

Third Presbyterian Church Children's Ministry HANDBOOK



We are so glad that you are part of the Children's Ministry at Third Presbyterian Church! Our children are important to us and we want their experiences here to be positive. This booklet has been prepared to give you some basic information on the many programs for children that are offered at Third Presbyterian Church.

We hope that this handbook will help you feel informed about your child's participation in our programming. Please feel free to contact any member of the Children's Ministry Committee or staff person with any questions or concerns.

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2011-2012 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

Children's Ministry Coordinator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch
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Office Hours: M, T & Th.—9am-3pm, Wed. 9am-1pm, 4-8pm

Associate Director of Music Chris Lenti
271-6537 ext. 101, e-mail: clenti@thirdpresbyterian.org
Office Hours: off on Fridays

Qabats Directors Kerrie Merz, Dawn Ossont & Sarah Wisbey

Children's Ministry Committee Chair Griff Vinton
Committee members: Chris Colaluca, Dawn Ossont, Jessica Taylor

Nursery Coordinator Suzanne Woodring

Preschool Shannan Monrad

Kindergarten* Robert Veitch
Barb/Fred Rich--assistants

First Grade* Ginger Briggs
Deb Bishop

2nd Grade Kathy Oehling
Jenny Bay
Kim Vasta (Winter)

3rd Grade* Cassidy Anderson
Lori Gilley

4th Grade Helen Witt
Andrew Elder
Betsy Vinton (Fall)

5th Grade Len Picone
Paul Zeh

6th Grade* Pam Black-Colton (Winter)

** Additional teachers for these classes are still being sought as of printing of this brochure. Please contact Becky D'Angelo-Veitch or Griff Vinton if you are interested in helping in these classes. Parent helpers will be utilized in cases where we have gaps.*

MISSION STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COMMITTEE

To fulfill the congregational promise made at baptism:

- ✦ To tell the Good News of the gospel, to help children know all that Christ commands.
- ✦ By our fellowship, strengthen the family ties with the household of God.
- ✦ To provide an environment that allows children to explore the meaning of faith so that they may grow and be nurtured in their own faith journeys as they grow with the church family.
- ✦ To allow every child through the program and beyond to seriously think about his or her own faith.

The program will be set up to support, teach and strengthen our understanding of God by providing the following:

- ✦ Teaching the fundamental principles of our faith and encouraging the spiritual growth and development of our children;
- ✦ Strengthening the partnership between church and home;
- ✦ Developing the program so that children are included and welcomed as part of the whole church family;
- ✦ Planning and promoting more intergenerational events (i.e. Qabats, Fellowship events, children's participation in worship)
- ✦ Relating the church school program with the worship service so the family unit may strengthen its understanding of God;
- ✦ Structuring the program for children so they want to attend and understand the Sunday service when they complete the program; and
- ✦ Providing opportunities for children to become involved in all aspects of church life.

The Children's Ministry committee has come up with **behavior guidelines** for those involved the children's ministry program—the 5 C's—

Cooperative—with teachers and peers

Careful—with the bodies, feelings and resources of ourselves and others

Considerate—of all God's children

Contributing—by sharing your gifts by participating in class

Curious—willing to learn new things!

About the Children's Ministry Committee

The Children's Ministry committee oversees all children's programming including Church School, Qabats and many special events. Membership is open to all in the Third Presbyterian Church community. The Children's Ministry Committee currently meets one Thursday each month (usually the 2nd) at 7:00pm. Any questions should be directed to committee chair, Elder Griff Vinton.

Opportunities for Children at Third Presbyterian Church

Sunday Mornings

8:15am-12:15pm—Nursery care is available

8:30am—Worship in the Chapel

9:30am—Junior Choir for children in 3rd through 6th grade

10:45am—Worship in the sanctuary

11:00am (approx.)—Church School for pre-school through 6th grade

12:00 noon—Sunday School is dismissed—children may be picked up in coffee hour

Please note—on Sunday mornings (except during Jr. choir rehearsal) any child involved in Third Presbyterian Church programming must have at least one parent or other responsible adult on the premises.

Wednesday Evenings

5:00pm—Children's Bell Choir (selected from older Junior Choir aged children)

5:30-7:30pm—Qabats Program for children in 1st through 6th grade
(includes: Junior Choir, The Glorious Voices, workshops & dinner)

Special Events

Special events are planned by the Children's Ministry committee periodically throughout the year and have included ice skating, swimming, picnics, dinner and folk dancing at church, a fall festival, and others.

Watch the Thursday update, newsletter and bulletin for information about special events. If you have ideas for events, please be in touch with any member of the Children's Ministry Committee.



A TECHNICOLOR PROMISE

On Sunday, April 22, the children of Third Presbyterian Church will present this charming musical about the story of Noah's Ark. The musical will allow the children to experience this familiar story in a new way, as they enter in the text and share the message of God's faithfulness with our wider community.

About Church School at Third Presbyterian Church

Our church school begins after the children's message in the worship service (at approximately 11:00 am). Children in Junior Choir leave with the choir to disrobe and then proceed on to their classrooms. Younger children may be escorted to their classroom by adults who are with them in the sanctuary.

