

## First United Methodist Church

### Childcare Policy

FUMC is pleased to offer childcare services to our congregation members and guests. We offer a loving, safe and nurturing environment for our young children to learn and play while their parents and guardians worship with our FUMC family. We have established procedures to maintain a safe, healthy and comfortable experience for your children. Please help us be good stewards of God's resources and fulfill our goal of providing quality care by following the stated policy.

#### **Worship Care – Nursery, age newborn to 3 years**

- ◆ Childcare will be provided during Sunday school and worship services. The nursery will be open from 9:15 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. each Sunday.
  - Worship services shall be defined as:
    - ☐ Sunday worship services at 9:30 and 11:00
    - ☐ Ash Wednesday
    - ☐ Maundy Thursday
    - ☐ Christmas Eve Contemporary and Candle Light service (Does not include family Christmas Service)
  - Sunday school shall be defined as:
    - ☐ Sunday morning, small group Bible study held at 9:30 or 11:00
- ◆ Childcare will be provided upon reservation on Wednesday evenings during the Wednesday Night Live program which runs during the months of September through April. The nursery will be open beginning at 6 p.m. through 7:30 each Wednesday evening. Please make reservations through the church office or the Children's office.

#### **Parent or Guardian Procedure:**

1. Complete a registration form (yearly) for each child to participate in childcare. Please note any allergies or special instructions for care.
2. A parent or guardian must sign-in their child and leave a cell phone or take a pager. At the end of services, the pager will be returned and the child signed-out of childcare. In an effort to maintain safety and security, siblings will not be allowed to pick up their younger brothers or sisters. Children will not be allowed to leave the childcare area unless signed out by their parent or guardian.
3. **Parents or guardians with children in our nursery-care facility MUST remain on the church campus at all times.**

#### **Facilities:**

The nursery is for newborns through age 2 years old and the Toddler Class is for 2 year olds, during the above outlined services. A child should move up to the 2 year old Sunday school class the September after they turn two and when he/she is ready for the transition and would benefit from a toddler Sunday school program. It is not recommended for a child under the age of two to be allowed in the Preschool hall before the September 1<sup>st</sup> date.

### Worship Care – Preschool, age 3 through Kindergarten

- ◆ On-site programs are provided each week during Sunday school and worship services. The Preschool Hall will be open from 9:15 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. each Sunday.
  - Worship services shall be defined as:
    - Sunday worship services at 9:30 and 11:00
    - Ash Wednesday
    - Maundy Thursday
    - Christmas Eve Contemporary and Candle Light service (Does not include family Christmas Service)
  - Sunday school shall be defined as:
    - Sunday morning, small group Bible study held at 9:30 or 11:00
- ◆ On-site programs are provided on Wednesday evenings during the Wednesday Night Live program which runs during the months of September through April. The Preschool Hall will be open beginning at 5:50 p.m. through 7:30 each Wednesday evening.

#### **Parent or Guardian Procedure:**

1. Complete a registration form (yearly) for each child to participate in Promise land programs. Please note any allergies or special instructions for care.
2. A parent or guardian must sign-in their child and leave a cell phone number or take a pager. At the end of services, the pager will be returned and the child signed-out of childcare. In an effort to maintain safety and security, siblings will not be allowed to pick up their younger brothers or sisters. Children will not be allowed to leave the Preschool Hall area unless signed out by their parent or guardian.
3. Children are not to be left unattended in the building or grounds of FUMC.

### Worship Care – Elementary, First through Fifth Grade

- ◆ On-site programs are provided each week during Sunday school and worship services. The fourth floor (Paradise Island) will be open from 9:15 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. each Sunday.
  - Worship services shall be defined as:
    - Sunday worship services at 9:30 and 11:00
    - Ash Wednesday
    - Maundy Thursday
  - Sunday school shall be defined as:
    - Sunday morning, small group Bible study held at 9:30 or 11:00
- ◆ On-site programs are provided on Wednesday evenings during the Wednesday Night Live program which runs during the months of September through April. The fourth floor (Paradise Island) will be open beginning at 6:30 p.m. through 7:30 each Wednesday evening. Parents are to sign in their children on the first floor and leave a cell phone number, or indicate their location in the church. Check out is on the fourth floor at 7:30.

