

St. Matthew MBC Children's Ministry Handbook



1 Timothy 4:12

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

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MISSION AND VISION

Mission Statement for St. Matthew Missionary Baptist Church Children's Church

Kids In Action for Christ Children's Ministry, KIA for Christ, exists to connect children to God by encouraging a heart-transforming personal faith in Jesus Christ through biblical teaching and relational discipleship.

Our Bible Verse

“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12

Role of our Church

Although development of a child's faith begins with the family, it also relies on the support of our church family. KIA for Christ and the family can partner to introduce children to biblical truths as well as the ways and teachings of Jesus. We are committed to providing a safe and fun place where kids can ask questions and share ideas with their peers. Age-appropriate bible stories through our chosen curriculum teach the Word of God and the integrated lessons allow kids to apply the truths to their own lives. Additionally, we want to support parents through providing some tools that can help them be the spiritual leaders in their own homes and be a source of encouragement and support along the journey.

Role of Parents

With roughly **936 weeks** from when their child is born until they graduate from high school, parents are the number one influence in their child's life. On average, a child could spend up to **192 hours a year** in church related activities. Just on math alone parents have much more potential to impact the life of their child more than any church related program. The family is God's plan to pass along the faith to the younger generations as we are told in **Deuteronomy 6:7 (“You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”)**. We must encourage parents to learn to see every phase their child goes through as an opportunity to lead them in the ways of Jesus. We will support parents in our congregation because we want them to be successful!

CLASSROOMS AND CURRICULUM

The selected curriculum will teach our children that God made them with purpose, that God loves them unconditionally; and Jesus wants to be their friend forever. The selected curriculum will help our children make wise choices using God's Word as their guide, to trust God no matter what, and to treat others with kindness allowing God's light to shine in their lives drawing others to Jesus by the way they live.

We will have three (3) classes as described below.

Primary, ages 2-5

Elementary, ages 6-9

Middle, ages 10-12

Classes may be combined at the discretion of the teachers/volunteers based on attendance.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Sundays at KIA for Christ Children's Church

Children's Church will be held in the **St. Matthew's MBC Christian Education Center** on the **1st, 2nd, and 4th Sundays of each month**. Schedule changes and closures will be announced via call, text or email using the information on file.

Check-in will open at 9:50a. During Children's Church, age-appropriate lessons, snacks, crafts, and activities will help them learn about God and His Word.

Tentative Order of Service starting at 10:15a:

1. 10:15 - 10:30 Collective Praise and Worship, Show & Tell (Testimonial Time)
2. 10:30 - Call to Worship
3. 10:35 - Opening Prayer
4. 10:40 - Opening Hymn
5. 10:45 - Responsive Reading
6. 10:50 - Offering exhortation and Offering collection
7. 11:00 - Song
8. 11:05 - 11:25 - Collective Teaching time
9. 10:30 - 12:15 - Classroom time (go deeper into the lesson, art/craft time)
10. 12:20 - 12:30 - Collective Prayer and Benediction
11. 12:30 - Snack and Free play until pick-up

All children should be signed out/picked up within 30 minutes after the end of service.

On the 3rd and 5th Sundays, children will participate in the main sanctuary worship service.

What to Bring to Children's Church

Primary - Bring an offering. **Elementary and Middle** - Bring a bible and an offering.

Members and Visitors

- Members and Visiting families will be asked to fill out a Child Information Contact Form. A contact number and email address will be requested for each child at the time of check-in.
- This allows us to follow up with families and thank them for joining us for the day.

KIA for Christ Children's Ministry Special Events

Special events will be scheduled throughout the year.

SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Purpose Statement (Safety)

St. Matthew MBC, the Christian Education Ministry, and the KIA for Christ Children's Ministry seek to provide a safe, secure, and fun environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. The safety of our children and the assurance of safety for the parents/guardians are of utmost importance to us. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children of St. Matthew MBC from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our volunteers. These policies and procedures are put in place to ensure the safety of the child, to give confidence to the parent/guardian, and to give our volunteers at St. Matthew MBC a guide on our policies in ministering to children.

