



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE **HOLY COMMUNION**

Our Nursery Guidelines and Policies

We Strive To Be a Safe and Welcoming Nursery:

- Our Nursery Staff provide gracious care and nurturing to children during Sunday morning worship services and other services and events as scheduled.
- There are never fewer than two Nursery Staff present in the nursery when children are present.
- We strive to have only age appropriate toys in the nursery.
- The door to our cleaning supplies is kept shut in the presence of children and features child safety locks.
- We avoid stuffed animals.
- Infants sleep only in carriers or portable cribs provided or approved by their caregivers. Older children who choose to rest may do so on a yoga mat or rug.

Welcome to Our Nursery

We enthusiastically welcome all children to our services as well as our nursery at Holy Communion. All primary caregivers will be asked to complete a registration form the first time they use the nursery services. Afterwards caregivers can simply sign their child in on arrival. Our registration form asks caregivers to share any pertinent information so that our nursery staff can offer children the best experience possible.

Caregivers may stay and observe as they choose but we ask that they not come and go as that can be disruptive for the children in our care.

If an emergency occurs, Nursery Staff will text the caregiver using the number provided on the sign in sheet. Caregivers are encouraged to keep their phones on vibrate during services.

Bathroom and Diapering Policies: Caregivers indicate on the sign up form as they enter the nursery on each visit that they understand the nursery staff expect children to have a fresh diaper and/or to have used the toilet immediately prior to their arrival. Gender neutral bathrooms are located at the opposite end of the lounge from the nursery. Caregivers are encouraged to use the changing tables in the bathrooms on the lower level.

In keeping with the Episcopal Church's child sexual abuse prevention program, Safeguarding God's Children, children who use the toilet cannot be physically assisted in the bathroom unless two pre- screened adults are present.

For this reason, we strongly encourage caregivers to escort their child to the bathroom immediately before coming to the nursery. If a child needs to

go to the bathroom while they are in the nursery, the Nursery Staff will text the parent to come take their child to the bathroom.

Diapering by our childcare staff will be conducted in our diapering area.

Wellness Policy: Caregivers initial as they sign their child into the nursery on each visit that they understand the nursery staff expect children to be feeling well and not contagious at drop-off. Caregivers of children who appear to be feeling poorly, running a fever, or displaying obvious symptoms of illness (e.g. a green, runny nose) will be retrieved from worship to pick up their child, minimizing the potential for contagion exposure to other children and our nursery staff.

Food and Drink: We do not offer a regular snack when children are with us to minimize the risk of food sharing, allergen exposure, and the potential for the spread of illness.

There may be times that we can offer bottles, sippy cups, and a snack provided by caregivers. Anytime a child in our nursery is eating or drinking, they do so at a table or on a snack mat. Only in special circumstances (e.g. childcare during an extended special event) can we supervise children eating full meals while in our care. For special events, we ask caregivers to provide a meal for the child/ren in a labeled bag.

All are welcome to our Adult Forum and Community Breakfast that follow the 8:00am service during the program year. However, we ask that children complete their meals in Mitchell Hall before entering the Nursery.

Picking Up Children: An adult caregiver must initial that they have picked up their child when they take them from our nursery.

Nursery Environment

Ratio: 1 adult to 3 children up to 3 years old. 1 adult to 5 children over 3 years old.

Physical Environment Visualization and Access: Nursery child safety gates, doors and the windows integrated in them will be kept uncovered so that visual access to all childcare areas is accessible to caregivers at all times. The door in our nursery area that leads directly outside is to be treated as an emergency exit only and should not be used by caregivers when dropping off or picking up children from the nursery. We ask that caregivers use the door that opens into the lounge to access the nursery and knock to alert the staff to their presence.

When children are present, incidental or casual passage through the nursery for purposes unrelated to caring for those children present is not permitted. Nursery Staff will redirect those needing to access other areas of the Parish House to the front or second floor entries.

