



<b>Title: Wee Care Nursery</b>
<b>Policy #: 37</b>
<b>EXPIRES: When Replaced</b>
<b>ISSUED BY: Church Council</b>
<b>SIGNED:</b>

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## 1 History

VERSION	DATE APPROVED	UPDATED BY	PURPOSE FOR CREATION/UPDATE
1.0	12/19/2006	L. HERRMANN	TO ENSURE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN OUR NURSERY MINISTRY

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## 2 Scope

This policy is part of St. Paul Lutheran Church's organizational policies. This policy applies to anyone who uses the Wee Care Nursery.

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## 3 Policy

As St. Paul Lutheran Church builds upon current ministries and continues to be a resource for our community it is essential to ensure a safe environment for those involved in our nursery ministry. This includes, first and foremost, all of the precious children which are entrusted to the care of the nursery. In addition, to protect nursery volunteers as well as St. Paul Lutheran Church.

With the current church facility usage many events have and would benefit from the services provided by the nursery. With this in mind it is helpful to first define the purposes of the nursery:

The Mission of the Children's Ministry at St. Paul Lutheran Church is Connecting Children to Christ. This is accomplished by respecting, nurturing, teaching and empowering children to live and grow in the knowledge and love of our Lord. In the Wee Care Nursery, this mission is carried out through the gifts of our staff as they care for and minister to children in a loving, respectful manner.

Secondly, it is important to identify and categorize all of the events that take place at St. Paul. For the purposes of this policy, all events at St. Paul have been categorized into one of two groups. Ministry events and community events.

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1. Ministry Events – functions of St. Paul Lutheran which help fulfill our Christ-given mission. These events include prayer meetings, church planning meetings, AIM classes, Bible studies, VBS, Sunday School, AWANA, Confirmation and Worship Services.
2. Community Events – events which St. Paul Lutheran Church allows the community to use the facilities as a resource for their group. These functions include but are not limited to weddings, wedding rehearsals, funerals, family events, parties, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H and other community events.

Thirdly, it is important to determine if an event fulfills the purpose the congregation has developed for the nursery. In identifying the goals of both ministry events and community events it seems clear that the purpose of the nursery is more in compliance with ministry events than community events. Therefore, the nursery will focus its attention exclusively on ministry events. The nursery will not be open for community events at any time. Though St. Paul Lutheran understands the need for a quality nursery facility for community events we believe opening the nursery to community events will hinder our efforts in providing a safe and healthy environment for those who use the nursery.

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## **4 Procedure**

1. If a ministry would like to use the nursery at a time when it is not normally scheduled to be open and staffed, they must talk with the Director of Church Administration.
2. The Director will evaluate their request to determine what type of event it is.
3. If it is a ministry event, the Director will check the schedule for availability and schedule it in if appropriate.
4. The Director will review cleaning and safety procedures with the individual responsible for the event and provide a key.
5. The ministry leader will be responsible for securing a nursery volunteer (who must be in high school or older) who will support the Wee Care Nursery Policies and submit to a background check if they are 18 years or older. Additional qualified helpers can assist the nursery volunteer.
6. The leader is responsible to ensure that the nursery is supervised and adequately staffed at all times. The ratio of children to volunteers should be no greater than 5:1.
7. If desired, snack and drinks shall be provided by the ministry event group using the nursery.
8. The volunteer must remain in the nursery at all times when alone. The parents of children who need bathroom breaks shall be contacted for assistance via the paging system. When two or more volunteers are present, one volunteer may walk the child to the bathroom after notifying the other volunteer.
9. The policies in the Wee Care policy Handbook shall be enforced. This includes issues relating to health, safety, discipline, check in/out procedures and pager communications.

10. The nursery must be returned in the same condition it was found.
11. The door will remain locked when the nursery is not in use.
12. The nursery is designed for little children. Only children 5 years and below will be allowed to use the nursery during a ministry event. Children older than the age of 5 years old should attend the ministry event with a parent.

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## **5 Forms**

None