbook assistants
    - ✓ help with P.E. activities, when applicable
    - ✓ help with opening the meetings
    - ✓ help with planning end of year picnic
      - These positions allow them to grow as adults in skills such as leadership, public speaking, childcare, event planning, and organization.
      - If any parents want to orchestrate or work in one of these areas, they should feel free.

### Cost:

- As a ministry of Reasoning Tree Church this CO-OP is free for each family.
- Field Trip/Special activity costs are paid for by the families.
  - We cannot guarantee refunds for these activities due to the policies of each site.
- If a family cannot go on a Field Trip due to financial needs, please let the Director know as we may be able to help you with that cost.
  - The Director needs to know this information at the time of planning and/or booking the field trip.

### **Meetings:**

- September – May
- 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays of each month
- 9am-12pm
- Follow SCPS and RTC for weather related cancellation and delay schedules.

## **Roots Policies**

### **Absences & Maintaining Membership:**

- Regular, punctual attendance is crucial for the smooth functioning of the co-op.
- Since we only meet three hours one time monthly for nine months and we limit our group to 20 families we will require that families only have **two planned absences** during the year.
  - Please try to make appointments, etc. on other days besides Roots days.
  - Families should give notice to the Director at least a week in advance for a planned absence.
  - If there is a third planned absence the leadership of Roots will work to decide if the family can continue in the program or if the family should be removed for that existing year. They may sign-up again for the following year but their spot for the existing year may be given to a waitlist family.
  - This does not include extended illnesses, births, deaths, or other extenuating circumstances. Please make sure to always communicate with leadership.
- Absences for sickness or other medical reasons will be allowed **up to four times**.
  - After four absences the leadership of Roots will work to decide if the family can continue in the program or if the family should be removed for that existing year. They may sign-up again for the following year but their spot for the existing year may be given to a waitlist family.

### **Bathrooms:**

- Parents are encouraged to utilize the 10:00a-10:15a time frame for all children to go to the bathroom.

- Preschoolers must be potty trained. Teachers will not assist with toileting. If assistance is needed, the parent will be called to assist.
- Toddlers who are potty-training in the nursery will be assisted. Potty training accidents may require calling the parent to assist.
- When adults are assisting children, who are not their own, in the bathroom, doors should remain open.
- Bathrooms are located at the back of the Sanctuary.

### **Bible:**

- We have no preference on Bible translations but we will be using the English Standard Version (ESV) for most memory verses.

### **Calendar:**

- During Roots meeting openers we will be learning how to read calendars correctly.
  - Months, days, years, seasons

### **Cleaning Up:**

- Each family should be prepared to pitch in at 12:00pm for cleanup and tear down.
  - Families who have small children that need to get home for lunch and nap do not need to stay.
- Tables need to be wiped down and put away.
- Chairs need to be replaced.
- All toys and books in nursery put away.
- Snack time supplies need to be put away.
- Floors need to be swept and/or vacuumed.
- Bathrooms need to be checked for flushed toilets.
- All trash needs to be collected.
- All lights need to be turned off.
- All outdoor supplies need to be cleaned up and put away.

### **Church Rules & Information:**

- Please be respectful of the equipment and church property.
- All toys and supplies will be cleaned up at the end of the morning.
  - Craft supplies should be placed in specific Roots containers.
- No children should be on the platform in the Sanctuary.
- No children should be wandering around the church without adults.
- The Nursery is located downstairs
- Parents should remind their children to walk when possible.

- Children should only be playing around the back of the church property, never in the parking lot or front of the church property.
- No food or drink in the Sanctuary except water.
- There is a coat rack and alcove in the back of the Sanctuary where family belongings can go during our time together.

### **Communication:**

- Communication with the leadership is extremely important. This applies not only to attendance issues but also to all email communication.
  - Members are expected to regularly check their email and respond to requests for information, etc.
  - Our sources of communication are the Roots Facebook group and email.
    - ✓ All information regarding classes, notifications, and cancellations will come through these sources.
    - ✓ Failure to check emails regularly jeopardizes the success of the co-op for all members.
- If a family has a concern, they should fill out a **Care and Concerns** form & place it in the box on the Welcome table for review by leadership.

