

Main Street
Methodist Church
ABBEVILLE, SC
A Global Methodist Congregation

Practices and Procedures

Revised summer of 2026

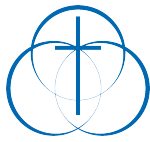
REPORTING PROCEDURES

- a. Accidents- An accident is an unintentional act which occurs and an individual is hurt. For example: A child falls on the playground and must go to the ER; an older adult slips on the floor----report to Trustees, Shari, or Pastor. A form will be completed providing facts of accident.
- b. Incidents- An incident is when an action is observed that does not necessarily require reporting to authorities but does require attention by staff or clergy. For example: A Sunday School teacher “loses it” with a class; an adult “in charge” leaves children unattended; a youth counselor is seen with his hand resting on a youth’s leg. ----report to Shari or Pastor.
- c. Suspected Abuse- Suspected abuse is when there is suspicion (or proof) that a volunteer or staff person has caused harm to a young one; OR sees, has been told of, or suspects a child, youth or vulnerable adult has been abused in some way. For example: A youth confides abuse to a volunteer; a child comes to Sunday School with repeated unexplained bruising and/or injuries, or young person is abused here at church. This is usually reportable to authorities. ----If witnessed in the church, report it to Shari or the Pastor immediately. At that point, authorities will be contacted immediately. ----If the incident involves Shari or the Pastor, go to the chair of the SPRC immediately who will then notify authorities immediately. ----If the incident occurred outside of the church, you should call authorities immediately and involve Shari or the Pastor for support and awareness.
- d. Documentation will be completed for all the situations listed above utilizing the Incident Report Form with supplemental documentation as needed. Discretion should be used for each of the situations listed and only shared with pertinent leadership. No-one other than church leadership (SPRC chair or designee, Pastor) should communicate with media.

CONSIDER YOURSELF A MANDATORY REPORTER OF ABUSE- Everyone has a moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to their attention, regardless of where it takes place.

GENERAL PRACTICES

- The goal of activities and ministries with young people is to nurture young people’s spiritual growth by teaching them biblical truth in age-appropriate ways, helping them develop a lifelong faith in Jesus, and equipping them to become Christ-like disciples, ultimately leading to a transformed life and active participation in the church and world.
- Minors should never be left alone without a screened worker present.
- The three- person rule is always in effect.
- Hi-Fives and Side Hugs are the rule.
- Minors are to remain in the designated gathering space until parent or approved/listed adult arrives.
- The bottom half of the pony (half) doors should remain closed while children are present and during pick-up and drop-off.
- In case of danger, lock the door and crowd into a corner out of view.
- In case of fire, exit as quickly as possible. Gather in the parking lot.
- A member of the safety team is always present in the hallway during worship and should be notified in case of emergency.
- Volunteers should bring their cell phone with them when volunteering to text parents and emergency personnel as needed.
- A choking rescue device and a Fire Blanket are in the cabinet in the Nursery, should they be needed.
- If supplies are needed or anything needs attention, please contact Shari immediately.
- A First Aid Kit is located in the Nursery, Children’s Church room, in the bus, and in the hallway near the bulletin board.
- A defibrillator is located in the hallway near the bulletin board.



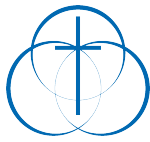
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NURSERY “BEST” PRACTICES

