

2020 - 2021 Parent Handbook



Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed

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ABOUT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



We are a Jesus Church.

What that means is that we are a Family of people following Jesus who are connected together by a common faith in Jesus, for His glory, and His purpose to see Jesus change our families, our church, our city and the world. We are based in Kokomo, but know that we are just one house in His Kingdom.

We aren't anywhere near perfect, but we know Jesus is. In our effort to be all about Jesus, we are doing our best to be more like Him every day.

We have many different ways for you to engage in the life of who we are outside of the AWANA Program and we invite you to be a part of our Family. From Women's Ministry, Men's Ministry, to Youth Ministry, to our gatherings on Sunday morning, to Bible Studies...whatever way we can be a part of connecting you to the heart of Jesus, we would love to serve you.

Please check out our church website for more information or talk to any of the AWANA leaders about how to get involved.

Thank you for trusting us with your children as we teach them about what life is all about. We can tell you that Jesus changed us, which is why we want to share Him with others.

ELENOR WYSONG SCHOLARSHIP FUND



First Baptist Church first came to know about AWANA through Eleanor Wysong after her tragic death in 2018. Eleanor was not only a friend of all of our children here at FBC, but made a lasting impact on us by her witness and conviction of faith while being a part of the Family of FBC.

After she went to be with Jesus in the spring of 2018, the leadership of FBC decided to start a Memorial Scholarship Fund in her name for children who want to be a part of AWANA but are in need of financial assistance. We continue to remember our friend in this way and want to provide assistance to Clubbers who may be in need.

To apply for aid, please speak with the AWANA Secretary or to Pastor Matt. When AWANA started at FBC we said from the onset that NO CHILD should ever be excluded due to financial reasons, which is why we established this fund. All we need is for you to speak to us.

If you would like to contribute to this memorial fund and help us in providing help to others who may be in need, please text the word GIVE to (765) 810-0796 and under the tab SPECIAL DONATION put in the memo AWANA SCHOLARSHIP FUND. If you would like to give a check or cash gift, please see the AWANA Secretary or Pastor Matt.

As we honor her life and witness, we also remember we are called to be the same witness to others by the way we live our lives. We thank God for Eleanor and her witness...

Now go and do the same in the lives of others.

WELCOME TO AWANA!

I am so excited about our AWANA Clubs at First Baptist Church Kokomo! Our goal is to have children grow in knowledge and understanding of the Bible and their relationship with Jesus. As parents and ministry leaders, we have been given the privilege and honor of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with one of the largest unreached people groups in the world: Children. It is an awesome opportunity and I am so excited about what God is going to do in the lives of our children. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve your children and help them learn who God is, what His Son did for us, and how we can live our lives for Him.

It is my prayer the children involved in Awana will be so excited about what happens on Wednesday nights that they want everyone they know to attend Awana. Awana is fun and exciting. We play games, learn Bible verses, hear testimonies, and learn how to live a life in service of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We also build relationships, share events in our lives, and help each other get to know Jesus better.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the AWANA Directors if you have any questions or concerns. May God richly bless this year as we go through this journey together.

In Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Hartke', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Matt Hartke

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THE HISTORY OF AWANA

Since 1950, AWANA has grown from a one-church program into a ministry that includes more than 12,000 churches in the United States and another 6,000 in more than 109 countries worldwide. Local churches reach hundreds of thousands of young people every week by using the Awana ministry. The goal of Awana is to reach boys and girls with the gospel of Christ and to train them to serve Him. The word Awana stands for Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed, and comes from *2 Timothy 2:15*. Awana is a fun and exciting way for children to learn Scripture and it works! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to acquaint you with the Awana ministry at First Baptist Church, and how it can benefit not only your child, but your entire family!

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15)

Each weekly club meeting is composed of 3 main elements:

- **Game Time**
- **Handbook Time**
- **Large Group Time**
-

Your child will enjoy the active Awana **Game Time** uniquely created around the Awana circle. This provides children with the opportunity to compete as a team and not just as individuals. They will learn to win and lose with a proper attitude of fair play and sportsmanship.

During **Handbook Time** an Awana leader works with a small group of clubbers, assisting them in memorizing Bible verses and other learning activities. Your child will begin to gain valuable understanding of spiritual truths and in this way, he/she will earn awards by passing sections in their handbook to motivate further achievement.

During **Large Group Time** your child will be exposed to messages from God's word from adult speakers. They will also learn (and sing) Awana songs. We offer clubs for Kindergarten through high school.