### **Conflict Resolution:**

- Disagreements will inevitably happen but as Christians we should handle disputes in a Biblical way.
  - We ask that you pray about any disputes that may have occurred that have caused hurt before making any decisions.
  - If after prayer, you feel the conflict needs to be addressed, it should be handled in a kind way between the two parties involved.
  - If either party is unsatisfied that these discussions are not creating a resolution, they may seek the help of the Director.
  - As a last resort, the conflict will be taken to the other members of the group or Reasoning Tree Church leaders.
  - If one of the parties in the disagreement is the leadership of Roots than it will need to go directly to the leadership of Reasoning Tree Church.

### **Creeds and Catechisms:**

- We affirm the historic creeds which would include the Apostles and Nicene Creeds.
  - We will be focusing on the Apostle's Creed at Roots.
- We glean from various reformed catechisms, the reason being to stay theologically connected to the historic church.
  - At Roots we will be using Truth and Grace edited by Tom Ascol.

### **Discipline:**

- Every student is expected to act in a way that brings God glory.
- Each child will be given a verbal warning for misbehavior.
- If a child does not respond to verbal redirection, that child will be removed from the class and escorted to the parent for supervision.
  - If a parent fails to control the child's disruptive behavior, or the child's behavior involves physical violence or the threat of physical violence the family will be asked to leave that day.
  - The leadership of Roots may choose to remove the family from the co-op permanently especially if this is an ongoing issue.
- Policies and procedures are in place for everyone's safety and protection. Failure to abide by the policies of our co-op may be cause for removal from Roots.
- Lewdness, inappropriate handling or touching, or complete defiance will not be allowed and will result in immediate removal from Roots.

### **Dress Code:**

- All dress code policies are to be adhered to at the Roots meetings and at all field trips.
  - No spaghetti straps, low cut tops, bare midriffs (even while bending or stretching), no bra straps
  - No sheer materials
  - No tight shirts
  - No short shorts/dresses (Shorts and skirts should not go higher than mid-thigh.)
  - No tight shorts or pants like leggings unless under a dress or skirt.
  - No shorts, sweats, or pants with words on the back

- No clothing with inappropriate wording or pictures
- No wheeled shoes.
- No bikinis at possible pool meet up days.
- If a student violates the dress code the leadership will address this violation with the family and if the article of clothing cannot be addressed immediately that family may be asked to leave for that day. They are welcome to return that day or the next time we meet.
- Proper hygiene will be expected as well.

### **End of Year Picnic:**

- Each family will sign-up to bring a pot-luck style food item for the picnic at the Roots Meeting in April.
- Some years the picnic may be themed so food may reflect that theme.
- CO-OP will go on as usual but then the meal will take place after class at 11:30.
- If weather is nice, we may do water activities or relay races, etc. for the kids to celebrate the end of the year.

### **Fellowship Time:**

- We ask that each family strive to arrive on time each month for the Play/Fellowship time in respect of the other families and to promote community and relationship-building within the co-op.

### **Field Trip Etiquette:**

- Children will always remain with staff and parents.
- Everyone will act in a way that honors the Lord and honors the group.
- Kindness and politeness, by all, will be expected.
- Attention will be given to tour guides and staff.
- Rules of the site will be followed and respected.
- The group will stay together, when possible, to encourage friendship and fellowship.

### **First Aid:**

- First Aid boxes can be found throughout the church.
- Fire extinguishers can be found throughout the church.
- Emergency exits can be found all over the church.
- The basement will be the area we go to in the case of dangerous weather.

- The only door that will be always be unlocked is the side door located in the foyer. After everyone has arrived & checked in at the Welcome table all other doors will be locked.

### **Illnesses:**

- Participants should not attend co-op if they are sick or are experiencing any of the following symptoms:
  - Colored mucus
  - Diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea (within last 24 hours)
  - Eye drainage
  - Virus or infection (known to be contagious)
  - Rashes (contagious)
  - Contagious anything including but not limited to, lice, ringworm, etc.
  - Fever (within last 24 hours - unmedicated)
- Please keep in mind that this policy is essential for the health and protection of all our children and families.
- If you or one of your children becomes ill during Roots, you must leave for the day.

### **Job Descriptions:**

- Teachers and Assistants:
  - Will be prepared for each class.
    - Prepare materials needed at home.
    - Come early to prepare needed supplies for class time that Roots provides.
  - All students are required to address adults as Mr. or Ms. For example: Ms. Sarah & Mr. Paul
  - Fill out **Restock Supply Form** if supplies are getting low in any area.
  - Teachers need to place all supplies back in supply boxes after class time.
  - Members with infants and/or children under 2 have the option to teach or help with the toddler area.
  - If a teacher will be absent, all plans and materials, when possible, need to be given to the teaching assistant or sent to the Director so a substitute teacher can be found for the class.

