

OTTAWA PRESBYTERIAN SAFE PERSON POLICY

Nov. 12, 2023

All people are welcome at Ottawa Presbyterian Church. We strive to provide a safe and inviting space for all adults and children.

It is our privilege at Ottawa Presbyterian Church to provide quality **nursery** care from birth to kindergarten during worship whenever possible. Our purpose is to provide a place where parents can confidently leave their children during worship service. Sunday School is also intended to be a nurturing, caring environment where parents can confidently entrust their children to the adult supervision of others within the church.

With the size of our congregation, full protection under the intent of most Child protection policies are impossible to implement to the fullest degree. We recognize that with limited numbers, the ability to have multiple adults involved in minor age supervision and to provide all of the safeguards recommended by child safety advocates is not practical. To this end, we also recognize that this is a small physical space, and during Sunday mornings there is a bustle of activity along with many adults on site that can provide mutual protection of our youth. We also are equipped by classrooms which all have glass door panels, and this can provide visibility of rooms utilized for SS instruction and child care, further assuring that your child is safe and in good hands.

Physical Needs

With the ongoing concern of child safety and protection, Session has opted to not provide bathroom or diaper changing services for the protection of your child and to allow quality care of all children left in the Nursery. To this end, we have implemented the following policy with regards to infant and toddler care:

- All parents/guardians are welcome to use the nursery during worship if they choose.
- Children should only be left in the nursery when there is a nursery worker/volunteer present.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to leave their cell phone numbers to be contacted to come to the nursery if needed. Parents/guardians need to initial the check-in/check-out sheet in the nursery.. Children should be picked up by the parent/guardian who checked them in. Children will not be allowed to leave the nursery to look for parents.
- If there is no scheduled nursery worker or volunteer the nursery will not be available.
- Parents will be texted by the nursery care provider if bathroom service is required by their child. This might include the need to take your child to the bathroom, change a diaper, or otherwise provide care for them outside of the nursery. The nursery care provider will not be allowed to leave the room at any time during nursery hours.
- There are glass windows in classrooms/nursery and parents/guardians are welcome to view activities if desired.
- The back door of the church will be kept locked during the church service for the safety of the educational wing area.
- Any incidents or concerns regarding safety or conduct should be reported to the minister. If there is not a stated or called minister, incidents shall be reported to the clerk of session.
- Special events with children may require special authorization from the parents for additional activities outside of the nursery.

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