2020 WELLNESS POLICY:

As we all know, sickness can keep going around with children, affecting not only the other children in your child's AWANA Club, but your family and other families as the illness goes “back and forth” between the children. Here is our established health policy for AWANA. Children should NOT attend if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever - 99.6 degrees or higher within the last 72 hours.
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours.
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
- Runny nose if accompanied by other symptoms and/or colored discharge.
- Bad Cough - coughing increases the chance of infection being spread to others.
- Any rash that is suspected to be contagious.
- If your child is prescribed antibiotic, they must have been on the antibiotic for a minimum of 72 hours prior to attending AWANA.

Please, in the event of your child being sick, call the church to let us know of the illness to give your child an excused absence for the night that will NOT result in your child getting an absence counted against them for their attendance record.

HOW DO I SIGN MY CHILD UP FOR AWANA?

You can sign up online on the church website (www.fbckokomo.org), stop by the church office during the week, or sign up during check in each week at AWANA! Children visiting for the first time do not need to be officially registered to attend, but will need to be registered before receiving their AWANA Gear.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

The best person to talk to is your child's AWANA Director, the AWANA Secretary or to Pastor Matt. We can all be reached at the numbers and emails provided in this handbook.

WHAT TO BRING TO AWANA:

Your **AWANA Gear** including:

- Your **Club Bag**
- Your **Uniform** - uniforms promote pride and uniformity as a group, so we ask that all Clubbers remember to wear their's each week.
- **Comfortable running/tennis shoes.** PLEASE do not bring flip flops or sandals. Long pants or athletic pants are highly encouraged as we will play games on gym floors or carpet and exposed knees may end up with rug burns and other injuries.
- Your **AWANA Club Handbook.**
- Your SPARKS, T&T, or TREK **Bible.**
- A mask to wear when needed/recommended.

On special Theme Nights we will ask your child to bring items to participate in the fun! Look for notes sent home with each clubber.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO AWANA:

- **Toys**
- **Electronics** - If your child has a cell phone, we ask that it remain OFF and in their Club Bag from the start of AWANA until they are dismissed. If there is an emergency, please contact the church number during AWANA time.
- **Food or drinks**

AWARD SYSTEM:

Awards are received in several different ways at our AWANA Clubs. Points are awarded for weekly achievements, game time, behavior and preparedness. Patches and stickers are awarded each week for sections accomplished. After your child earns a patch for their uniform, the following week at Opening they will be awarded the patch and then be sent to get it ironed on their uniform before going to class. At the end of the year, we will have an awards ceremony where clubbers who complete one or more handbooks will receive special ribbons and trophies. This is a HUGE accomplishment and we encourage all parents to set aside the time to come and participate in this celebration of your child's accomplishments and hard work.

We as leaders want to be sensitive to any special needs your child may have, especially in the area of learning. Please contact your child's Director if there are any disabilities or challenges your child may face.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN AWANA?

AWANA is for all children 2 years of age through High School. There are specific Clubs for each age group with a Director for that Club and teachers that will walk with your child through this Discipleship Program. To determine which Club your child will be in, we simply go by how old the child is on August 1st OR by what grade they are going in for the new school year. This helps ensure that everyone is able to engage in the right club at the right time for the year.

WHEN DOES AWANA MEET?

AWANA meets every Wednesday night beginning on October 14th, 2020 through the end of May 2021. There are a few Wednesday nights that we do not meet (please see the section titled ATTENDANCE POLICY).

WHAT DOES AWANA COST?

The yearly cost for AWANA Clubs is \$30 per child (returning clubbers in the same age group have the option to use their same uniform again lowering the cost to \$25) with a family cap of \$75. The fee covers the cost of the uniform, the handbook, and supplies of the Clubbers needed for the 2020-2021. We also ask that each child turn in weekly dues of 50¢ a week (total of \$16.50 for the year) which helps covers the cost of awards for each child. **NO CHILD IS EXCLUDED FROM AWANA FOR FINANCIAL REASONS.** We can break down the AWANA Fee over the course of the semesters and also have scholarships available, but that must be coordinated with the AWANA Secretary (Diana Criss). If you or someone you know are in need of these arrangements, please contact us and let us know. Such information is considered private and privileged and will be kept confidential.

All fees and/or dues can be turned in to the secretary at check in each week. Please NEVER turn in cash without it being inside of an envelope with your child's name and Club name on the outside of the envelope. Please make all checks out to First Baptist Church. You can also give online by texting the word GIVE to (765) 810-0796 which will send you a link to pay online. Under the "GIVING TYPE" select the option "EVENTS" and in the MEMO line we ask that you please put your child's name.

AWANA CLUBS

Cubbies® celebrates the spiritual potential of preschoolers (children ages 3 and 4 on or before August 1st) by helping them develop respect for God, His Son and His Word.