### **Parent or Guardian Procedure:**

1. Complete a registration form (yearly) for each child to participate in Promise land programs. Please note any allergies or special instructions for care.
2. A parent or guardian must sign-in their child on the appropriate attendance sheet and leave a cell phone number. At the end of services, a parent or guardian must sign the child out. In an effort to maintain safety and security, siblings will not be allowed to pick up their younger brothers or sisters. Children will not be allowed to leave the fourth floor area unless signed out by a parent or guardian.
3. Children are not to be left unattended in the building or grounds of FUMC.

### **Worship Care – Celebrate Recovery**

- ◆ Childcare will be provided during the Celebrate Recovery Service on Thursday evenings. All childcare will be held on the fourth floor beginning at 6:45 through 9:30 p.m. The nursery will be opened on an “as needed” basis.

### **Parent or Guardian Procedure:**

1. Complete a registration form (yearly) for each child to participate in childcare. Please note any allergies or special instructions for care.
2. A parent or guardian must sign-in their child on the fourth floor and leave a cell phone number or take a pager. At the end of services, the pager will be returned and the child signed-out of childcare. In an effort to maintain safety and security, siblings will not be allowed to pick up their younger brothers or sisters. Children will not be allowed to leave the fourth floor unless signed out by their parent or guardian.
3. **Parents or guardians with children in the Church’s care on Thursday evenings **MUST** remain on the church campus at all times.**

### **Non-Worship Childcare**

Childcare is offered for on-site church events (i.e. Bible studies, choir rehearsals, classes, meetings, and other types of small groups sponsored by FUMC not related to regular worship services. All attempts will be made to provide childcare for events when it is needed for two or more families. All childcare requests require following a reservation system. All requests must go through the Director of Children’s Ministries.

1. All groups are encouraged to schedule their events when staffing is available and childcare has already been scheduled. This will help our Children’s Department wisely use our resources. Due to staffing needs and our Child Protection Policy, there is a minimum of two childcare workers in every childcare situation. The groups should be aware and support our efforts to be good stewards of our funds and resources.
2. Requests should be made at least two weeks before the event and should include the event date, start and end times, the number and ages of children and if there are children with special needs. We may not be able to accommodate requests that give less than the two week’s notice. No same day requests for care will be accepted.
3. Committee Chairs are responsible for sharing any childcare information with their committees. Each group is responsible for making childcare arrangements for their respective activities. It is recommended that one person from each event/group be responsible for contacting requesting child care.

4. A “Request for Childcare” form must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event to the Children’s Director. Request forms are found on the Church web-site and in the Church office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, or can be obtained from the Children’s Ministry office.
5. When an event is cancelled or postponed, please alert the Children’s Director as soon as possible.

### **Illness Policy:**

If your child is not feeling well, he/she will be much happier in your care. If you think your child may be coming down with an illness, or if your child has displayed one or more of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours, please do not leave them in childcare, or have them attend a program that day. To protect the health of all our children, we cannot knowingly accept a child who may be ill. If our staff feels that your child has any of the below symptoms, we will page or call you to come and get your child.

- ◆ Runny nose or consistent cough
- ◆ Fever (exceeding 100)
- ◆ Vomiting or diarrhea
- ◆ Inflamed mouth or throat
- ◆ Rashes /eye infections or discharge
- ◆ Head lice (Must be clear a minimum of 48 hours)

Since we are not capable of determining if a runny nose or cough is the symptom of something contagious, we have taken the conservative approach to minimize the spread of illness. The only exceptions are:

- ◆ If your child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours
- ◆ If you child’s runny nose is clear and/or from allergies

### **Staff/Volunteer Policy:**

In accordance with the Florida Conference Child/Youth Protection Policy, anyone working or volunteering with the children consistently and/or regularly must be approved. All must pass a Criminal Records background check and sign a participation covenant statement. The minimum age for all nursery staff and volunteers is 15 years.

Nursery-Care ratios utilized:

- Birth to 2 years - Five children per adult childcare worker
- Two/three years – Eight children per adult childcare worker
- Four/five years – Ten children per adult childcare worker

We pray that providing these guidelines gives you the opportunity to offer functions to your ministry groups with the security that knowing the participants’ children are safe and properly cared for. If you have any questions, please call the Children’s Ministry Office at 894-4661, ext. 127.

