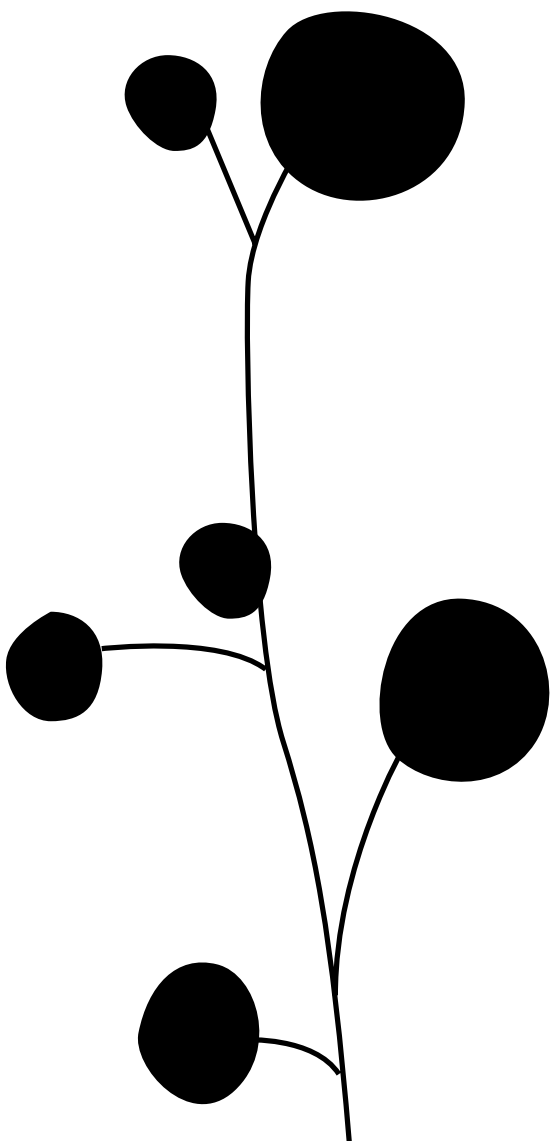
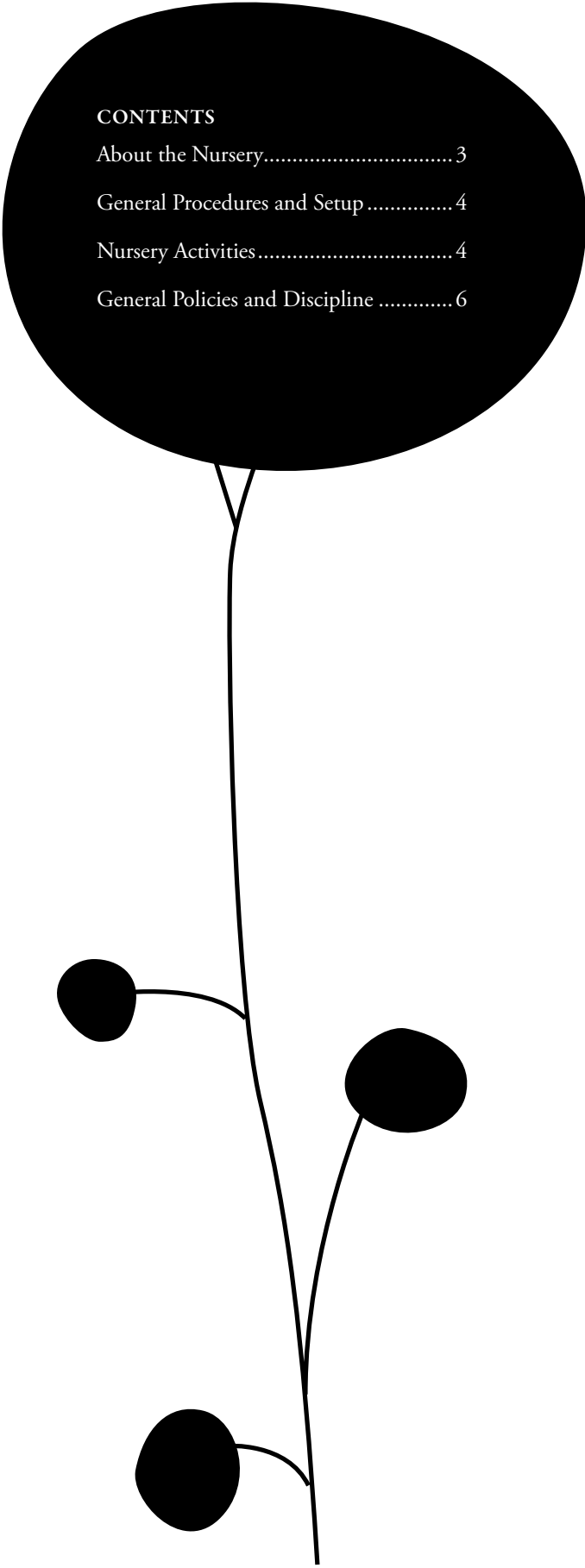


Welcome to the Nursery

St. Luke's United Methodist Church





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At St. Luke’s United Methodist Church, we affirm that children are a sacred gift from God. We promise to surround our children in a nurturing community that they may grow in their love of God and service to others.

About the Nursery

SCHEDULE

A nursery is provided for infants and toddlers through age 3 for all church services and many church-wide events and activities. The nursery will open at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of a church function and will promptly close 15 minutes after the event is over.

