Children and Youth Parent Manual

Calvary Episcopal Church's mission is "making God's love visible in downtown Memphis." We encourage our children and youth to live into this mission as part of a safe and loving community. Contained within this manual, you will find information regarding the guidelines, procedures, and code of conduct for children and youth ministry. These guidelines and procedures are in place to provide safety for all children and youth.

Please take the time to read this manual and discuss it with your child. Expectations of parents/guardians, children, youth, and Calvary staff are outlined. Parents/guardians, children, youth, and Calvary staff are responsible for the information contained in this manual. Questions can be directed to the director of children and family ministries, the director of youth ministries, or a member of the clergy.

Ministry Structure

Calvary Episcopal Church Children and Youth Ministries seek to build meaningful spiritual formation opportunities through religious education, worship, service, events, and activities for Calvary parishioners aged 0 to 18.

Wednesday Evenings

Calvary's Wednesday evening programming includes dinner, nursery, Gathering, EYC, and choir rehearsals during the fall, winter, and spring.

Sunday EYC

The location and times of Sunday EYC vary each month to fit diocesan guidelines for gathering. Students and parents will be given advanced notice of the Sunday location.

Child Registration Forms

Parents/guardians should complete a Child Registration Form for each child at the beginning of the school year. The program director will distribute and maintain forms. The parent/guardian must inform the program director if any information changes during the school year.

Permission Forms

Events and activities held outside Calvary's walls may require individual permission forms. Permission forms will be made available and distributed to parents/guardians in a timely manner by program staff. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to complete individual permission forms.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is essential to maintain Calvary's successful children and youth ministries programs. It is important to keep in touch with the program staff, formation teachers, and event chaperones while your child participates in the program. Parents are strongly urged to volunteer their talents of teaching, leading, chaperoning, event planning, and event execution.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Please be mindful of our staff's and volunteers' commitment to teaching, leading, chaperoning, and caring for Calvary's children and youth. Please respect drop-off and pick-up times at the designated location(s). If an adult other than their parent/guardian is responsible for picking up your child, please inform the program staff or volunteer.

Special Circumstances

Illness Procedure

Calvary is concerned for the health of each child. Your child must be picked up as soon as possible if your child becomes ill. Parents will be contacted in an emergency using the information provided on the Child Registration Form.

Medication

Calvary's program staff asks that parents/guardians administer medication to their children at home. Program volunteers may not administer medication to a child. Program staff may only administer medication to a child if the parent/guardian has given expressed permission each time.

Children with Special Needs

Calvary Children and Youth Ministries strive to meet the needs of every child. To assist us in meeting your child's needs, you must complete the Child Registration Form in detail. We will do our absolute best to accommodate all children at Calvary; however, children are required to refrain from behaviors that threaten the safety of themselves, other children, volunteers, and staff members.

Confiscated Items

Occasionally, children bring toys, books, and electronic devices to children or youth activities and events. These items can create a distraction for the child as well as other participants. These items may be collected by program staff or volunteers and remain with the staff member or volunteer until the activity is over.

Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures

Children and Youth Ministries Code of Conduct

Calvary children and youth are expected to be respectful of their peers, church staff, volunteers, Calvary, and Calvary's property, as well as the property of others at all times. The Code of Conduct is intended to assist students in governing their own behavior. The guidelines and procedures in the code of conduct are necessary to help ensure a safe environment for all children and youth. We

request that you familiarize yourself with Calvary's code of conduct and discuss the importance of this code with your children.

Discipline

Calvary is committed to positive behavior management and expects children to be responsible church members. Each child is expected to uphold Calvary's code of conduct. Discipline will be reasonable, understandable, and appropriate for each child. Praise and encouragement of good behavior are used. If a problem occurs, you will be informed. Parents/guardians are expected to work with the program staff to resolve any issues.

Children's Ministry Policy

During Sunday and Wednesday formation or a Calvary children or youth event, if a teacher or volunteer believes a child is acting disrespectfully or is disruptive to the class, teachers, volunteers, or other students, they will inform the child that they have three (3) chances to improve their behavior before being escorted to their parent/guardian. If the child continues to be disrespectful or disruptive and the teacher, leader, or volunteer in charge has already escorted the child to their parent/guardian two (2) times in the past, then the program director or clergy will ask the parent/guardian to accompany the child to class or the event the next time they attend.

Youth Ministry Policy

During Sunday Formation, EYC, and other youth events, if a leader believes a youth is acting disrespectfully to the class, teachers, volunteers, or other students, the youth will be given the choice to leave and find their parents or stay and change their behavior. If disrespectful behavior continues, the youth will be told to find their parents if available or call their parents for immediate pick-up.

Disciplinary Plan

Children with continual behavior problems or disciplinary problems during formation time or children and youth events will be asked to create a disciplinary plan with their parents and members of Calvary staff. This plan may include the loss of privileges to attend children and youth activities outside the walls of Calvary. Behavior that warrants a disciplinary plan includes but is not limited to:

1. Behavior that negatively affects the safety of others, such as the use of force, hitting, or physical or verbal intimidation
2. Open or continued defiant attitude or willful disobedience toward a church staff member or program volunteer
3. Threatening bodily harm to another person
4. Fighting
5. Sexual or racial and ethnic harassment
6. Bullying and harassment.
7. Verbal abuse, use of profane language, obscene gestures, or written obscenities
8. Any illegal activity

Parents Rights

Parents have the right to

- know their children are in a safe environment where their social, emotional, and spiritual health is being fostered;
- know what types of programs and activities are offered and share concerns with staff, at any time, about anything they do not feel is in the best interest of the child;
- know if their child is misbehaving and spend time working with the program staff to resolve unacceptable behavior;
- voice special concerns not covered within this manual.

Parent's Responsibilities

Children and youth should be supervised at all times.

Parents are responsible for

- observing the rules of this program as outlined in this manual, as well as any additional guidelines, procedures, or individual event permission forms;
- replacing any equipment or property their child has misused or destroyed;
- signing their child in and out of activities when necessary;
- notifying program staff or volunteers when taking a child from the activity;
- notifying program staff or volunteers when another person is authorized to pick up their child from an activity or event;
- picking up their child on time;
- maintaining a current child registration form with the program director.

Children's Rights

Children have the right

- for their ideas and feelings to be respected;
- to discipline that is fair, equal, and not harmful to their self-esteem;
- to express creative ability, anger, frustration, disappointment, and joy in an appropriate manner;
- to a safe environment free of hazards.

Children's Responsibilities

Children are responsible for

- respecting the rules that guide them and controlling their feelings such that their actions do not harm anyone in the program;
- remaining with a program staff member or volunteer at all times;
- respecting the rules of the program and taking care of the church space, equipment, and property.

Transportation and Youth

A licensed young person may drive to and from a Calvary Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) event with their parent's permission. Young people, with the permission of all parents/guardians

concerned, may bring other young people to events. They must also take the same young people from the event. Event leaders must receive written or oral parental permission before allowing young people to leave with a youth other than the youth that brought them to the event. No youth may drive during any youth event.

Cell Phones

Children and youth with phones are asked to silence and put away their phones during Sunday formation and youth events unless instructed otherwise. Youth with phones are asked to step out of the room to take phone calls and to use discretion when sending messages to parents. If a leader believes the cell phone is distracting to the group, they may ask the youth to put the phone away for the remainder of the class or event.

Volunteers

Volunteers with children and youth, ages 0-18, must complete Safe Church Training and abide by The Diocese of West Tennessee Policy on Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse, as found on the diocesan website at episwtn.org.

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