



MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) is for all moms with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. St. Paul's MOPS group offers a caring atmosphere where a mom is reminded that she is not alone, has an opportunity to share concerns, make friends, explore areas of creativity and more. MOPS is led *by mothers for mothers*, with the addition of three Mentor Moms who have "been there, done that."

We begin each 2-hour MOPS meeting with a homemade breakfast and talk time. Then we feature a guest speaker, Mentor mom devotion, occasional make-and-take craft projects, other fun activities, and time to visit with other women just like you. During meetings, children enjoy a safe, nurturing childcare program. Outside meetings, we plan play dates, field trips to St. Louis attractions, family picnics and our popular Mom's Night Out.

MOPS meets from 9:00am to 11:00am on the first and third Thursdays from September to May. No matter where you live, or where your church is (or if you have no church home) -- ***you*** are invited to join our MOPS group at St. Paul's!

### **Why MOPS?**

MOPS is about:

- Celebrating motherhood
- Meeting needs (yours!)
- Making connections and friends
- Experiencing God's love

MOPS (Mothers Of Preschoolers) exists to meet the needs of every mom – stay-at-home and working moms, single, and married moms – moms with different lifestyles who all share a similar desire to be the very best moms they can be! Mothers not only need a sense of belonging, they also need to reach out to each other ... ask questions, make connections, make friends.

A special feature of MOPS is our mentor mom who has "been there, done that" ... whose grown children's lives bear witness that you, too, will survive mom-hood! MOPS is an international organization with more than 3,000 groups and over 100,000 women who meet in the United States and around the world.

### **What Is a Meeting Like?**

We begin each 2-hour MOPS meeting at St. Paul's with a homemade breakfast and fellowship time. Our mentor mom shares from her heart in a specially-prepared devotion. Then we feature a guest speaker, occasional make-and-take craft projects, other fun activities, and plenty of time to visit with other women just like you. Our variety of guest speakers will inform and inspire you. Each year, we enjoy presentations on relevant topics such as parenting, marriage, stress management, faith, health and wellness, cooking, organization, safety, sleep, and more. We always plan time for discussions in small groups so you can get to know other moms and our mentors.

Outside of the meetings, we plan get-togethers such as play dates, field trips to St. Louis attractions, family picnics, book club and our popular monthly Mom's Night Out. We have a great year lined up ... just for you! Thousands of MOPS groups meet in churches all over the United States and we are delighted to offer this group to St. Paul's moms and the community!

### **MOPPETS - children's program**

When you arrive at MOPS you will be pleasantly surprised at all that we have to offer you, as well as your children! While you are in the meeting area enjoying the company of other women, your child(ren) will be enjoying a safe, nurturing atmosphere with kids their own age in our MOPPETS program. Childcare is provided for children up to kindergarten. Infants, up to the age of 6 months, are welcome to remain with mom in the MOPS meeting room. Infant caregivers can bring older infants to you, if necessary, for feeding or comforting.

The children will be divided between rooms based upon age and individual needs. Each room will have a paid lead teacher and caring volunteers to reach an age-appropriate teacher-child ratio. St. Paul's Lutheran Church is equipped with a nursery for infants up to age 1, and three preschool areas - one for younger toddlers, one for preschoolers, and one for Pre-K and kindergarten age children. Each room is packed with fun, safe toys and learning tools to keep them busy and active. If your child needs you, we will promptly find you in the meeting room.

For the older children, we offer a preschool-like setting, where youngsters are exposed to a light teaching atmosphere without any pressure. The specialized curriculum is presented by our MOPPETS teachers and then each child can indulge in crafts, reading or play. We use a variety of different learning materials, including Bible stories, songs, and games. The little ones will use their energy and curiosity to learn about Moses, the parting of the Red Sea, Queen Esther, and more! We even have a music lady, trained in Kindermusik who provides all children in MOPPETS a special opportunity to play musical instruments, dance and sing songs. It's a unique setting and experience, full of love and fun.

### **Guidelines:**

Our childcare rooms start at age six months; younger babies stay with their mothers during the meeting. You may drop off children between 8:45am and 9:00am. Please pick up children promptly after the meeting ends. Snacks are provided. On occasion, we know a child (older than six months) may need to leave the childcare area to be with you, but we ask that these exceptions be infrequent.

### **Meeting Dates:**

First & Third Thursdays from 9:00am to 11:00am during the school year: September 15, 2016 to May 18, 2017.