STAFF

Our nursery staff is currently composed of two paid nursery workers for Sunday morning services and many church-wide events. Paid nursery workers must be at least 17 years old and are to abide by all nursery policies and procedures. There will always be at least one nursery attendant present who is 21 or older. The 17–20-year-olds must be accompanied by an older attendant (paid or volunteer.)

ADULT/CHILD RATIOS

There should be no more than twelve children at a time in any of the nursery rooms. Every effort needs to be made to keep the ratio of one adult to every five children, and one adult to every three infants. We also require that at least two workers be on duty at all times. Under no circumstances should the children be left alone for any amount of time. Caregivers are required to directly supervise children by sight and hearing at all times—even while they are sleeping.



General Procedures and Setup

ROOM PREPARATION

- Set out registration, sign-in sheet, pens and pagers on Check-In Table.
- Make sure the room is orderly and clean.
- Prepare toys and snacks in advance for children.
- Have all diaper changing materials ready for use.
- Wash hands and have hand sanitizer available.

CLEANLINESS

The nurseries should be the cleanest rooms in the church, which is for the safety of both the children and workers. The guidelines below will help to facilitate this:

- All equipment surfaces (i.e., walker trays, swings, mats, tables, and chairs) must be cleaned with Clorox wipes at the end of each nursery session.
- All toys that have been handled and mouthed must be cleaned before use by another child.
- Carpet spills should be cleaned up immediately.
- Workers must clean their hands each time after changing diapers or wiping noses.
- Not only should the area be sanitized, but there should be a clean, sharp look to the whole room.

GREETING THE CHILDREN

One of the nursery workers should warmly greet the children and their parents while the other workers are involving the children in appropriate play and activities. The greeter also needs to make sure the parents fill out all of the pertinent information at the Check-In Table.

Nursery Activities

The church nursery is more than a babysitting service—we consider it a ministry opportunity where young children can be introduced to basic

spiritual concepts and have God's love modeled to them through the nurture and care of the nursery workers. Nursery workers are encouraged to express love to every child, teach Bible basics such as "God made you" and "Jesus loves you," be filled with praise to

God, promote a secure and safe environment in God's church, and help babies and toddlers develop social and play skills. Resources, including Bible storybooks and Christian music, will be available for use in the nursery.



PLAYTIME

All activities for children will be developmentally and age appropriate. The children should be involved in these activities and participatory games for the largest percentage of time that they are in the nursery. Children will be encouraged to participate in these activities by the nursery workers. It is our goal for the children to have a pleasant visit in the nursery, and to achieve this, the workers should interact with the children as they play and talk with them.



SNACKTIME

Appropriate snacks are available in the nursery cases (e.g., 100% juice boxes, bottled water, Goldfish or graham crackers). Do not give a child's snacks brought from home to another child. Due to possible allergies, snacks given cannot contain peanuts, chocolate, or red dye. Snacks will only be given while the child is seated at the table. There should be no food or drinks given on the carpeted areas. This is important to maintain the cleanliness of the nursery and to prevent choking hazards.

INFANTS

- Infants should not be restricted to one piece of equipment or activity for long periods of time in order to encourage their development and provide adequate stimulation.
- Activities such as swings, lying/playing on blankets or mats on the floor, and looking at books and toys are acceptable and encouraged.
- Do not stand and hold more than one infant at a time. It is a much better solution to place them on a mat on the floor and join them.
- Infants should be held while given bottles.
- Diapers need to be checked hourly and soiled diapers need to be changed immediately.

General Policies and Discipline

AGE LIMITS

Only children of the appropriate age for a room are allowed in the nursery. No child over the age of four should be in the nursery. For special events where a wide range of children are present, the children should be separated into similar age groups and appropriate activities provided to keep them occupied.

ILLNESS

If a child is visibly ill, he/she should not be admitted into the nursery. If he/she becomes ill while in the nursery, the parents should be paged immediately.

SAFETY

Every child must have a registration form on file. A silent pager is provided for each child's parent, which is returned to the nursery when the child is picked up.

INCONSOLABLE CHILDREN

Workers should make every effort to engage unhappy children in play or rock them. Sitting on the floor with the children is very effective and calming. If a child is inconsolable (10 minutes of non-stop crying), the parents are to be paged or notified immediately. Under no circumstances should you let a child "cry it out." This policy will help to fortify the trust between our parents and our nursery staff.



DISCIPLINE

Discipline means gentle teaching and modeling, not harsh punishment for misbehavior. To keep all of the children in the nursery safe, no throwing, hitting, biting, or kicking can be allowed. If children express this behavior, remind them in a kind voice of the appropriate behavior that you expect and remove them from the source of the conflict. If the behavior continues, it is appropriate to place them in a time-out chair for no more than one minute for each year of their age. Yelling at the children is absolutely prohibited. Also, under no circumstances shall the use of physical force or the threat of physical force be used. If a child is unmanageable after efforts have been made to correct the situation, then contact the child's parent.

CLEAN UP AND DEPARTURE

The above mentioned cleanliness procedures must be done at the end of each nursery session. Toys shall be put away in their proper places. All pagers should be turned off and placed in the cabinet.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about the children in our program and their families shall remain confidential unless it is determined that harm may come to the child and in that event, the pastor should be notified immediately and actions will be taken in line with the "Safe Sanctuary" procedures. It is expressly understood that any gossip is strictly forbidden.

COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS

Nursery workers will take all concerns from parents seriously. The nursery workers will report any concerns or ideas for improvement to the pastor.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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