Selection of Teachers and Volunteers

Church attendance consideration

No person will be considered for any volunteer position involving contact with minors until they have been ***consistently** attending St. Matthew MBC for a minimum of 6-12 months. This time of interaction between leadership and potential volunteers allows for better evaluation and suitability of the potential volunteer for working with children. (*consistently as determined by church leadership)

Teenage Volunteers

- Must be at least age 16.
- Age exceptions may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Christian Education Director and Children's Church Director.
- Must be screened as specified above.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

Children's Church Staff Approval (Teachers and Volunteers)

All Children's Church teachers must be approved by the Christian Education Director. Once approved, they will be placed in the appropriate classroom based on classroom age-based interest. If teaching, a ***period** of shadow teaching may be completed before becoming the teacher for the class. (*period to be determined by the Christian Education Director)

Children's Church Staff requirements

Prior to serving all teachers and volunteers must:

- Consistently attend Bible Study and/or Sunday School.
- Read through St. Matthew MBC Children's Church handbook.
- Complete a Volunteer Information Contact Form.
- Arrive on time for scheduled volunteer day.
- Wear provided staff t-shirt while serving in Children's Church.
- Use the provided material to ensure all children are learning about the gospel on their educational level.

Check In

The designated Children's Church volunteer(s) will greet and welcome all children upon arrival. A sign in log will be used each Sunday to capture the child's name, the name of their parent/guardian, and their contact phone number.

- Parents/guardians should remain in the check-in area and exit the building once their child's check-in has been completed.
- A parent/guardian may be allowed to walk their child to their classroom under special circumstances. (anxiety, first time visitor, never being away from parents, etc.) The parent should not interact with other children, their time in the classroom should be as brief as possible, and they will be monitored during their time in the classroom.
- Parent/Guardian should remain on the church campus while their child is in Children's Church.

Check Out

- During pick up time, children will be called up to the check-out area when their parent/guardian arrives.
- If a teacher has any questions or hesitations, they will keep the child in their care and immediately contact the security team member in the building until resolved.

Secured Areas

All classrooms are located in secure areas. Volunteers and a security team member are in place each Sunday of Children's Church to make sure children are in a safe environment.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Primary Procedures

Teachers will...

- use positive reinforcement at all times to help children to be kind and safe.
- be patient and calm when dealing with behavior issues.
- always be aware of the number of children in your care.

Elementary Procedures

Teachers will...

- use positive reinforcement at all times to help children to be kind and safe.
- be patient and calm when dealing with behavior issues.
- always be aware of the number of children in your care.

Discipline Policy

- No corporal punishment will be administered by teachers/volunteers.
- No spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. The child's parent/guardian will be contacted if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.
- The following is the procedure for dealing with a disciplinary issue:
 1. The teacher talks with the student about inappropriate behavior.
 2. Students are reminded and warned about the consequences of 3rd behavioral infraction.
 3. At the 3rd warning of the inappropriate behavior, the child will be removed from the activity until their parent/guardian is contacted to sign them out of Children's Church.

Restroom Policy

- When assisting a child in the restroom, the door must be left open.
- If assistance is needed, the child will be properly cleaned.
- Any soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag.
- Clean clothes or spare clothes provided by the church will be used if needed.
- The teacher will inform parents of any restroom accidents.
- Elementary students may be dismissed one child at a time to the restroom and the teachers will be mindful of their return.

First Aid Procedure

- If a child is hurt or requires basic first aid, an Incident Report form will be completed as soon as possible. A copy of the report will be given to the parents/guardian upon pick up. The Christian Education Director and Children's Ministry Director will be informed of all injuries.
- If the child requires more than minor first aid, immediately contact the security team member present in the building. The child's parent/guardian and Children's Ministry Director should be notified by the security team member. If warranted by the circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
- All incidents will be recorded on the Incident Report Log before the end of the Children's Church service.
- All completed Incident Report Forms and Incident Report Logs will be securely stored in a labeled binder.