### **Contacts:**

For any MOPS-related questions, contact MOPS Co-Coordinators, Sara Lehmann ([iwu1996@yahoo.com](mailto:iwu1996@yahoo.com)) or Jackie Weber ([jackie4mizzou@gmail.com](mailto:jackie4mizzou@gmail.com)) or Director of Family Ministry, Sharon Shearman ([sshearman@stpaulsdesperes.org](mailto:sshearman@stpaulsdesperes.org)). You may register online at the St. Paul's website by clicking [here](#).

### **Fees & Dues:**

The annual MOPS International fee registers you to participate in MOPS anywhere in United States, and includes the quarterly Hello Dearest magazine, e-mail newsletters, and other gifts. Your semester meeting dues to St. Paul's help us break even with refreshments, childcare, supplies, postage, printing, crafts, etc. Dues are collected as \$90 for the year (includes MOPS International fee and St. Paul's dues). Scholarships are available, simply contact one of the MOPS Co-Coordinators.

### **Online Registration**

You can register online for MOPS on St. Paul's website by clicking [here](#).

### **Address**

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

12345 Manchester Road

Des Peres, MO 63131

*At the intersection of Ballas and Manchester Roads, across the street from West County Mall*

### **MOPS International**

For more information about MOPS International -- the worldwide organization of Mothers of Preschoolers -- visit [www.mops.org](http://www.mops.org)

## **2016-2017 MOPS Theme: "We Are The Starry Eyed"**



***Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. – Jeremiah 33:3***

Sometimes we think we have to pick one, when in reality it is always both: light and dark, hope and fear, kindness and risk, wonder and mundane.

This is evidenced by the fact that we are people who are meant to live by both sunlight and moonlight. Our natural rhythms revolve around the circling of sun and moon. Yet often our tendency is to cling to one, the one that is more comfortable, forgetting that our fullest living comes when we embrace the swirly mix.

Starry Eyed means looking for the light even when darkness is enveloping. It is an opportunity to hope recklessly and to witness God's presence guiding things seen and unseen, comfortable and uncomfortable.

When we reflect back over our lives, this year is going to stand out. It will be the year that we decided to live fully by both sunlight and moonlight. Because audacity is rising in the deepest and wildest parts of our souls.

And the best part is, we will experience it all together. So the question becomes,

- When was the last time you felt fully alive?
- The last time you were so swept up with wonder that it took your breath away?
- That kindness made you feel powerful?
- Or audacious hope unraveled fear?

This is the year to experience all of it.

## **What Moms Are Saying About MOPS**

*"When I started MOPS, I was a stressed out, first-time parent. MOPS made me very comfortable and welcome. I feel better about not knowing much (or anything) about being a parent."*

*"Before I joined MOPS, I felt I had nothing just for me. Learning that there are so many women out there that are on the same page as me when it comes to raising their children is an awesome feeling. It makes me feel like I am not alone after all."*

*"Thank you so much! I needed this time today in a special way and MOPS answered my prayers."*

*"I could never have guessed how much I would receive from MOPS. I'll never be able to repay all of the kindness and love shown to me and my family by these wonderful Christian moms."*

*"Thank you to all the behind the scenes efforts the steering committee put forth to make this year possible. Being part of MOPS meant a lot to me this year."*

*"The breakfast is one of the reasons I love coming to the meetings. It is nice to eat a warm breakfast uninterrupted."*

*"I cannot even explain how much MOPS means to me! It was my first year and I thank God for such a wonderful group!"*

*"Wonderful MOPS program! Meetings were always fun and worthwhile. Great speakers, fun crafts, and overall wonderful experience!"*

*"I look back this year with a grateful heart. I so valued this opportunity to be part of a community of moms who support me and I can support in return. It was such a unique time to recharge as a mom and yet not need to simultaneously parent my child (like on a play date)."*

*"Many of the speakers left me encouraged as a mom and offered excellent tools to help manage kids and a household."*

*"The MOPPETS program is just what it should be. Kudos for providing the music time for each group of children. What a great way to bring Jesus to the little ones!"*

*"Thank you to all who give of their time to the ministry of MOPS. It is such a vital ministry for mothers. Hopefully, moms don't just see it as purely a time to relax and have free childcare as it is so much more than that. It can change a mom (in a God pleasing way) for the rest of her life."*

*"Great group of ladies! I like that we can all pray together. It moves me as we are all from different walks in our faith. I like when I'm challenged to be a better Christian... I don't get that a lot elsewhere."*

*"I loved that each of the crafts were practical and useful. They were fabulous this year! I'm still using each of them."*

*"Thank you to everyone who puts time and effort into making the meetings possible. It was positively affects my parents, my mental sanity, my life. God bless you!"*