- Nursery is available through age 3.
- Pictures of our children and their families are on the wall to get to know them.
- The goal of the nursery is to create a safe and Christ-centered environment where all babies are loved deeply and allowed to engage in age- appropriate play while their parents/guardians attend church events. If there’s anything that might hinder this kind of environment, please communicate those concerns to Shari immediately.
- Only volunteers, adults picking up babies, and young siblings accompanying those adults should be allowed in the Nursery.
- Fresh linens are always available in the cabinet.
- Please wash/sanitize hands regularly when providing care in the Nursery.
- Dirty diapers should be placed in a grocery sack before being tossed in the trash.
- Please notify the parents/guardians if you change a diaper.
- Please utilize the check-in/check-out form for each baby as they are dropped off and picked up. Any child not on the list should have a form filled out by parents/guardians before leaving them. There is a laminated list of grandbabies of Main Street members that visit periodically. They do not need to complete a form.
- Children should only be picked up by parents and approved adults from the list and never passed off to older siblings without the parent present.
- Only snacks/drinks provided by the parents/guardians should be given to children in the Nursery.
- In order to “help” in the nursery, you must be in middle school or older and should get approval through the Education Chair or the Discipleship Coordinator before “helping”.
- Children should be allowed to be independent as possible, in play and when utilizing the restroom.
- Never be in the bathroom alone with a child with the door closed. Be nearby in the hallway to offer assistance, as needed, when a child who is potty-training is using the restroom. There is a door stop that will help prop the door open but still give the child a bit of privacy.
- Record number in attendance on form on wall.
- Please arrive 15 minutes before worship and stay because many parents bring their kids back after the children’s message.
- Volunteers should do a check of the room to make sure all the toys are in working order and age appropriate, to make sure it’s a safe environment, and there are no small things left behind that can be picked up by little hands and put in mouth.
- If there’s an issue or the child is very unhappy, please text the parent. If you’re unsure of what to do or if you need an additional set of hands, text Shari. If Shari is unavailable, please contact Jenny Jackson, Jordan Glace, or Lori Glace.
- Please clean up before you leave.
- Toy sanitizer is available in the cabinet and should be used as needed. Toys can be left out to dry.



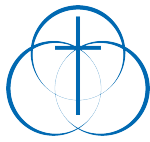
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CHILDREN'S CHURCH "BEST" PRACTICES

- Children's Church is available for 3 year olds through 2nd grade.
- The goal of Children's Church is to provide a child-friendly, safe, caring, loving, and engaging environment so that they can learn stories from the Bible and about how much they are loved by Christ.
- If there's anything that might hinder this kind of environment, please communicate those concerns to Shari immediately.
- If it's a kiddo's first time, the guardian is asked (in the bulletin) to come back with kid to check-in so phone number and any pertinent information can be collected. If they don't, collect this information at the end of the service so we'll have it next time.
- Mark kids who are present on the list. Write in the names of those who aren't on the list. There is a laminated list of grandbabies of Main Street members that visit periodically. They do not need to complete a form.
- Children should be dismissed to their guardians at the door. Children should be dismissed only to parents and individuals listed on the approved guardian list and not to older siblings unless the parent or guardian is present.
- The bottom half of the pony (half) door should remain closed at all times even during pick up.
- Children should be allowed to be independent as possible, in play and when utilizing the restroom.
- Never be in the bathroom alone with a child with the door closed. Be nearby in the hallway to offer assistance, as needed, when a child who is potty-training is using the restroom. There is a door stop that will help prop the door open but still give the child a bit of privacy. When children request to utilize the bathroom, please wait for them by the Children's Church door to ensure a safe return.
- Only water, animal crackers, and pretzels (occasionally goldfish if available) is allowed. Please note allergy alerts. No outside food or drink is allowed unless we plan it ahead of time- like for a special occasion (birthday, holiday, etc) and we notify parents.
- Parent numbers are provided should you need them. If you need another set of hands or need assistance, text Shari. If Shari is unavailable, please contact Jenny Jackson, Jordan Glace, or Lori Glace.
- Be mindful that we likely have children that join us with differing abilities or special needs. For example: speech/language delay, sensory sensitives, anxiety, etc. So, we need to be mindful of their needs. For example- some kids need a toy in their hands to help them stay focused, some children do not like loud noises, some kids need you to repeat what you've said again, etc. Questions about this? Ask Shari!
- Our curriculum is an established plan which rotates through the pertinent stories of the Bible. The curriculum is provided to volunteers each week via email. Volunteers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Bible lesson prior to Sunday. Volunteers are invited to take the provided lessons and utilize their own strengths to make the lesson come alive. Aids are provided to help- such as game ideas, options for streaming worship songs, or video Bible lessons.
- Volunteers are invited to make special crafts. Materials are available on the 3rd floor in the storage room located behind the steps in the corner (right side after you enter).
- Please wipe the tables and clean up the toys before leaving.
- Materials are available on the bookshelf and in the cabinet.
- If anything in the room needs attention, please contact Shari immediately.
- In order to "help" in Children's Church, you must be in middle school or older and should get approval through the Education Chair or the Discipleship Coordinator before "helping".



