



Dear Volunteer,

You are amazing. I thank Spirit for you and your presence in the lives of the children of The Church Within. You have been called to this work because you have gifts to share-- and because Spirit has some gifts to share with you through this work.

Attached you will find some basic policies and procedures for Children's Church. The list is by no means complete, but it is a place to start. The purpose of policies and procedures is to make our journey together a little smoother, by having an agreed-upon way of working together. Making a few decisions ahead of time makes things less complicated along the way. Think of it this way...do you have a special place you always put your car keys or your glasses? I usually put mine on the right hand stereo speaker in our living room. (The few times I forget to put them there, I end up searching the house looking for them!) By making that decision ahead of time and sticking to it, I save time. By committing ahead of time how we will handle certain situations in Children's Church, we waste less time "deciding how to decide."

Now if I rearrange the living room, that speaker may no longer be the best place for my keys. Then I'll have to reconsider what to do. And that's how it is in Children's Church. Conditions or needs may change and a policy may no longer make sense. I promise I will keep an eye out for this, but if you notice something before I do, please let me know!

Thank you for your willingness to be a part of the spiritual lives of the children Spirit has sent to us.

Rev. Mary Armstrong-Smith  
Children's Minister



## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Attendance:**

Please be at the church no later than 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. This allows those who are teaching to put together a “game plan” for the day.

If you have a scheduling conflict, please call one of the other teachers first to see if you can trade dates. Once this is arranged, please notify me so the calendar can be updated.

If, at the last minute, you cannot come to one of your scheduled sessions of Children’s Church, please call the Children’s Minister.

### **Preparation:**

Please review the lesson thoroughly before coming to church. If you have questions, contact the Children’s Minister as soon as possible. If you receive the lesson by email, please print it out and bring it with you.

### **Concerns:**

Please tell the Children’s Minister directly about any suggestions or concerns you have. If she doesn’t know about it, she can’t address it effectively.

### **Security & Safety:**

1. For children over the age of five, at least one adult female should take girls to the restroom, and one adult male should take boys to the restroom. The adult should check to make sure the restroom is safe and that the toilet and sink are in working order, and then wait outside the restroom until the child comes out.
2. Children five years of age or younger (boys and girls) should be assisted as needed in the restroom by an adult female.
3. Please ensure all children wash their hands after visiting the restroom.
4. Never touch a child’s private areas except when necessary, as in the case of changing a diaper.
5. Volunteers should avoid the appearance of impropriety, such as sitting older children on their laps, kissing or embracing others, etc.
6. Volunteers are to release children in their care only to parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized to pick up the child.
7. In the event of an accident, volunteers are to follow Universal Precautions Procedures. The Universal Precautions kit is in the same closet where cleaning supplies are stored.

8. In the event that a child is injured, the incident should be documented in writing before you leave church that day. Please notify the Children's Minister about any accidents as soon as possible. If the accident is serious enough to warrant getting the parent/guardian out of church, please ask one of the ushers to go get the parent/guardian.

### **Discipline**

1. Volunteers are never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline children.
2. Disciplinary problems should be reported to the Children's Minister or to the child's parent or guardian.
3. Please avoid characterizing children's behavior as "good" or "bad." There are other, more effective ways of talking about behaviors. If you need some ideas, please see me.
4. If you are a parent, please remember that treating other people's children "just like your own" isn't necessarily a compliment. Often it's too familiar and causes the child to feel uncomfortable.

### **Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect**

Indiana state law requires anyone with knowledge of or suspicion of child abuse or neglect to report it to Child Protective Services. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, please report your concerns to the Children's Minister right away. If she is not available, contact Rev. Yvonne Brandenburg. If Rev. Yvonne and the Children's Minister believe a report should be made, they will do so. If they don't feel the situation calls for a report to CPS, but you sincerely disagree with that decision, you can still make a report to CPS.

### **Confidentiality**

As a volunteer, you may have access to sensitive information about children and their families, as well as information about other volunteers. Please be discreet in how you handle this information, and do not reveal confidential information unless the situation calls for it.

Please refrain from talking about individual children or their families while they are in the room. Even if a child is across the room, she/he still may be able to overhear your conversation.

### **Miscellaneous**

Please do not give gifts, candy or food to individual children during Children's Church, as this will create hurt feelings. In addition, a child may have a food allergy of which you are not aware.

Never administer any medications of any kind to a child unless you are that child's parent or guardian.

If your phone number, email address or mailing address changes, please notify the Children's Minister as soon as possible.

Be aware that these policies and procedures will change in the coming months as the Children's Church program grows and changes. If you have suggestions for additions or changes, please contact the Children's Minister.