

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The nursery at BVAG is intentional; we are not just babysitters, we express the love of Christ to all children while implementing the best of care.

NURSERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

OUR PURPOSE

We recognize the importance of the early years when first impressions of the “church” are being formed, and we want to make this a positive experience for both you and your child. Bella Vista Assembly of God and the Nursery Ministry, therefore, will be doing everything within their means to provide for your child’s physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual needs, so that he/she will find coming to church a pleasant experience.

Our Nursery Ministry is specifically two-fold:

1. It enables parents to participate in Sunday School and church services freely.
2. It exposes even the youngest babies to loving attitudes, actions, and a Christian atmosphere, which begins to form their spiritual development.

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

1. strict adherence to health rules, including cleanliness and space requirements,
2. an environment where babies are happy and comfortable,
3. age-based opportunities for spiritual development.

The nursery policies have been set for the following reasons:

1. to ensure the safety and well-being of the babies,
2. to aid in the consistency and expectations for babies, parents, and workers
3. to prevent any unfortunate misunderstandings or accidents.

NURSERY SCHEDULE

A. NURSERY CLASSES FOR SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY

We have one large nursery section located on the right as you enter the main foyer. This large section is divided into two rooms. The age separations are as follows:

Sunday a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Sunday school, 10:30 a.m. worship

1. Infants to walking located in the back room
2. Walking to four located in the main front room

Sunday p.m. – 6:00 p.m. worship

1. Infants to four located in the main front room
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Wednesday – 7:00 Family Night

1. Infants to four located in the main front room

B. TIME

The nursery is open 15 minutes prior to each service and remains so until 15 minutes following dismissal. If you wish to spend some time at the altar after the service, please feel free to do so. As soon as you are finished worshipping, however, please return for your baby. As other babies leave, your baby will begin to anticipate your arrival. It will also aid workers as they begin to clean the

nursery in preparation for the next service.

C. SPECIAL EVENTS

During an all-church special event the Nursery Coordinator will specify how many nurseries will be open. This will depend on the ages and how many children need care.

COMING TO THE NURSERY

A. WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU:

1. a diaper bag (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 many children have allergies and sensitivities, even to specific brands of diapers.)
2. three to five disposable diapers,
3. a plastic bag for wet diapers (if cloth are used),
4. plastic bottles or sippy cup (enough for baby's stay),
5. a pacifier if he/she is accustomed to one (please include a holder to attach the pacifier to the child's clothing),
6. a change of clothing, including undergarments.
7. Please assist us in seeing that your child is fed before registering them. (Bottle fed babies will be the only exception.)

The diaper bag and all bottles should be labeled with your child's name. You may use a waterproof marker and label each item directly or attach a masking tape label to each. It is a good idea to attach a baby's pacifier to his/her clothing using a pacifier holder made specifically for the purpose or with a pin and ribbon. (Please do not hang around the baby's neck.)

B. CHECK-IN

Please give your child and diaper bag to the worker and register him/her on the "Check-in-Sheet" along with any special instructions. (There is also a place to write down your pager number so the nursery attendants may reach you if needed.) **Please report any known allergies on the "Check-in-Sheet".**

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C. NURSERY PAGERS

Upon your arrival to the nursery, you will be greeted by a nursery attendant. The attendant will assign you a pager with a number on it. Your parental pager is used as a claim check tag. This pager ensures that utmost in safety and protection for your child. It also helps the greeters and teachers to feel more confident about releasing a child to adults with whom they may not be familiar with. If you wish for someone other than yourself to pick up your child, they must have this pager. Without the return of the pager, your child will not be released from the nursery. If you have **more than one child enrolled** in the nursery department at the same time, the same pager will be used. If he/she needs you, you will be paged indicating for you to come to the nursery area.

We believe that all crying is communication. If we have tried to comfort your child through love, talking softly, holding, meeting physical needs, and prayer, and are still sensing distress, we will immediately page you.

If **picking up your child during a service** after having been paged, please come to the half door of the main nursery where you check in your child. (You will

notice that this half door remains locked.) We keep the inside half door locked for several reasons:

1. Safety – We want to halt anyone from coming in the nursery that has no business there.
2. Peace – It often causes unsettledness in children when other adults come in that they do not know, as well as, they start anticipating the arrival of their own parents which may not be for some time.
3. Cleanliness – Our facilities are regularly cleaned. All of our workers wash their hands frequently and after changing each child. We want to facilitate keeping our nurseries as clean and germ free as possible. Therefore, we desire as little traffic as possible within the nursery other than the children and attendants.

In essence, no one will be allowed to enter the nursery rooms except approved workers and children ages 0-4. We offer a nursing mother's room in the hall directly across from the nursery. It is the fourth door down, on the right.

