

Children's Ministry

Handbook



Reformation Presbyterian Church
120 7th Avenue West
Hendersonville, NC 28792
www.refpres.org

Welcome to the Children's Ministry at RPC

Our heart's desire is to introduce children to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the life changing power of his Gospel of grace. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). We want to make disciples of children who are transformed by the Gospel and learning to serve Christ, others, and the world.

The children's ministry of RPC serves families of infants through fifth grade. We are not just a church that "has children"; we are a church that is "for children." Although we believe that the bible places the primary responsibility for the spiritual nurture of children upon their parents, the church is the spiritual family of God that includes parents and children. The church is to be a context where families grow strong in God's word and children experience the loving community of the gospel. Therefore, our children's ministry partners with parents by equipping and encouraging them in the Christian nurture of their children. We provide our children and their families with a variety of spiritual growth opportunities in worship, service, teaching, fellowship, and missions. Our prayer is that children will grow up to believe in Christ and love his church.

PURPOSE & MOTTO

The Children's Ministry seeks to glorify God by partnering with Christian parents to pass on faith in Jesus Christ to the children of RPC and our surrounding community.

Our motto is 'Growing in Jesus through His Word'. All instruction is grounded in God's word and pointed to Jesus with the purpose of training up children to love and serve Him. We want their lives to follow the pattern of Jesus Christ who 'increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man' (Luke 2:52).

SPECIFIC GOALS

- To strengthen Christian families in Christ.
- To instill in our children God's love for them and a love for Christ and his church.
- To teach an overview of the biblical story of salvation so that children possess a working knowledge of how God has come to save sinners through Jesus Christ.
- To teach foundational theological truths to children through the Bible and Children's Catechisms.
- To help them grow into young people who seek spiritual maturity out of a heart for God.
- To reach out to families and children in our community with the love of Christ.

COMMITMENTS IN MINISTRY

- Provide a safe context for all of God's children to taste and see that the Lord is good, observe mature Christian living, and build Christian friendships with their peers.
- Provide opportunities for children to know Christ through the teaching of his word, prayer, worship, service, fellowship, and mission and outreach to their community.
- Provide resources and support to parents for the spiritual nurture of their children (books, CAMP, parenting training, etc.).
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to impart saving faith to our children as we teach the word of God and model the Christian life.

NURSERY

It's our delight at RPC to care for the smallest in our congregation. We have paid staff and church member volunteers who are the caregivers to our infants and children one, two and three. Our "infant and toddler" nursery is designed for infants up to age two for worship and up to age three during the SS hour. Children's Church is designed for children age two and three.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

While the Children's Ministry offers a variety of ministry opportunities, Sunday school is a primary gathering time. We have Sunday School classes for children age three to fifth grade. During this time they get a chance to sing, pray, and study a bible lesson together. Our teachers love children and desire to show them the love of Christ.

The curriculum we use to teach our children is *The Gospel Story for Kids* by Marty Machowski (New Growth Press). The stated purpose of the curriculum is to help children understand that the Bible is one story with Jesus as the hero who saves his people.

SNL (SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE)

SNL is a time of outreach and discipleship to our children and gives our parents a time to do something for themselves. I feel the need is there for parents, children and volunteers. It's been wonderful worshiping all together on Sunday mornings but fellowship and prayer together in addition to corporate worship will be beneficial to the children's social needs and spiritual growth. This time of devotion, prayer, play, singing, crafts, eating and service will serve the children, the volunteers and the Youth. Parents can drop off their children to a safe place for an hour and a half. The Youth will be meeting at the same time and that was designed to offer an opportunity for all parents to enjoy a date night. Volunteers have an opportunity to use their gifts. Finally, the children can invite their church and unchurched friends. The Gospel will be presented each week as we fellowship together. An unchurched friend would feel comfortable and welcome.

VOLUNTEER LEADERS

Many of our able bodied members volunteer in the nursery rotation along with paid church staff persons. There are at least two volunteers in both nurseries. The "infant & toddler" nursery has a minimum of two volunteers, 16 years and older. There are usually two adults in this nursery but some older youth members have had First Aide training and/or extensive experience with small children. Children's Church has one adult and at least one volunteer in middle school or older. These nurseries are side by side with visibility between the two rooms, located in the children's hallway in Kirkside Hall.

COMMUNICATION

The church website (www.refpres.org) has some basic information regarding the Children's Ministry. Up-to-date information will be communicated via text messages and email.

SAFETY

All church staff and officers, as well as all volunteers who work with children and/or youth, have undergone a background check. We also require all volunteers to sign and adhere to our safety policy. Our policies and procedures document follows.

COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

Rather than teaching a traditional age-based communicants class that puts expectations upon children to become professing Christians and communicant members at a particular age, we prefer for parents to instruct their children at home in order to help them make that step. Genuine faith is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in his time. Therefore, the process of getting ready for a public profession of faith in Christ and communicant membership in the church should be tailored to the individual child.

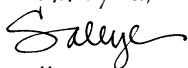
We recommend a workbook that parents may use in teaching their children. After a time of study and preparation with your son or daughter, parents can begin discussing the membership process with the pastor and shepherding elder.

FROM THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR

Dear RPC Family or Visitor,

It is our privilege here at RPC to love and nurture children of all ages for the Lord. We try our best to keep these little ones safe when in our care and to give them a fun and healthy environment to grow in their relationship to Jesus, and to the church family. If you have any questions about our ministry to children, please feel free to contact me any time.

Thank you,



Sallye Lucas, DCM

Reformation Presbyterian Church

Christian Education Ministry (Children)

Policies and Procedures

OUR MISSION: TO GLORIFY GOD

Through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God has made his people into a community that is bound to him and each other in a covenant relationship. As a covenant community, we take joy in participating with many church members in the awesome privilege of raising up the next generation of God's people. The officers, staff, and members of Reformation Presbyterian Church are committed to maintaining a safe environment in which children and youth are protected from sexual/physical abuse and neglect in church-sponsored events. The Christian Education Ministry (CEM) of Reformation Presbyterian Church exists to glorify God by reaching children and youth with the gospel of Jesus Christ and equipping them to serve him in all of life. Therefore, we commend the following safety and care policies and procedures for the purpose of:

- Maintaining an appropriately safe and secure environment for our children and youth.
- Maintaining appropriate ethical standards such that volunteers and teachers live and serve above reproach, protecting the children and youth of Reformation Presbyterian church and the reputation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CRITERIA FOR SERVICE AS STAFF OR VOLUNTEER

- All persons—both paid and volunteer—seeking to serve are required to complete and sign the **Volunteer Application/Background Check Authorization**, undergo a criminal background check, every third year, and complete the appropriate Child Protection Policy Training, either online or in person with the Director of Children's Ministry (DCM) and/or Associate Pastor.
- Those adults who will be **transporting minors** or adults in vehicles must submit a copy of their driver's license to the church office. Drivers must also provide evidence of automobile liability insurance and the insurance and the motor vehicle record be checked annually. Drivers having been convicted of DUI /DWI, reckless endangerment, or other driving violations are restricted from driving youth or children for church ministries.
- Any paid childcare worker must be approved by the Senior Pastor or the appointed staff person and come from a list of approved workers recognized by the church staff or Session.
- Volunteers who have been members or active participants pursuing membership for less than six months will be asked to provide references from churches in which they have served or be pre-approved by the Session.

Any paid childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker that has disclosed or been convicted of sexual misconduct or child abuse will not be allowed to serve in any capacity in the Children's and Youth Ministry and/or where they would have unsupervised contact with minors. While recognizing the healing and redeeming work of our Lord Jesus in the lives of all sinners, this restriction will not be lifted or set aside, but rather other areas for service are recommended for this individual.

Only the Senior Pastor and the one designated by him to serve as the background check coordinator will have access to the criminal background check report. This individual(s) will give recommendations to the DCM and Associate Pastor as to the qualification of applicants. The reports will be kept in a permanent, secure and confidential manner.

The church will make appropriate efforts through the staff or Session to respond to any internal grievance asserted by an applicant.

Reformation Presbyterian Church reserves the right to reject any applicant for volunteer service or dismiss an existing paid childcare worker or volunteer for any reason, including, but not limited to: refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information that is subsequently determined as false or misleading; sin or suffering issues that compromise the paid childcare worker's, volunteer's, or prospective worker's ability to care for children; any criminal report or charge; obtaining information from references or criminal record checks that suggest that the paid childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker is not suitable to help with children.

Any paid childcare worker, volunteer, helper, deacon, staff, elder, or any member of Reformation Presbyterian Church who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by any paid childcare worker, volunteer, or prospective worker must report that knowledge to the DCM and/or the Associate Pastor. He or she also must be personally responsible for any legal obligation that he or she may have to disclose such information to the appropriate governing authority.

POLICIES FOR CHURCH SPONSORED EVENTS

Appropriate Signs of Affection: Adult leaders shall not touch, interact with, or otherwise communicate with children in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayers), or physical caretaking (changing diapers, toileting) are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Care must be taken, however, that expressions of affection and affirmation are not excessive or imposed upon a child. Care must also be taken that adults do not act in a sexually stimulating way toward one another in front of children or youth during any church activity.