Our Guidelines for a Clean Nursery:

- All toys handled by children are cleaned by Nursery Staff as part of the closing routine in the nursery.
- Toys handled by children who appear to have colds or may be ill are cleaned immediately after use.
- Cleaning supplies are kept in a child safe compartment in the nursery. We use a soap and hot water wash for visible dirt followed by natural thyme oil-based spray or wipes.
- Nursery carpets are cleaned weekly. The vacuum is located in the copy room on the lower level.
- Our nursery furniture, door handles, and any baby gates in use are sprayed or wiped down with thymol-based solution weekly by our Nursery Staff.
- Dirty doll clothing, cloth napkins, changing table covers, tent coverings, cleaning rags etc. are given to the Sunday Children's Formation Coordinator weekly when washing is required.
- Nursery Staff wash their hands upon entering the nursery, prior to the arrival of children, when preparing or handling food, and as appropriate through the nursery session.

Sunday Morning Opening Safety Check and Routine:

- Visually check floors for choking hazards such as: coins, marbles, safety pins, jewelry, buttons, crayons, pen caps, nails, screws, etc.
- Ensure plugs and door handles have safety covers.
- Confirm all necessary equipment and supplies are on hand.
- Set-up nursery to welcome children.
- Wash hands upon entering nursery and prior to children's arrival.

Closing Our Nursery After Caring for Children:

- Check and clean toys, furniture, surfaces, and doorknobs and other nursery items before departure.
- Vacuum floors using the Dyson located in the copy room on the lower level.
- We encourage you to communicate any joys or concerns regarding children in the nursery's care to the Holy Communion Staff and/or caregivers as appropriate.

Nursery Personnel

Staffing and Personnel: Only screened church personnel, hired and volunteer, may work in the church nursery. Unscreened friends or family of nursery personnel are not allowed to assist in the nursery without going through the application process. We have two Nursery Staff through an arrangement with TLC for Kids.

Ongoing Supervision: The Sunday Children's Formation Coordinator oversees the care of our youngest worshippers. They, along with other members of the Holy Communion staff, conduct random spot visits to the nursery averaging once per month and spend at least 10 minutes observing the program. When appropriate, feedback is offered directly to Nursery Staff supplied by TLC Kids to ensure the finest nursery care possible.

Nursery Hours of Operation

On Sundays, Nursery Staff arrive by 8:30 am, preparing the space and themselves to welcome children in anticipation of our 10:30 am worship. They will remain there and be prepared to receive children who may arrive as late as 11:30 am and provide care until the last child has been picked up. Nursery Staff are guaranteed a minimum payment of four hours compensation on Sunday mornings even if the nursery has no child visitors at one or both services and they are expected to be able to be present in the nursery as late as 12pm should care be needed.

There may be a period of time when the nursery has no children present. When that is the case, one Nursery Staff may be asked to assist with Godly Play space management. Should childcare then be needed in the nursery during this time, the absent nursery staff member will return immediately to the nursery to ensure proper staffing.

In Case of an Emergency in Our Nursery

- A personal cell phone can be used to call “911” and the Children’s Formation Coordinator. A list of emergency number is located with the sign in materials.
- Fire Extinguishers are located in the nursery and review of their use occurs and is documented annually.
- Our Nursery Staff meet with the Children’s Formation Coordinator and the Rev. Mike Angell at least annually to update policies and ensure best practices.
- Injury is unlikely in a safe nursery environment but our care providers are required by TLC for Kids to have basic child first aid and CPR and will contact caregivers and/or call 911 immediately.
- Sheltering in place and emergency egress with children in our charge are unlikely possibilities. There are two doors out of our nursery and one exits directly out of the building. Our primary evacuation meeting site is the south end of Mooney Park near the park sign. Children will be escorted by Nursery Staff across Jackson avenue to wait for further instruction. Alternative sites may need to be chosen on a case-by-case basis.

Reporting Concerns: Concerns about the Nursery should be reported to Heidi Olliff, the Sunday Children’s Formation Coordinator and The Rev. Mike Angell, Rector.

Holy Communion Nursery Policy: Our current policy is available on our website as well as in print in our nursery. It is reviewed annually and updated with the input of the nursery care providers, caregivers, and other resources.