OUR HISTORY

In the fall of 1987 the church began to investigate the possibility of starting a “Latch Key” ministry for families in the community who needed child care after school. A committee of church members was formed to study the geographical service area, the impact on the church building, the cost for start up, NYS school age licensing implications, additional insurance needs, budgets, etc. In the fall of 1988 PASS (Program of After School Support) opened it’s doors with 17 children enrolled for after school care. PASS continued to grow over the years and was expanded into a full day summer program called SUMMER SON. The morning care program was added to the school age care program and PASS continued to grow over the years, so much so that we had to license a second hallway of classrooms to accommodate the numbers of children who were enrolling in the program. The SUMMER SON program was discontinued for a time in the late 1990’s but was revived as SUMMER CAMP in 2005.

With the school program up and running thoughts began to turn to full day child care for preschool children. In the spring of 1995 another study was conducted similar to that of the school age program but focusing on the need of our community for full day preschool child care. The greatest barrier to opening the day care involved the NYS child care licensing requirements for the actual building. The rooms had to be fitted with sinks for the children, direct access to the outside from certain classrooms had to be retrofitted into the existing rooms, specific equipment and supplies needed to be purchased, fire detection and evacuation issues had to be addressed, food service for the lunches and snacks had to be secured and approved, staff had to be hired and taken through extensive background checks, windows were put into the walls for visibility in the classrooms, etc. A wall was taken down in what is now the blue 4 year old room to make the room large enough to use for a preschool classroom and all of the rooms received new carpet and a fresh coat of paint. It was a massive undertaking but all was completed and we opened our doors to our first preschool children in the fall of 1997 under the name of Pearce 4 Kids Child Care Center. At that time we had four classrooms (infant, 2 years, 3 years and 4 years). In August 2006 we expanded the infant room to include the separate sleeping area which gave us more floor space for the infant children to play during their awake time. We also expanded into the west wing hallway and created the “Wobbler” room so that we could move older infants out of the infant room before they were 2 years old. Finally, we created another 4 year old room, which is now known as the “Orange 4’s”.

In 2005, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, our licensing agent, merged our PASS school age license and our Pearce 4 Kids full day children care license under one license. At that time we officially became Pearce 4 Kids Child Care Center, serving children ages 6 weeks – 12 years. The name PASS was officially dropped and P4K is now our acronym for all programs.

Besides the school age and full day preschool programs, Pearce 4 Kids also includes the Nursery School and Pre-Kindergarten programs. These two programs are not required to be under our NYS license for child care, however they do fall under the same umbrella as the licensed P4K programs and the staff and children in the Nursery School and Pre-K are part of our P4K family as well. The Nursery School has a long-standing history in our community. Having started in 1967, we often welcome children into our classes whose parents attended Nursery School at Pearce!

Pearce 4 Kids continues to grow and change. We are grateful for a church staff and congregation that understand the need for family and community ministry and are willing to have the building used – and used *hard* - by close to 300 children and their families each week. We are fortunate to have a facility crew at Pearce who are but a walky-talky call away to assist us in everything from spills on the carpet to hearing us dream about projects and then helping us see those projects through to completion. Most of all, we are grateful to God for allowing us to have the privilege to serve Him through the Pearce 4 Kids Child Care ministry. We strive to provide a loving and stimulating Christian environment where children’s social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual needs are met. God has blessed us immensely and we look forward to continuing in His service at P4K.