Sparks® ignites the curiosity of early elementary-age kids to learn about the people and events of the Bible, building a foundation of wisdom for knowing Christ.

The T&T (Truth & Training) curriculum teaches kids the truth of God's Word, trains them to follow Him and practice His grace.



Trek is a Biblically rich discipleship program with practical application for your students' lives. Trek serves as the middle school (7th-8th grade) continuation of Awana.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE:

6:15pm - 6:30pm	Opening in the Sanctuary
6:30pm - 7:30pm	AWANA Clubs
7:30pm	Dismissal from Classrooms

PARENT EXPECTATIONS:

1. **ENCOURAGEMENT** - Always encourage your child. Children have much more fun when Mom and Dad show interest in their accomplishments and their studies.
2. **ATTENDANCE** - Help children to attend Awana every week and to arrive on time (Club begins at 6:15pm). Consistency builds friendships, achievement and self-discipline. If your child is sick or unable to attend club that evening, please call the church number to let us know.
3. **PREPARE** - During the week, we encourage you to work on the current lesson with your child to complete each assignment. If you have questions about which lesson they are on or what you should be doing, please contact your child's Club Director.
4. **REVIEW** - Please review the discipline guidelines above with your child. AWANA has very few rules of behavior, but in order to insure that all clubbers have an opportunity to learn as well as have fun, some rules of behavior will be enforced.
5. **CHECK IN / PICK UP** - We ask that when you bring your child to AWANA that you bring them inside the church through the Armstrong Street doors to check them in at the AWANA Office. We ask that you do not just drop them off at the door. Please come in with your child and check in at the AWANA Office before departing to not only check in your child, but also to get any information regarding things coming up, etc. All clubbers must be accompanied by a parent until the beginning of Opening at 6:15pm in the Sanctuary. For Pick Up, please plan to pick up clubbers promptly at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary. Again, please use the Armstrong Street doors when coming to pick up your child. Clubbers will NOT be permitted to leave the building without an approved adult picking them up.
6. **GAME TIME** - If your child needs to be excused from participating in Game Time, please send a note to that effect to their Director. Otherwise, they will be expected to participate with all other clubbers in all activities.
7. **COMMUNICATE** - If there is a need for scholarships, questions about the Club Handbook, concerns about behavior, or a need that we can help to meet, PLEASE talk to your child's Director, to our AWANA Secretary or to Pastor Matt. Our only desire is for your child to grow in their relationship with Jesus and if there is a way to better meet those needs, we will do everything in our ability to help...but we need to know. Don't assume we do, after all...we are flawed humans, too!

If you have questions or concerns about any of the above expectations, PLEASE feel free to talk to your AWANA Director or Pastor Matt. We are in this together and want the best experience to grow with you and your child!

AWANA CLUB RULES:

While our list of rules is pretty short, they are enforced for the benefit of everyone taking part in each of the AWANA Clubs. We do this to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to grow and thrive inside of AWANA in a safe environment to ask questions, be loved and have the opportunity to love others the way we are learning that God loves us.

The following rules are expectations for ALL Clubs here at AWANA:

1. **RESPECT GOD** - means we don't do or say anything that would cause Him to be ashamed of us and we don't use His name in a disrespectful manner.
2. **RESPECT GOD'S WORD** - God's Word is Holy. It deserves the highest respect and obedience. It is the source of communication God has chosen to use with us. It contains God's plan for our daily lives and our only hope for eternal life in heaven. Each child will be given a Bible in the Sparks, TNT, and TREK clubs. We require that they not only bring their Bible each week but also that they don't do anything that would be seen as disrespectful to the Word of God.
3. **RESPECT GOD'S PROPERTY** - The things we have to use are not our own. Everything in the church belongs to God and His people. We have their permission to use their things but never to deface or destroy them.
4. **RESPECT OTHERS** - Treat other people (yes, even other clubbers) like you would like to be treated.
5. **COME PREPARED** - each week you are expected to bring with you your Awana Gear: Your Club bag, your Awana Uniform, your Bible, and your Club Handbook. We also HIGHLY encourage you to come in appropriate footwear (not flip flops or sandals) and wear long pants or athletic pants DUE to the games we will play together. If any of those are a need, please see your AWANA Director.

As parents, take the time to discuss the above rules with your child and help reinforce the need for all of us to have the same expectations of each other in the way we treat God, His house and others.