### **Lost & Found:**

- Roots will have a designated box for lost and found materials that can be found under the welcome table at each meeting.
- Anything left at the end of the year will be donated.

### **New Families:**

- To join the group each family should contact the Director of Roots to read through all materials.
- After reading the information, if the perspective family has decided to join-
  - They will sign a form stating they read and understand the Roots Handbook.
  - They will also fill out a form listing their names, home address, phone numbers, emails, birthdays, allergies, and children's grade levels.
- If there is no available space in the co-op at that time the family will then be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted as openings occur.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Parents are required to stay and are encouraged to help where they can and/or are led.
  - Only in extenuating circumstances may the parent leave their child, older than 6, in the care of a friend should they not be able to stay. Must be communicated with director beforehand.
  - If a child will be going home with another family, that information needs to be given to the director.
  - Make sure you know how your child will behave in these circumstances.
- Only Christians are allowed to teach and must be a part of the group for at least 3 months before being allowed to teach unless they are members of Reasoning Tree Church.
  - Roots will learn as a group and then divide up into class groupings for age related enrichment activities. This is where the teacher volunteers will be utilized.
- Each parent is responsible for their own child's behavior but if you see other children making poor or unsafe decisions you should feel

welcome to gently correct that child and/or direct them to their parents.

- Children should not be outside by themselves.
- Parents should be setting an example in behavior during opening meeting procedures and during class times.
  - Parents, with no children in the nursery and who are not helping with the class time as teachers or assistants should plan to fellowship outside of the sanctuary or nursery.
  - They can sit in the foyer or outside.

### **Personal Items:**

- Students are not allowed to have phones, electronic games/ equipment, or personal items like headphones/earbuds during co-op.
- Weapons without a permit are prohibited
- No tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Parents are encouraged to maintain possession of any medication a child may require, except for those that must remain with the child for their safety.
- Parents' cell phones should be set on vibrate during co-op hours.

### **Playground & Picnic Shelter:**

- No children should climb on the top of the playset.
- No mulch should be thrown.
- Picnic tables are for sitting and eating, not climbing on.
- All toys and supplies should be cleaned up and placed in appropriate boxes before leaving.
- Children should not be taking or using any outdoor church materials for playtime.

### **Pledge of Allegiance:**

- We will be saying the Pledge of Allegiance only to have the children introduced to it & have them be familiar with something that they will undoubtedly encounter at some point in their lives.
- Utilizing the pledge is not to be like public schools or to conflate America and the church.

### **School Topics:**

- We will look through a Biblical worldview in all that we learn.
- History

- In our studies, we will encounter a wide view of world history. We will not stray from teaching hard history as we should learn from the bad so it can never be repeated and learn from the good so we can continue in that path.
- Science & Geography
  - We believe God created the world and all that is in it.

### **Snack Times:**

- Snack time will be 11:30a-12:00p
- Snack times will be held outside, in the foyer, or in Nursery area
- Snack times can be themed and theme ideas are listed on the yearly calendar
- Each family is asked to be willing to supply snacks throughout the year.
- It is the parent bringing the snack who is responsible for checking out the allergy list to make sure snacks are accessible for everyone.

### **Student Responsibility:**

- No flirtatious or romantically driven behavior.
- No profane language, crude humor, or morbid topics
- No negative or insulting words aimed at others. No bullying.
- Must obey all teachers and adults during co-op hours.
- Must alert teachers to where they are going.
- Must treat each other with respect.
- Required to be in their assigned group during class time.
- Not permitted to bring toys or other personal playthings from home, unless it is Show-N-Tell Day. (Limit one show and tell item per child)
- Be on time.
- Honor parents and teachers by addressing them as Mr./Ms. For example: Ms. Sarah & Mr. Paul
- Be respectful of the church property, as well as other people and their property.

### **Visitors:**

- For the safety of our families, no one can just come to meetings, including extra family members, without contacting the leadership of the group first & meeting with approval.

### **Waitlist:**

- The waitlist will not be followed alphabetically but will be followed by first name on the list.

- If a family chooses not to join Roots after being contacted from the list, it will pass to the next name.
- Each perspective family will be informed at how many families they are away from the top so they can decide if they want to be placed on the waitlist.