

2016 FAITHSTATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Protection Policy & Parental Covenant

Children are a precious gift from God, our future for the world. At Gary Church, our Children's Ministry team exists in order to help support families in the spiritual growth and formation of their children. We welcome the opportunity to guide and support you and your family in a caring and loving Christian environment. As you know, our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection for our future – and more specifically, to our children. God calls us to create communities of faith where children, youth and adults grow safe and strong. Our purpose for establishing this Protection Policy and Parental Covenant is to demonstrate our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children. Our congregation recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy and procedures in place, and enter into a covenant with parents/guardians, their children and the teachers, leaders and caregivers in whose care children are placed, in order to prevent, as much as it is possible, the opportunity for the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of children. As parents, we ask that you familiarize yourself with these policies and procedures, uphold your responsibility, and know that in enrolling your children in the programs of Gary Church, together we are entering into a covenant to protect all of God's children to the best of our ability.

At Gary Church, we strive to provide a safe, clean and nurturing environment where children and youth can...

Grow in faith, knowledge and understanding of Christ as Lord and Savior

Serve our community and the world by sharing time, gifts, and talents

Nurture one another through worship, fellowship, love

Demonstrate our discipleship to Christ

Proclaim God's grace and Good News

Sunday Morning FaithStation Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

Preschool—5th grade

- Each Sunday morning, please sign-in your FaithStation child on the grade appropriate attendance sheet at the Children's Welcome Desk in the lower level lobby.
 - Write your child's name on a color-coded FaithStation nametag.
 - Each FaithStation class will be assigned a color for the year (infants/toddlers WHITE; preschool 3's & 4's RED; preK - K's ORANGE; 1st & 2nd GREEN; 3rd BLUE; 4th - 5th PURPLE)
 - ALL CHILDREN WITH FOOD ALLERGIES ARE ASKED TO PLACE A YELLOW DOT STICKER ON THEIR NAME TAG.
 - A Children's Ministry Host will be at the table to offer assistance.
- At 10:50am, the end of the Sunday School hour, please sign your child out on the attendance sheet which can be found in their classroom on the lower level.

- **Note:** 4th & 5th grade students will not need to be signed out at 10:50 a.m. They will be released at 10:50 a.m. to find their families. If you would prefer to make other arrangements for your 4th or 5th grade child, please contact Carey Bebar.
- Parents who will pick up their children after the 9:00 a.m. service are asked to do so **by 10:10am**. After that time, the doors to Gamon will be closed and parents should go to the Children's Welcome Desk to sign out their children. We ask this to minimize disruption to the Sunday School classes.
- Children that are not picked-up by 11:00 a.m. will be escorted to the nursery.

If you have any questions about our Sunday Morning FaithStation drop-off and/or pick-up procedures, please contact Carey Bebar, Director of Children's Ministries through the church office or email cbebar@garychurch.org.

FaithStation Sunday School Attendance Incentives

- Children will receive a sticker to place on the attendance board in their Sunday School classroom during the 10:00 hour. Each time a child has placed 5 stickers on the attendance board, they will be allowed to visit the treasure chest for a small prize.
- Each month certificates of perfect attendance plus a Popcorn Shop token will be presented to those children who attended Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday of the previous calendar month.

Parent Responsibility

All FaithStation participants are asked annually to complete a registration form for their child/ren and to read and support these guidelines as well as the behavior guidelines. FaithStation parents are asked to ensure that the registration information is kept up-to-date. For the safety and security of all children, parents/guardians are also required to ensure their children get to and are picked up from their respective program according to the Drop-off/ Pick-up Procedures. We believe parents are the primary guide for their children's spiritual development and are able to partner with the church through various teaching, leading and care giving ministries. If you would like to be a part of this experience please contact the church office (668-3100 or office@garychurch.org) for more details.

Classroom Management & Discipline

The FaithStation program aims to encourage, stimulate and foster Christian growth of all participants. Because of this, children will be expected to respectfully participate in group activities and classroom lessons at an age appropriate level. The purpose of discipline is not punishment for wrongdoing, but assistance in doing what is right. All interaction regarding discipline needs to carefully respect a child's dignity and fragile life. Physical punishment or

intimidation will not be used. Situations requiring discipline (examples, not exclusive to this list):

- direct disobedience to a request from the teacher
- aggressive or belligerent behavior
- damage to church or an individual's property
- situation dangerous to the safety of others
- disrespect shown to people/property

If the above behavior becomes persistent, the child will be asked in a positive way to “join with the class” and participate in a specific activity and to stop (name the specific behavior) now. Should the unacceptable behavior continue, the child will be asked to take time away from the class until the behavior is acceptable. This could include a short walk down a hallway, leaving to get a drink of water, sitting in a chair away from the classroom activity for a “breather”, or something else that will provide a break and time to calm the unacceptable behavior. In these situations, the child will be accompanied by the teacher/leader or church staff. If there is still no improvement, a FaithStation team member, will inform the parent/ caregiver of the situation and she will be asked to take her child/ren into her custody.

Parents should be familiar with classroom management and discipline policy as stated in this covenant. The respect of personal space and appropriate level of physical contact is important to create a safe place for those in our care. Permission must be obtained from a child before hugging them or holding their hand. Any form of discipline which honors and respects a young person's inherent worth and leaves their dignity intact is acceptable and encouraged. Our program has zero tolerance for any form of corporal punishment, threatening or violent behavior, or verbal abuse.

Illness

Upon recommendations of the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics, a child should not be taken from home when any of the following exists:

- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Common cold
- Sore throat
- Croup
- An unexplained rash
- Any skin infection
- Pink eye or other eye infection
- A runny nose with green/ yellow discharge
- Any known contagious childhood diseases

If the teacher or leader suspects that a child is ill, she/he should talk to mom away from the child to explain that ill children cannot be accepted in the classroom for the protection of other

children and teachers. A child will not be admitted to the classroom if one or more of the following exists:

- Fever (oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater)
- Signs or symptoms of any illness listed above
- Symptoms which would prevent the child from participating comfortably in activities
- A diagnosed communicable disease (until a medical evaluation determines the child is no longer communicable and can resume contact with other children)

If a child becomes sick while in the classroom, the leaders will notify the mother, and give the child appropriate attention and supervision until she arrives. If the child is vomiting or has diarrhea, the leaders will keep them away from other children with extra attention given to hygiene and sanitation until the mother arrives to pick up the child.

Injury, Allergy and Accident Prevention and Response

- A well-stocked first aid kit is kept in the Nursery, the Resource Room and the Children's Hospitality Desk. The contents are replenished as needed. The first aid kits are readily accessible during class time. Leaders have access to emergency phone numbers as well as parents' contact information. In an effort to ensure our smallest children are cared for appropriately, it is requested that only caregivers and volunteers be allowed in the nursery. Toddlers and young preschoolers are required to not bring toys to the nurseries.
- Toys in the nurseries are regularly reviewed, sorted and cleaned. Those which are broken or unsafe are discarded.
- Due to an increase in peanut allergies, all food items are requested to be "peanut free."
- Parents who have children with severe allergies are asked to create an Allergy Action Plan and review the plan with the FaithStation leaders. PLEASE NOTE, IN THE EVENT OF A SEVER ALLERGIC REACTION, 911 WILL BE CALLED IMMEDIATELY.