Church school concludes at 12:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Children in the nursery may be picked up at any time. With the approval of Session, we are using the Presbyterian denominational Curriculum, *We Believe*.

Special events that occur during the church school year:

Children in communion *(the first Sunday of selected even numbered months)*

In order to help our children to experience this important expression and practice of our faith, we have arranged the schedule so that on certain communion Sundays, school aged children may be present for the Sacrament of communion. All baptized persons are welcome to partake of communion. We encourage families to talk with their children and make the decision together about sharing communion. Families may speak to any member of the program staff if they have questions or concerns about children and communion. Our second rotation of Qabats this fall will focus on worship, and will include instruction in the sacrament of communion. This year, children will be present for communion on October 2, December 4 and February 5.

Church School Chapel *(Twice per year—once in the fall, and once in the spring)*



Just as we invite children into worship on communion Sundays to help them experience that important aspect of our worship, so we also hold church school chapel services to help our children to better understand a worship service--not just as a worshipper, but also through planning and leading aspects of the liturgy. At church school chapel, each class takes responsibility for a prayer, litany, reading, or other aspect of the worship service. Themes come from our curriculum. Family members are very welcome to join us for these chapel services. This year's services are scheduled for November 6 and June 3.

Palm Sunday Event *(April 1)* This event will engage the children in exploration of the story in celebration of Palm Sunday and preparation for Holy Week.



Large Group Sunday School *(offered certain Holiday Weekends during the program year, and weekly in the summer for children age 3 through 1st grade.)*

In the summer, and other times when classes are traditionally not full, we encourage families to worship together in the sanctuary. For younger children, we offer large group Sunday School. Parents of children in this age range are asked to assist with leadership at least one time during the year.

Guidelines for Sunday School Enrollment

All children are welcome and encouraged to participate in Sunday School at Third Presbyterian Church. For our program to run smoothly, and to best meet our children's needs, we have established the following guidelines:

- Anyone attending Sunday School must fill out a registration form (now available online!) For occasional visitors, there is an abbreviated form.
- Children should attend the class that correlates with their grade in school.
- For our pre-school class we ask that you do not make the switch from the nursery mid-year, but rather at the start of the program year.

Expectations of parents or other caregivers

At Third Presbyterian Church, we are blessed to have a thriving program which simply could not exist without the assistance and support of parents and other members of the congregation. *Did you know that it takes nearly 700 volunteer hours per program year to keep the Church School alone running?* To help with our important charge of educating our children in the faith, we ask for parents or other care givers to be available to help in the following ways:

- *As a classroom helper.* It is expected that all children will have a parent or other adult available to help out in the classroom as needed (a good guideline would be to help in the classroom 3-4 times each year). Our child protection policy dictates that two adults be present in each class.
- *By providing snack.* Although we always have a simple snack of juice and crackers available, it is often a nice treat to have snacks brought in. Healthy snacks such as fruit, cheese & crackers, raisins and other dried fruit, granola bars, etc. are particularly appreciated.
- *As a designated classroom substitute.* There are times in the year when our teachers are unavailable to teach, whether due to travel, illness or last minute emergency. We ask each class to have a "designated sub" that can be available to help out on short notice in case of teacher absence.

A note about pick-up and drop-off: Families may wonder what the appropriate age is to let children go to church school on their own. We know that families may have individual preferences and situations, but we offer this as a guideline—we suggest that children in second grade and younger be escorted to and from church school each week. All children in Sunday School will be brought to the celebration center at the conclusion of Sunday School (around noon), where parents can pick them up from their teachers. In the spirit of fostering good communication between teachers and care givers, we encourage you to check in with your child's teacher at pick-up so that they can share any important information, and also so that they can be sure that they have adequate support for volunteers and snack.

Children and Stewardship

We encourage families to take time to talk about how we share what we have with others as an action of our faith. Just as adults are asked to make a monetary pledge to the church and a commitment of their time and talents, we also ask our children to share their time, treasures and talents. Sunday School teachers have envelopes available for children who would like to use them.

If parents would like additional resources to help them explore stewardship with their children, they may check out the Stu Bear books (Available in the Children's Library) or see Children's Ministry Coordinator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch for additional suggestions.

Communication—Where to find information and who to contact

Because Third Presbyterian Church is such a large church with so much going on, we strive to communicate with our members in a variety of ways including:

- Sunday Bulletin announcement pages (in the back of the bulletin)
- Our monthly newsletter, "The Messenger"
- Our website, www.thirdpresbyterian.org
- The "Google calendar" [click here](#)
- Our weekly e-mail congregational update which includes limited information about events coming up in the week ahead (If you do not receive this update, you may send an e-mail requesting to be added to the distribution list to Cindy Mark at cmark@thirdpresbyterian.org).
- The Children's Ministry newsletter, a monthly newsletter e-mailed to all households with children registered for church school (If you do not receive this newsletter, please check with your child's teacher to make sure that you have filled out a registration form, and be sure that we have your current, preferred e-mail address)

How to contact us. . .

