

First United Methodist Church of Salisbury Nursery Policies

Church Mission:

The mission of First United Methodist Church is to make and nurture Christian disciples through the presence and power of God.

Nursery Mission:

At FUMC of Salisbury, we promise to surround our children in a community of love and forgiveness that they may grow in their service to others. Our intention is to minister to the needs of all children and provide them with a caring community where all may be nurtured in a dignified and loving manner.

**“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,
for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.”
Matthew 19:14**

Nursery Structure and Hours:

Childcare is provided for our services of worship and many church-wide events and activities. For the 11:00 a.m. Sunday worship service, childcare is provided for both infants and toddlers.

Children two and older are cared for in a separate toddler facility adjacent to the infant nursery.

The nursery will open 15 minutes prior to the beginning of a church function and will promptly close 15 minutes after the event is over. Parents are expected to remain at the church when children are in the nursery.

Nursery Scheduling:

It is the responsibility of the Director of Children’s Ministries to secure the proper staff (paid workers and volunteers) for services and functions requiring childcare. However, if a volunteer is unable to cover their scheduled time, it is their responsibility to find a substitute. Any special requests for nursery service need to be submitted to the DCM at least 14 days before the event.

Adult/Child Ratios:

The nursery will use a combination of paid staff and volunteers to provide care for our children. In accordance with our Safe Sanctuaries policy, we require that at least 2 workers be on duty at all times. Every effort will be made to keep the ratio of one adult to every 6 children and 1 adult to every 4 infants. No child will ever be left alone.

Nursery Staff:

Each nursery will be staffed with a paid worker and at least 1 volunteer for Sunday morning services. Paid workers must be at least 18 years old, have current CPR/first aid training, and undergo a background check.

Nursery Volunteers:

Our nursery volunteers consist of parents, youth, and other members of our church family who assist our paid staff during Sunday morning services. For those who enjoy babies and wish to nurture our little ones, there are opportunities to serve as a “Loving Arms” volunteer. “Loving Arms” volunteers may be asked to rock and feed babies, serve snacks to toddlers, interact and play with children, and read stories to little ones. All parents of infants or toddlers will be asked to volunteer to assist. In order to provide optimum care for our children, we ask that volunteers not bring older children into the nursery. All volunteers must attend Safe Sanctuary training offered by the church periodically throughout the year. We recommend that all volunteers also participate in nursery training offered through the church. Volunteers must undergo a background check every 3 years.

Room Preparation:

Paid staff and the volunteer will:

1. Check the room for orderliness.
2. Set out check-in sheet with markers, pens, and pagers.
3. Have all diaper changing materials ready to use.
4. Wear the aprons provided in order to help parents easily identify the staff.
5. Wash hands.

Greeting and check-in of children:

A paid worker should warmly greet the children and their parents while the other workers are involving children in age-appropriate activities. As parents check-in and leave their child at the check-in point, they should be sure to fill out all pertinent information on the check-in sheets and be sure that all of their child’s belongings are clearly marked. Since the hall of our infant check-in area is small, please limit the number of family members bringing in an infant. Please, also, limit the number of people who enter the room when dropping off and picking up toddlers.

Pagers are available in the nursery. Please remember to note the pager number on the check-in sheet and return the pager when the child is picked up.

Children must be picked up from the nursery by the parent or guardian who checked the child into the nursery.

Toddler Care:

Because this experience is the child’s earliest impression of church, we want it to be positive for both the child and his or her parents. All activities for children will be age-appropriate and designed to enhance the child’s development. Children will be encouraged to participate by the nursery workers and volunteers. The children should be engaged in these learning activities for the majority of the time they are in the nursery. At least 1 Bible story should be read to the toddlers during the Sunday School hour.

Appropriate snacks are available in the toddler nursery. Snacks from home will not be shared. Because some children may have allergies, snacks provided cannot contain peanuts, chocolate, or red dye. Drink cups brought for children from home should be labeled with the child's name.

Infant Care:

1. Infants are in the earliest stage of development, and in order to foster this development, infants should not be restricted to one area or piece of equipment or activity for a long period of time.
2. Only 1 infant should be held at a time while standing. It is much better to place them on a floor mat and join them.
3. Infants will be held while given bottles.
4. Diapers will be checked hourly and soiled diapers need to be changed immediately.
5. Babies will be placed in cribs on their backs unless instructed otherwise by the child's parent.

Cleanliness:

The nurseries should be the cleanest rooms in the church for the safety of both the children and the workers.

1. All equipment surfaces (i.e. jumper trays, mats, tables, and chairs) must be cleaned with the provided cleaning agents by the workers.
2. All toys that were handled and mouthed must be cleaned.
3. Sheets must be changed after use by a child, placed in the hamper, and washed after each nursery session. All blankets and aprons used should also be placed in the hamper, and washed.
4. Carpet spills should be cleaned up immediately.
5. Workers must follow general hand washing guidelines posted in the sink area of the nursery. Workers should wash their hands after each diaper change or cleaning any bodily discharge, such as wiping noses.

General Policies:

Age Limits—Only children of the appropriate age for a room are allowed in the nursery rooms. No child over the age of 4 should be in the nursery rooms.

Illness policy—For everyone's protection, children who are ill will not be allowed to stay in the nursery. Children who have obvious signs of illness, such as fever, cough, or a runny nose (thick green or yellow mucus) will not be admitted. If a child becomes ill during his/her stay in the nursery, the parents will be paged to come pick up the child. Any chronic illness should be brought to the attention of the nursery staff.

Medication--Medicines will not be administered by the nursery staff. Medications should not be left in diaper bags or backpacks left in the nursery.

Crying—The nursery staff will do everything possible to comfort a crying child. If

a child becomes inconsolable for a length of time (15 minutes of non-stop crying), the parents will be paged.

Behavior—For the safety of all children in the nursery room, all children are expected to behave appropriately, within the limits of their understanding. Hitting, pushing, grabbing, biting, and the like will not be permitted. If any child's behavior becomes problematic and cannot be corrected by a kind, firm tone of voice or removal from the source of conflict, parents will be paged. Yelling at the children and physical punishment of any child are never permitted.

Cleanup and Departure:

The above mentioned cleanliness procedures must be done at the end of each session. Toys will be put away and battery toys will be turned off. Returned pagers should be turned off and placed in their case. We ask that volunteers help in this effort.

Confidentiality:

All information about children in our program and their families shall remain confidential. It is expressly understood that any gossip is strictly forbidden.

Emergency Procedures:

Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each nursery area. If the facility must be evacuated, workers will place infants in the crib with large wheels and will follow the evacuation route to the back parking lot.

In the case of an intruder into the facility, workers should secure the nursery rooms and notify security team members who are on duty during worship services.

If an injury occurs, an Incident Report Form will be completed by the attending worker and given to the Director of Children's Ministries. Incident Report Forms may be found in the back pocket of the three-ring binder holding check-in sheets.

A telephone is available in the infant nursery and is for emergency use only.

A first-aid kit is located in the marked cabinet in the infant nursery.

These policies were compiled after appropriate study and research by a committee appointed by the Education Team.