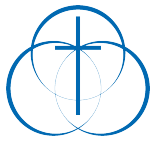
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CHILDREN'S MINISTRY "BEST" PRACTICES

- Crew is 2nd through 5th grade or the equivalent.
- Children's Ministry events are any event that is geared toward children.
- Adult leadership should think through each event and activity and plan ahead for safety and child well-being.
- When events or activities are away from the church, suitable ratios of child per adult should be determined and followed.
- Medical Release forms should be on file. Bus forms are required if transporting away from the church.
- Children should only be released to approved adults.
- All applicable expectations set forth in the Nursery and Children's Church Procedures should be followed.
- Bullying, discrimination, or behavior inconsistent with Christian love and respect will not be tolerated. If concerns arise, the adults supervising will utilize Biblical standards to address the concerns. If needed, adults supervising will contact parents.
- Adult's personal behavior must foster trust at all times. Adults should be mindful of their signed covenant and expectations regarding pictures and media.
- Verbal interaction with students should be positive and uplifting. All verbal interaction should be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of our mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of students.



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YOUTH MINISTRY “BEST” PRACTICES

- Youth is considered to be any middle or high school student or equivalent.
- Medical Release forms should be on file. Bus forms are required if transporting away from the church.
- Transportation:
 - When feasible, drivers transporting youth and children should be accompanied by at least one other adult, even if there is only one child or youth accompanying the driver.
 - When there is reason to believe it would not be safe for a youth to ride to and from the church for church activities in a vehicle driven by another youth, the adults responsible should intervene and take reasonable steps to make alternative arrangements for all concerned.
 - Youth who drive their own vehicles should be reminded regularly of the importance of vehicle safety.
 - If youth request to drive their vehicle to a youth activity away from church premises, supervising adults must have written acknowledgement from their parents.
- Youth are expected to abide by the youth covenant to maintain a safe, secure, and nurturing environment. Bullying, discrimination, or behavior inconsistent with Christian love and respect will not be tolerated. If concerns arise, the adults supervising will utilize Biblical standards to address the concerns. If needed, adults supervising will contact parents. If the concern or offense jeopardizes the safety of any youth (offender or others), parents will be asked to pick up their child. Future participation could be paused or suspended if it's a truly severe or continuous offense that jeopardizes other's safety.
- The two adult rule is always in effect. If an adult steps out of the room, the three person rule is the minimum expectation and should only be utilized briefly. If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single student, move to a space occupied by others or to a location easily observed by others.
- If you need to talk with a student alone, do it in a highly visible area.
- Appropriate touch is needed and encouraged, but it is vital that adult leaders do not blur or cross the lines. Physical contact in any form should be above reproach, for the benefit of the student, and never based upon the adult's emotional needs. Pat a hand, shoulder or back in an encouraging manner. Side hugs: in public view and kept brief. Look for opportunities to give plenty of “high fives” and “fist bumps”.
- Adult's personal behavior must foster trust at all times.
- Verbal interaction with students should be positive and uplifting. All verbal interaction should be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of our mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of students.
- Adult leaders should recognize that students may seek guidance regarding difficult or sensitive issues such as family struggles, mental health, grief, self-esteem, relationships, bullying, abuse, substance use, sexuality, or other personal concerns. Because these topics can be serious and emotionally complex, leaders should proceed with great care, compassion, sensitivity, and in keeping with the Biblical teachings and values of the church. Leaders should avoid making promises of confidentiality and should seek guidance from another youth leader, pastor, or staff member for accountability and support when appropriate. If a leader has reason to believe a student's safety or well-being is at risk, or that the student or another person may be in danger, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) must be contacted promptly, along with the appropriate church leadership, in accordance with church policies and any applicable reporting requirements. However, if abuse by a parent or guardian is suspected, leaders should follow church reporting procedures and applicable law before notifying the family.
- Photos or videos of students should only be used in accordance with parental permission and church policy. Leaders should avoid posting identifying information about students without appropriate consent.
- Adult leaders should avoid favoritism or relationships with individual students that could create the appearance of impropriety or undermine healthy ministry boundaries.