Sick Child Policy

To ensure the health of all children, teachers/volunteers should not accept any child showing any of the following symptoms.

- COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, or awaiting test results
- Fever (101 degrees or higher)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Pink eye
- Lice
- Green runny nose
- Mouth sores
- Chicken pox

If a teacher/volunteer feels as though the child is not well enough to attend Children's Church, the child's parent/guardian will be contacted as soon as possible, and the child will be signed out to leave with their parent/guardian.

Medication Policy

- No medication, prescription or over the counter, may be administered to a child by a Children's Church teacher/volunteer.
- Medications will have to be administered by the child's parent/guardian.
- Exceptions to the medication policy may be granted to children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or an allergic reaction). Parents of such children should address their situation with the Children's Ministry Director to develop a plan of action.

Food Allergies

Due to severe peanut allergies that may be present in children under our care, we will not be serving any peanut based snacks at any of our sponsored activities. Parents should document allergies on the Child Information Contact Form. The child's parent/guardian must be contacted immediately if evidence of a food allergy is presenting.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

Two Adult Rule

Children will never be left unattended or unsupervised. At least one (1) church approved childcare volunteer will be present at all times during Children's Church or sponsored activities. Teenage volunteers must be at least 16 years old and screened as specified above in order to serve. Teenage volunteers are required to be under supervision of an approved adult and will never be left alone with children. Inside classroom doors should never be locked while people are inside the room.

Physical Interactions

Using appropriate judgment, the following are **approved** ways to touch children

- An arm around the shoulder
- Walking hand-in-hand
- Short hugs
- Handshakes, high fives, fist bumps

The following should **never** take place. All physical contact should be above reproach.

- Never touch or interact with children in anger or disgust.
- Never touch a child in any manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.
- Never touch a child between their belly button and their knees.
- Never touch a child's private parts (with the exception of necessary bathroom procedures).
- Never force any kind of physical contact or touch if a child is reluctant.
- Never roughhouse/wrestle/or tickle a child on the floor.
- Never swing a child by the arms.
- Never discipline by laying a hand on a child, use harsh or loud words.

Verbal Interactions

- Verbal interactions with children should always be positive and uplifting.
- Teachers and volunteers should always strive to be encouraging, constructive and mindful of their mission to share the gospel with children and their families.
- We should always be careful to speak words of encouragement, kindness and love, even in difficult situations.

Visibility and Security

- All Children's Church volunteers should wear a name tag for identification.
- All interactions with children should take place in an open area in the sight of other approved volunteers.

Camera, Photography and Media Policy

This policy is in place to ensure the safety and protection of all minors in our care during Children's Church.

- Cameras are throughout the Christian Education Center to monitor who is present in the building at all times. Entrance into the building is consent to be recorded.
- Only the Christian Education and Children's Church Staff are approved to take or publish videos or pictures from the Children's Church environment with the permission of the child's guardian.

Training

The Christian Education Ministry and the Children's Church Ministry will schedule and/or lead training sessions throughout the year for teachers and volunteers. This includes going over the handbook, curriculum training, and child protection trainings.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Intrusion/Active Shooter

- If a teacher sees any individual that gives cause for suspicion or concern, they will immediately notify the security team member in the building of the issue and secure the classroom door.
- If the security team confirms that there is an intruder in the building, teachers will
 1. If the intruder/active shooter is not in the children's area, gather the children and exit the building safely.
 2. If the intruder/active shooter is in the children's room, lock and or barricade the classroom door.
 3. Turn off the lights and move the group where they cannot be seen through the classroom door window.

Missing Child

The teacher will immediately notify the security team member in the building of the missing child including the following information. They will not leave children unattended to search for the child.