Two Adult Rule: Persons involved in the custody and care of children at RPC should observe the “two adult rule,” which requires an adult working with children to be accompanied by another adult worker. The “two adult rule” should be followed whenever possible. Multiple adult chaperones are required for all special events for children and youth held at times and locations other than church-wide gatherings. The exception would be on Sunday mornings in Children’s Church, twos and threes, during worship. In this nursery there can be one adult and one Youth worker. For the “Baby” nursery we allow some 16 and 17 year olds who have First Aid Training and babysitting experience to be one of the “adults.” Sunday School classrooms, Lower Elementary up through High School can have only one adult as these classrooms open to a main hall with visibility into the classrooms.

Open Door Policy: All classrooms, or any area used for meeting with minors in the church facilities, will have sufficient visibility for observation, and such visibility will remain unobstructed at all times and doors will be unlocked. Upper Dutch Doors will remain open in the classrooms and nurseries (also between nursery rooms). Where Dutch Doors or doors with a window are not present, doors will remain propped open.

Observation: Parents/guardians are welcome to observe any activity involving their child at any time.

Nurseries

Baby/Toddler Nursery: There must be **two adults** (16 or 17-years-old or older, one being a female) present in the Baby Nursery. Children are allowed in the Baby Nursery, this includes children of volunteers. In addition to the two adults children can serve as “helpers” in the Baby nursery as needed. Children can not carry babies unless given permission by the parents.

Children’s Church: There must be at least one adult and one approved youth (6th grade to age 17) in Children’s Church, one volunteer being female to take children to the restroom if needed. Parents are asked to take children to the bathroom before entering.

Classrooms

Pre-K Classroom: Two adults, one being female, must be present at all times when supervising children. Dutch door left open.

Lower & Upper Elementary Classrooms: One adult must be present with the door left open, unless two adults are present.

Accepting custodial care of children

Children cannot be dropped off for any church sponsored event without a guardian in charge. The parent/guardian must let the event leader, nursery worker, teacher or other leader know they are responsible for the child(ren) by "signing in" their children, four and under and taking a nametag.

Children will be checked into and out of the nurseries, classrooms or activity by their parent, guardian, or another person authorized by their parent or guardian. Children K, first and second grade, will not be released unaccompanied from Sunday School without specific direction by the parent or guardian. Children four and younger will be released to the person who has the parent's/guardian's nametag that matches their child's nametag. For a group event all children, 5th grade and younger, need to be signed in and permission written down stating who will be picking up their child.

Volunteers will have access to a phone in case of emergency. Parents/guardians leaving the church property must provide an emergency contact number.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child is not left alone in an unsupervised area on the church property.

Teachers and volunteers should ensure that movement between rooms and buildings is orderly and that *all* children are accounted for and watched while traveling between rooms and buildings. No less than two adults should accompany a group, (depending on age and size of group), of children between buildings.

Toileting and Bathroom Care

Whenever possible Baby Nursery workers should check and change diapers each hour while fulfilling duties associated with childcare at Reformation Presbyterian Church.

An adult, female childcare worker, must conduct all bathroom trips, for children, two, three and four years of age. This is true even if the worker merely accompanies the children to the bathroom and waits outside the door while the child uses the facilities. Should a child require assistance, it should be conducted with the stall door open.

Children in the care of RPC should not be sent to the bathroom with another child unless the adult supervises inside the bathroom.

Children K through 5th grade will be watched as they go down the hall to the bathroom and then promptly return.

Handling Discipline

Teachers and workers should not search children or use physical force at any time except in self-defense or when deemed necessary to prevent possible injury. Teachers and workers

should work in teams (and in conjunction with parents and the Director of Children's Ministries) in all significant disciplinary matters.

Scheduling Childcare for off-campus Events

The caregivers will be scheduled by the event coordinator; not Director of Children's Ministry. The ages and backgrounds of childcare workers will be approved by the persons in charge of the event(s) (e.g., small group leaders, coaches, instructors, etc.). Ultimately parents will remain responsible for the safety of the children at these smaller events. Observing the childcare policies and procedures, as far as possible, will be strongly recommended. RPC assumes no liability for the safety of children in these settings and at these events that are outside its reasonable control and supervision.

Responding and Reporting Requirements

If a suspected incident of child abuse or neglect as defined by the NC Code of Law occurs at or is revealed to any adult paid childcare worker or volunteer at a RPC sponsored activity, that person shall:

- Seek to ensure the safety of the child or youth.
- Contact the Senior Pastor, The DCM and the specified authority (parent or legal guardian.)
- The Incident Report Form will be completed as soon as possible. This form will be located in a well labeled, visible notebook in each room.
- Any paid childcare worker or volunteer has a legal obligation to disclose such information in accordance with governing laws to the appropriate governing authority, (city, county, or state) law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the place of the suspected incident and/or the location where it was reported. Call our church lawyer, Skip Goldsmith, Atty. His phone number is listed on the RPC Leadership form.