When **picking up your child at the end of service**, please have only one parent per child, if possible, return for them. This will help cut down on traffic congestion. At this time, we ask that you return the pager to the attendant.

E. FOOD

Infants - Toddlers: Cheerios, infant/toddler fruit puffs, and dissolvable cereal bars
If the bottle or sippy cup of juice/milk is used and the child is still thirsty, we will fill it up with water. If an infant needs to be fed cereal or baby food, it may be necessary for the parent to come back and do it at the appropriate time, depending on how many infants are there and the demands of the day on our nursery staff.

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Two's - Fours: Water, goldfish, saltine crackers, animal crackers, graham crackers, & Cheerios are served as a snack at least once during every service and often twice.

D. HEALTH

1. 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. A child who is sick is best comforted by mom or dad.
- b. Well children should not be exposed to sick children.
- c. The teacher cannot teach and take care of a sick child at the same time.

NOTE: Our policy will not allow nursery workers to dispense medication to your children under any circumstances.

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

- a. a runny nose with discolored mucus,
- b. an above normal temperature (over 98.6),
- c. an irritating cough that has persisted for more than 48 hours,
- d. drainage in the eyes, conjunctivitis, or pink eye,
- e. irritability and fever due to immunization in the last 24 hours,
- f. undiagnosed rashes or eruptions of unknown origin
- g. diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours,
- h. irritability and pulling at ears,

i. parasites such as lice, mites, or ringworms.

What if my child has been sick during the week? According to physicians that we have spoken with, if a child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours, without fever for 24 hours, and shows no other symptoms, it is considered safe for them to be in a nursery setting.

STAFFING THE NURSERY

A. PARENTS

We encourage all parents, grandparents, or guardians to volunteer their time for the nursery. However, we will only put you on the schedule once you have attended the church for at least three months and have passed a background check through our church's office. When you have received your **schedule** and you notice a **conflicting date** you will need to **make arrangements to trade days with someone who is on the list of workers**. You will then need to call the nursery coordinator/assistant coordinator and give the name of the person trading days with you. (If you cannot find a person to trade with, you may call the Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator, but we ask that you try to find your own replacement first.)

B. HIRED CARETAKERS

It is our goal to have one hired staff person rotating between the two nurseries. This person will be responsible for arriving 30 minutes prior to service, preparing the room to receive children, changing diapers, assist teachers, assist the Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator as needed, and stay until all children have been picked up. They will also need to tie up trash bags, vacuum, and carry out other duties.

C. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital part of church ministry and are needed to make any ministry in the church succeed. We need volunteers to teach, substitute and help with general caring of children. Volunteers must also pass a background check through the church office.

WHAT WORKERS ARE NEEDED?

Nursery Coordinator – LaVerne Goodsen (*Toddler – Four's Nursery*)

The nursery coordinator is in charge of all the nursery rooms. This person is responsible for overall planning, for the care of the rooms and materials, and for recruiting and scheduling workers. The nursery coordinator will manage hired nursery employees and assist the children's pastor with duties that apply.

Assistant Nursery Coordinator – Beth Johnson (*Infant – Walking Nursery*)

This person shall assist the Nursery Coordinator with her responsibilities

Teachers and Assistants

We always have two adults in each nursery at all times.

Nursery teachers and assistants are responsible for meeting the physical needs of children as well as for teaching through their attitudes, actions, and activities with the children.

Qualified men are also needed in the nursery. (Married couples seem to be a great team in the nursery.) Many authorities feel that a baby gets a better start in life if he/she has both a feminine and masculine influence. Some children do not

have a good male image at home with whom to identify. The nursery can help meet this need by providing qualified male workers.

WHAT WORKERS ARE NEEDED?

The Nursery Coordinator, teachers, and assistants have the awesome responsibility of influencing the baby's first impressions of Jesus, God and the church. These are not "factual" impressions based on concepts he/she learns, but rather "feeling" impressions based on what he/she senses. However, these first experiences affect the lasting impressions the child will have of the church, as he/she grows older. These impressions are formed primarily through the baby's contacts with the nursery worker. In order to ensure good first impressions, nursery workers should meet the following qualifications:

1. **Be a mature, committed Christian with a deep devotion to Christ.** The worker must possess what they profess. Their life will continually reflect

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their relationship with Jesus Christ as they care for the children and minister to the parents.

2. **Be committed to service.** Tangible rewards will be few and recognition may seldom come. The nursery worker must be motivated to serve because of commitment and a desire to minister to *His* children.

3. **Keep a loving attitude with children.** A genuine love for children must dominate the nursery worker's attitudes, thoughts, and actions. This will be reflected through body language and verbal communication. A child senses whether or not a loving person is caring for them. They will develop a sense of trust, as they feel secure in the caretaker's love.