- Child's name and age
- Location last seen
- Clothes the child was wearing the last time they were seen

Tornado

Teachers will keep children in their care and proceed to the basement classroom with no windows, to shelter in place. They will call the security team of their location once they are safely in the basement.

Fire

Teachers will keep the children in their care and exit as soon as possible as far away from the building as possible. They will group together and call their location to the security team.

Forms

Incident Report Form

Incident / Injury Log

Child Information Contact Form

Children Church Sign-in Sheet

Volunteer Information Contact Form

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

Facebook: **Stmatthewmbc Church**

Church website: www.stmatthewmbc.org

Bible App: **YouVersion Bible App**

Content: **Bible Project**

Child Protection Policy

CONTACT INFORMATION

Christian Education Director - Gwen Faulkner - email: gfaulkner@centurylink.net

Christian Education Co-Director – Shirley Thorp - email: sebthorpe@centurylink.net

Children's Church Director – Eva Fisher - email: ekfisher21@gmail.com

Children's Church Co-Director – Rev. Daphne Allen - email: allendj67@yahoo.com

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Teachers and volunteers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under their care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of the children at Children's Church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child, this should be immediately reported to the Children's Ministry Director for further action, including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

Allegation of Abuse at Church

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred during Children's Church or a sponsored activities, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker or church member alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation. He or she should be instructed to have no contact with the victim or with witnesses.
3. All allegations of abuse should be reported to the civil authorities, and the organization will comply with the state's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The organization will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. The insurance company will be notified, and the organization will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. The organization will designate a spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse and neglect. The advice of legal counsel will be sought before responding to media inquiries or releasing information about the situation to the congregation.
6. All other representatives of the organization should refrain from speaking to the media.
7. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it. This should be for the purpose of providing pastoral support during the time of crisis and not for the purpose of investigating the incident or influencing the investigation.
8. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

Children's Church Sign-in Sheet

Today's Date:



| # | CHILD'S NAME | PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME | PHONE | TIME IN | TIME OUT | SIGNATURE |
|----|--------------|----------------------|-------|---------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | | |

St. Matthew MBC Children's Ministry

CHILD INFORMATION CONTACT FORM



Date Form Completed: _____

CHILD'S INFORMATION

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name: | | |
| Date of Birth: | Current Age: | |
| Home Address: | | |
| City: | State: | Zip Code: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female | Current grade in school: |

GUARDIAN INFORMATION

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Guardian Name: | |
| Relationship to Student: | |
| Phone Number: | Email Address: |
| Home Address (if different from student): | |

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Emergency Contact Name: | |
| Relationship to Student: | |
| Phone Number: | |

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Does the child have any allergies? yes No
If yes, please list: _____

Does the student have any medical conditions we should be aware of? yes No
If yes, please specify: _____

DISMISSAL INFORMATION

Names of person(s) who may pick up this child.

CONSENT

Would you like to be contacted about other events or activities of interest sponsored by our ministry?
 yes No

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION CONTACT FORM



Date Form Completed:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Male

Female

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name:

Relationship:

Phone Number:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Allergies/Medical Conditions:

Trainings/Certifications:

Preferred Classroom:

Incident Report Form



GENERAL INFORMATION

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| DATE OF INCIDENT | |
| REPORTED BY (STAFF NAME) | |

CHILD'S OR VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

| | |
|-----------|--|
| NAME | |
| CLASSROOM | |

INCIDENT DETAILS

Type of Incident

Detailed Description

Action Taken

Recommended Follow-Up

STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE



Enter all incidents / injuries on this log on the same date that they occur.

INCIDENT / INJURY LOG



| Date (ex. 23Nov2025) | Child / Volunteer Name (ex. (child) Jane Doe) | What was the incident / injury? (ex. paper cut) | What caused the incident/injury? (ex. Jane picked up stack of paper too fast) | Action taken (ex. cleaned cut and applied band aid) | Parent / Guardian informed (ex. Yes) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
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