All paid childcare, youth workers and volunteers may be held accountable for being knowledgeable of the contents of these policies and abiding by them. This policy does not constitute a contract between the church and its workers or the church and any other party. It is merely a statement of policy and general guideline which Reformation Presbyterian Church will seek to follow. Reformation Presbyterian Church makes no guarantee to any party that all aspects of this policy will be followed in any given situation. Reformation Presbyterian Church is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker and/or volunteer.

why do we worship the way we worship? Written to the children

We love children and love for them to worship with us. The Children's Worship Aids are designed to help children follow along and participate in worship, help parents parent their children in the pew and provide discussion at home about the privilege of worship.

ORDER OF WORSHIP (for order)

The first part of the service is the "up and down time". This time goes quick and you can participate. It's easier to enjoy your time of worship if you know what it is you are doing and why it's important. It's a great joy to come and worship God.

PRELUDE

This is the time to do what you need to do to get ready, like go to the bathroom and get water, so you can quiet down and prepare your heart to enter into holy worship. Listen to the pretty music. Say a prayer.

"Dear Jesus, make me excited to be entering into this building where my church family is going to worship you. Amen"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Listen well here. The pastor will welcome everyone and tell you what will be happening in the life of your church family in the coming week or weeks.

MOMENT OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

"Dear Jesus, help me to be still and listen so I can hear your voice and know better how to live. Thank you, Jesus. Amen"

INTROIT

Introit is music played or sung at the beginning of a worship service.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor Matt picks scripture to be read here.

Worshiping God is a main purpose of the church. God calls us to enter his presence and worship. The call to worship grabs our attention and asks us to focus on God. It reminds us why God is praiseworthy and deserving of our worship.

HYMN OF ADORATION

Example: *Come, Christians, Join to Sing*

This hymn is our response to being called to worship God and we love and adore God for wanting us to come into his presence to worship him.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

We are asking God to receive our worship and bless us.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Scripture or a catechism question is used here. To affirm means to say as a fact, strongly and publicly. The worship leader is asking us a question about what we believe about God.

Elder: What does God teach us about...?

People: **God's people respond and say what they believe.**

RESPONSE OF PRAISE

A hymn of praise is sung. We know what we believe is wonderful. This song should be one of rejoicing and praise.

CALL TO RENEWAL

Pastor picks Scripture to go here. When we hear or read Scripture we know that we can not live perfectly so we ask God to forgive us and help make our hearts new and loving through Jesus who died for us and can do all things perfectly.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

This is the time when we realize that we are not God. God is our creator and perfect in every way. We do not measure up to God and we tell Him we are sorry.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

As a family we join together to tell God we are sorry for our sins because none of us are good. We all need forgiveness. Did the prayer ask God for forgiveness? Yes or No? Underline the things the prayer says we are sorry for. "Our heavenly Father,...amen."

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

This is Scripture, God's very words which are truth. Assurance means to speak something with confidence or certainty.

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

A hymn or song that claims truth about God

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Jesus wants the children to know that the Gospel is for them as well. We are encouraged to train children in the way they should go so they will grow in their faith and love for God. Pastor Matt wants you to have your own message that you can understand. The older people love seeing you worship.

CHILDREN'S HYMN

The Children's Hymn or song is sung in response to the Children's Sermon and it gives them a chance to get back to their seat.

PRAYER FOR CHRIST'S CHURCH AND THE WORLD

The pastor leads the congregation in this prayer for the well being, care of the church world wide and for the church to grow, or expand.

DOXOLOGY

God allows us to care for His things. We praise God for everything. He made you and all things.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Scripture

This is one more way we hear God speaking to us through the teaching of His Scriptures.

SERMON

"Title of the sermon is here in quotes"

The pastor's message from God's Word, the Bible.

HYMN OF COMMITMENT

A hymn that should say we promise to live for God

Ask in worship, does this hymn or song say something about living for God?

BENEDICTION

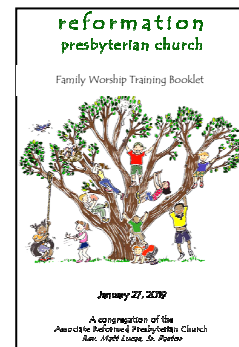
The pastor speaks God's blessing over the congregation. Stand up tall and straight as you receive this blessing. If you want you can hold out your hands like you are receiving His blessing. Go out into the world with the confidence of the Lord with you.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

The congregation will respond to God after his blessing with thankful hearts in song.

POSTLUDE

Music after the worship service sending us out to live for God.



»Look for the Children's Worship Aids in the Narthex.

»Pick up a Family Worship Training booklet for guidance and tips on parenting in the pew.

»If you need help or want additional tips please contact Sallye Lucas, DCM @ 828.702.2892