

A Guide to Our Nursery



Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church

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The Ministry of Our Nursery

We believe the nursery is vital to the Christian Education program at Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church. The church nursery is for many children their first experience of church and, by extension, of God. Because we are working hard to nurture and grow our children's faith, it is vital that we maintain a quality nursery program for our infants and toddlers. We encourage the nursery staff to work hard at creating and maintaining an environment for our youngest children that is nurturing, caring and safe.

OUR TIME TOGETHER

Our nursery shares space on the third floor of our Fellowship Building with the Sunday School program. Caregivers arrive at 9:30 each Sunday to provide infant and toddler care during the education and worship hours. Our nursery is also available for special services during Advent and Lent and for other events. Upon request we will make every effort to have childcare available for events in addition to our regular schedule where childcare has not been advertised. To request childcare for a particular event or service, please contact our Christian Educator, Rachel Cunningham, at 410-523-1542 Extension 14 or at rachel@browndowntown.org.

A typical Sunday morning nursery routine includes circle time, age appropriate organized group activities, free play, healthy snacks and rest time if needed and is broken into two time segments.

Sunday School Integration 9:30am-10:45am

Because community is all about building relationships, we are integrating our Nursery into our Sunday School program for children. The education hour for all (children, youth, and adults) begins at 9:45am. Caregivers are present at 9:30 to welcome children as they arrive. We begin the morning together as one group - caregivers, teachers, infants, toddlers, and children with Circle Time. Circle Time is led by our Christian Educator and incorporates elements of worship like singing and praying lending itself to integration with our youngest children. Toddlers will learn songs and prayers alongside older children, while infants are cared for in the circle by both caregiver and teacher. When it is time for the lesson of the day children in the nursery will move to a separate room with the Nursery Caregivers where they will hear a Bible Story followed by free play or a simple project depending on their age.

Worship Care 10:45am-12:30pm

During worship, children in the nursery may play or rest as needed. Many children attend worship through the Children's Moment and then return to the nursery. Once the children have arrived from worship, around 11:15am, a small snack is given to those who are hungry. Worship Care is intentionally less structured allowing caregivers to follow the child's lead in play.

THE ROLES WE PLAY

Good lines of communication are important for all parties involved, thus our staff actively works to create an atmosphere that fosters open sharing of thoughts and ideas between staff and families. We seek to approach problems or concerns as opportunities for growth rather than challenges to be overcome.

Christian Educator:

Our Christian Educator supervises and supports our nursery, facilitating the integration of elements of the Sunday School program with the Nursery Program. Our Christian Educator is in regular direct communication with our Caregivers regarding the program.

Our Caregivers:

Our caregivers strive to create a warm and nurturing environment for children and parents. Families are greeted as they arrive and children are welcomed into play. Caregivers actively participate with children as they play, nurturing their interests and guiding them away from potential conflicts. Caregivers provide loving care and supervision while maintaining good safety standards at all times.

Parents/Family:

Parental and family involvement in the nursery is important to the adjustment of the child especially if separation anxiety is present. Below are a few suggestions for ways to be involved with our nursery.

1. Talk openly with our caregivers about any concerns you may have. Share with them information about your child that will help with transitions.
2. Complete our online **Nursery Connections** questionnaire. A handy QR code is located at the back of this guide.
3. Talk about the nursery and our caregivers at home so that their names become familiar and connected with coming to church.
4. Introduce infants to the nursery before you “need” the nursery. We love having children in worship but worshipping with a toddler can be

a challenge. Toddlers also frequently experience separation anxiety, which can make utilizing the nursery an even greater challenge. Try introducing your child to the nursery at an earlier age for short periods of time so that they become familiar with our caregivers and the surroundings. The education hour is a great opportunity for this. Some parents also find it helpful to remain in the nursery with their child for a short amount of time, gradually decreasing the amount of time they stay over several weeks.

5. Attend a fellowship gathering with other nursery parents and our caregivers.
6. Communicate praise and/or concern to our Christian Educator.

Families can also help us out by labeling all of their children's belongings. We would also like to ask that families pick up children at a reasonable time following worship or an event. And finally, for the health of everyone we ask that families keep sick children at home.

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

Health and Safety

The health and safety of your child is of utmost importance to us, thus caregivers follow the policies and procedures of the Brown Memorial Safe Church Covenant, which can be found by logging into our online community or, by following the QR code at the back of this guide. In addition, each family should complete the enclosed emergency contact card with the following information to be left on file in the nursery:

- A list of current phone numbers where parents can be reached.
- Any medical condition or emergency medical instruction that might be pertinent.

We ask that families inform our caregivers of any updates or changes to the information found on the emergency contact card.

Ages

The nursery is designed for infants and toddlers, but we recognize that a child's ability to remain in worship varies and so we make the nursery accessible to children under the age of 6.

Arrival and Dismissal

We ask that parents sign their children in leaving a cell phone number and the approximate seating location so that we may reach you in the event of a problem. We also ask that parents keep the caregivers informed as to who will be picking up children from their care, i.e. parents only, grandparents, older siblings, etc.

Snack

On typical Sunday mornings a snack will be provided in the nursery for older children, often animal crackers, pretzels or goldfish. If your child/ren have dietary restrictions please make our caregivers aware of their needs. Snacks for infants and beginning eaters should be brought with the child in a labeled container.

Clothing/Supplies

Children who are busy at play often get dirty; therefore, we suggest dressing your child/ren in washable, comfortable play clothing that can be easily managed at diaper or bathroom time. Please also pack a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing in your child's bag in case of accidents.

Toys

Our nursery has a variety of age appropriate toys for infants and toddlers. If your child has a favorite toy they are welcome to bring it along. Having special "Church" toys that are only played with at church can be a way of making the nursery inviting and special. This can be carried over into worship when they are older.

Leaving The Nursery

From time to time caregivers may wish to take advantage of nice weather and take the children out to play in the courtyard. The decision to go outside will be based upon the age of children in attendance that day. If you do not wish for your child to go outside please let a caregiver know.

Screen Time

Television and movies are not a part of our time with the children.

Unexpected Closures

If Brown Memorial should cancel worship or another event for any reason an announcement will be made via the online community and the website. In the unlikely event that all of our caregivers become ill and we are unable to open the nursery a similar announcement would be made.



NURSERY CONNECTIONS
QUESTIONNAIRE



SAFE CHURCH COVENANT

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