We also have a few things that you can help us with as parents when it comes to AWANA. Here are a few things YOU can do to make the most out of this opportunity for your child to grow:

AWANA WEDNESDAY DINNER

There will be NO Dinner prior to AWANA for the 2020/2021 year. We have had to cancel this for the 2020/2021 AWANA year due to health concerns and following the guidelines set by local and state officials. We will do our best to make sure that we have light snacks available for the kids during Club, but we are limited as to what we can do due to the guidelines and restrictions.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS FOR 2020/2021

With the health concerns and guidelines put in place for large gatherings of people during this time we are living in, FBC has adopted the following measures to keep both our students and leaders safe:

- We will have people at the entryways to take everyone's temperature upon entering the building. If anyone enters and registers a temperature at or above 99.6 degrees, they will not be permitted to participate that evening.
- We are asking all kids and parents wear masks upon entering the building for check in and keep them on until seated in the Sanctuary for opening.
- Once in the Sanctuary, we are asking each family to practice social distancing precautions until the kids are dismissed to their Clubs for the evening.
- We ask that your child have a mask with them at all times. There will be a time when we don't have to wear them, but we don't know when that is. We are asking the kids to have them as needed to maintain safety. So please...make sure that is part of their gear when they come.
- All classrooms, play areas, and the Sanctuary will be disinfected prior to and after AWANA on Wednesdays.
- PARENTS...we ask when picking up your child that you wear a mask when picking them up from their Club rooms. Once your child is dismissed from Club, we ask that they wear masks while exiting the building.

Thank you for your understanding and helping us to navigate through these times...together!

OPENING

Each week we will kick off AWANA with the Opening in the Sanctuary at 6:15pm with Pastor Matt. Here we will sing, do our pledges, recognize achievements of Clubbers and pray together as we begin the night. From there we will dismiss Clubs to begin their night together.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

The club year is divided into semesters in regard to club attendance. Each clubber can earn one attendance award each semester if they miss no more than 2 nights during that semester. If your child is sick or has another commitment to where they CANNOT be at AWANA, we ask that you call the church number (765.452.5451) and leave a message or call during AWANA to let us know.

For the 2020-2021 year, AWANA meets every Wednesday beginning on October 14th and concludes on May 26th with the Awards Ceremony. The only nights AWANA will not be meeting during the 2020/21 year are as follows:

November 25th (Thanksgiving Break)
December 23rd (Christmas Break)
December 30th (Christmas Break)
March 31st (Spring Break)
April 7th (Spring Break)

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

If KSC (Kokomo Schools) has cancelled school or dismissed students early on a Wednesday there will be no AWANA Clubs that evening. You can always contact the church office if you have a question OR join the AWANA messaging system by texting the word AWANA to the number (765) 810-0796. We will make sure to send out a message via email and the AWANA messaging system by no later than 3pm each Wednesday if Clubs are cancelled for that evening.

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD AT THE END OF AWANA:

All AWANA clubs end at 7:30pm. We ask that parents pick up their child from the Sanctuary where kids will be dismissed by their Club Leaders to their parents. If your child is being picked up by another adult that evening, PLEASE make sure to let the AWANA Secretary know when dropping off your child that night and notify the Club Leader before leaving that evening. Children will NOT be dismissed to any other adult unless the Secretary and/or Club Leader is not informed.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

AWANA Club is a fast paced, fun evening, in which clubbers remain engaged for the entire hour and a half. However, there are occasions when individual clubbers can be disruptive to the rest of the group, especially those who come unprepared with sections to recite. These occasions can be prevented, or at least minimized, by setting clear expectations at the beginning of the year, occasionally providing reminders throughout the year, and consistently expecting first time compliance with the communicated expectations.

When a clubber is being disruptive, the following guidelines can be used to resolve the disruption:

- Provide a verbal warning, explaining the incorrect behavior and providing the appropriate correct behavior expected for the remainder of the night/year.
- On the second offense, the Clubber will be removed from the classroom for a period of time and will be invited back in after the Director is able to speak to them about the problem.
- On the third offense, the Director will call or get in contact with the parent/guardian of the Clubber to discuss the behavior to seek help in correcting the behavior.
- If the behavior problems continue, the Director should meet again with the parent and Senior Pastor of FBC, requiring the parent to “babysit” the clubber for an appointed set of AWANA nights. If the parent will not or cannot attend with the clubber, or if the parent’s presence is not effective in resolving the issue, the clubber will be required to come ONLY when the parent can be there to assure appropriate behavior during the AWANA evenings.

While the final step may appear harsh, a disruptive clubber degrades the AWANA experience for all of the other Clubbers. Our commitment as Leaders is to reach clubbers with the Gospel of Christ and train them to serve Him. This is highly inhibited when a single clubber consistently disregards club rules and disobeys their Leader, not to mention disobedience of their Leader is a violation of scriptural principals. AWANA is a ministry, not a babysitting service and as such, we expect our children and parents to meet the following expectations during AWANA.