**Saint Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church**

**Nursery Guidelines**

**I. OUR PURPOSE**

It is our privilege at Saint Francis on the Hill (SFOTH) to provide quality nursery care. Our purpose is to provide a safe and loving environment where parents can confidently leave their children during the Sunday worship service.

We recognize the importance of the early years when first impressions of faith, Christ, and the church are being formed; and we want to make the nursery a positive experience for parents and children.

SFOTH therefore, will be doing everything within their means to provide for children's physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual needs, so that they and their families will find coming to church a pleasant experience.

In order to provide better care for your child, we have compiled some guidelines which are outlined in this document. We pray these guidelines are not too demanding, but instead, are reflective of high standards for care. Our desire is to give quality care for any child associated with our nursery.

To insure the success of the nursery, the nursery team is committed to the following:

* Strict adherence to health rules, including cleanliness and space requirements.
* An environment where children are happy and comfortable.

The nursery policies have been set for the following reasons:

* To ensure the safety and well-being of the children and the nursery workers.
* To aid in the consistency of expectations for children, parents, and workers.
* To prevent any unfortunate misunderstandings or accidents.

**II. NURSERY OVERVIEW**

Our nursery room located at the bottom of the stairs in Myrick Hall and is available for infants and children age 3 months through 3 years of age. The nursery is also available for use as a nursing room should it be needed.

The nursery is open 10-15 minutes prior to the start of Sunday service and remains so until 10-15 minutes following the end of the worship service. Children are only to be in the nursery during the allotted time for the worship service.

**III. FOR PARENTS**

**What to bring with you:**

* A diaper bag labeled with your child's name - Your child’s diaper bag ensures that your child receives only his/her bottle/food and wears only his/her own diaper. This is very important as many children have allergies and sensitivities, even to specific brands of diapers.
* Two to four disposable diapers.
* Plastic bottles or sippy cup, filled with your choice of beverage and preferably labeled with your child's name.
* A pacifier if your child is accustomed to one (please include a holder to attach the pacifier to the child’s clothing).
* A change of clothing if child is not FULLY potty-trained, along with a plastic bag for soiled clothes.
* Unless instructed otherwise in the Special Instructions section of the Registration Form, Infants and toddlers are checked regularly and diapers changed, if needed. If parent(s) desire to change diapers, they will be messaged or notified to return to the Nursery Room for a diaper change. Nursery attendants cannot leave the Nursery to give this notification.
* Please do not allow children to bring toys from home into the nursery. It can be placed in their bag, but playing with it while in nursery causes conflict between your child and the other children. The toy also may get broken, which would upset your child. Should your child bring a toy into the nursery, it will be placed in his/her bag until the service is over.

**Check in and dismissal:**

* We ask that parents remain outside the nursery door when checking children in and out to assist the attendant in maintaining positive control over those children already in the nursery.
* Please give your child and diaper bag to the worker and register him/her on the check-in sheet along with any special instructions (or feeding times if bottle-fed). Please report any known allergies on the check-in sheet.
* Parents are welcome to pick up their child for the Eucharist of after the service is completed (please ensure you sign your child out on the check-in sheet).
* Once the child is released to you in any situation (regular dismissal, emergency situation, or otherwise), the child becomes your responsibility and not that of the nursery attendant.

**You may be asked to come to the nursery during service for a variety of reasons:**

* If a child has been inconsolable for 15 minutes and the attendant has made every effort to engage and console the child.
* If your child is not responding to control measures (verbal correction or time out) in such a way as to be a continuous disruption to the nursery environment.
* If we do not have the necessary items to care for your child (diaper, change of clothes, bottle, etc.)
* If a child shows any of the illness symptoms listed under the “Health” section of this document.

**Feeding:**

* Nursing moms will be contacted via phone text message if their baby needs to nurse. Bottle-fed babies’ parent(s) can be messaged, as well, or Special Instructions given to staff regarding bottle-feeding. All formula should be premixed in bottles, ready for use. Nursery attendants will not prepare bottles.
* We ask that children coming into nursery do not bring their own snacks, as it can create conflict with the other children. Exceptions would be for allergies or medical reasons.
* the following snacks (in addition to others) may be served: Cheerios, goldfish crackers, saltine crackers, animal crackers, graham crackers
* If the bottle or sippy cup you provide is empty and the child is still thirsty, we will fill it up with water
* There will be no sharing of bottles or cups, so if no cup is provided for your child, we can offer a regular disposable cup but will not have bottles or sippy cups on hand.
* If an infant needs to be fed cereal or baby food, it is the responsibility of the parent to return to the nursery and feed their child
* Please assist us in seeing that your child is fed any regular meals necessary before checking them in (Bottle fed babies will be the only exception)
* Food allergy concerns should ALWAYS be listed on the check-in sheet.

**Health:**

If your child is not feeling well, please keep him/her with you. We cannot allow children in the nursery if they are sick. We feel that:

* A child who is sick is best comforted by mom or dad.
* Well children should not be exposed to sick children.
* The teacher cannot take care of other children and a sick child at the same time.
* Nursery workers will not be allowed to dispense medication to your children under any circumstances. If medication needs to be dispensed during the time your child is in the nursery, you will need to come in from the service. This includes any over-the-counter medicines and ointments, as well as prescribed medications. The only exception would be a typical diaper rash cream for infants, in which application would be left to the nursery workers’ discretion.

Please do not bring a child to the nursery that has the following symptoms:

* A runny nose with discolored mucus.
* An above normal temperature (over 98.6) anytime within the last 24hours.
* An irritating cough that has persisted for more than 48 hours.
* Drainage in the eyes, conjunctivitis, or pink eye.
* Irritability and fever due to immunization in the last 24 hours.
* Undiagnosed rashes or eruptions of unknown origin.
* Diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours.
* Irritability and pulling at ears.
* Parasites such as lice, mites, or ringworms.