- If you have any questions about the church school of Third Presbyterian Church, you may contact Children's Ministry coordinator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch or your child's Sunday School teacher.

NURSERY

At the Third Church nursery, we have a simple goal: to provide a safe, secure, happy and loving environment for both our children and their parents. To do this, we have a three level system of care which includes staff, regular volunteers (shepherds), and parents.

The Nursery is available each Sunday morning from 8:15am-12:15pm for children not yet in the preschool room (generally, up to age three and generally, out of diapers).

With parent OK, a snack of apple juice and animal or graham crackers is provided.



Parent responsibilities

We want to give your child the best possible care so that you can have a worry-free worship experience. To help us do that, we ask parents to:

- Sign up to be a parent volunteer as needed.
- Provide diapers, bottles (if used) and a change of clothes in case of accidents.
- Alert coordinator of any food allergies or any other special needs or conditions.
- Sign your child in and out every week (parents with cell phones are invited to set their phone to vibrate, and leave their number with the staff for emergency contact).
- Upon arrival, label your diaper bag and pin your child's name tag onto the back of his/her shirt.
- Please do not bring your child if (s)he has had any of the following in the past 24 hours: rash, fever, vomiting, or cold symptoms.

The nursery is staffed by the following individuals each week:

Nursery Coordinator

Our nursery coordinator, Suzanne Woodring, is in the nursery every week and oversees the shepherds and other volunteers and coordinates all aspects of the nursery. Any questions or concerns about the nursery should be directed to her.

Nursery Shepherds

Our nursery shepherds provide consistency as regular volunteers once a month. Shepherds are there to assist the Nursery Coordinator. Please introduce yourselves to them!

Shepherd duties:

- wear a name tag to identify yourself
- arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of service
- make sure parents sign children in and out
- make sure name tags are pinned onto children and removed when they leave
- change diapers when necessary (with gloves and a washable changing pad)
- help clean up toys
- assist Nursery Coordinator
- play with the children

Parent Volunteers

In order for the nursery to run smoothly, we ask that you volunteer every 6-8 weeks or as needed.

Parent Volunteer Duties:

- help clean up toys
- assist nursery coordinators and shepherds
- play with the children

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Children's Ministry Coordinator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch or Nursery Coordinator Suzanne Woodring. We look forward to a wonderful year with you and your child!

QABATS

Mission Statement of Qabats

As children of God, we will fulfill our promise made to children at the sacrament of baptism.

We will do this by creating a program that provides integrated Bible learning through choir, centers, stories, and the breaking of bread.

Qabats is a midweek, intergenerational, Christian-based, cooperative program with music and fellowship for Third Presbyterian Church families with children in first through sixth grades.

What is Qabats?

Qabats, pronounced “kubbots,” is a Hebrew word that means “to be gathered together.” On Wednesday nights, children in grades 1–6 and volunteers gather together for an evening of Christian fellowship, study and fun.

Like the LOGOS system on which our program is based, Qabats is a mid-week gathering of children and adults that celebrates the Word of God among us. (“Logos” is Greek for “Word”).

Our Qabats program is an opportunity for children and adults to build Christian relationships. *Qabats is not a substitute or replacement for Sunday School.* We hope that our Qabats program will be a time to focus on building relationships and nurturing our children into Christian discipleship.

What is the purpose of Qabats?

- To learn how to develop richer relationships between each other and between each person and God;
- To create an understanding and desire for accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- To develop intelligent, active and loyal membership and leadership in the church;
- To give worthwhile study, wholesome recreation and opportunity for service and Christian fellowship;
- To help young people and adults to develop into Christians who are able and willing to communicate their faith and to assume personal responsibility in assisting in the building of God’s kingdom on earth.

Qabats and the Workshop Rotation Model

The Workshop Rotation Model (WoRM) started in a Chicago-area Presbyterian Church about 20 years ago and has spread through the denomination and beyond since then. It is an exciting program that uses centers to help kids get an in-depth understanding of Bible stories by exploring them for a more extended time than Sunday school or mid-week programming usually offers.

We continue to be excited about the Workshop Rotation Model and its role in Qabats. Workshop center topics include (but are not limited to): arts & crafts, drama, Bible skills & games, computers/A-V, world religions, cooking, science... the sky's the limit! Each rotation begins with a large group session introducing the theme the first week, and then continues for four more weeks with groups rotating through themed centers so that at the end of each rotation, all will have done each center.

Wednesday Night Qabats Schedule for 2011-2012:

| Time | 1st & 2nd Grade | 3-6th grade |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 5:30-6:15 | Centers | Junior Choir |
| 6:20-6:50 | ←----- Dinner -----> | |
| 6:50-7:30 | Glorious Voices | Centers |

2011-2012 Qabats Themes:

Theme A: Kenya and the Church in Africa (10/5, 12, 19, 26 11/2)

Theme B: Wonderful Worship (11/9, 16, 30 & 12/6 & 14)

December 21 is Nativity Rehearsal, January 4 there will be no Qabats due to the busy schedule for Boar's head, and January 11 will be a "fun night"

Theme C: Noah's Ark (1/18, 25, 2/1, 8, 15)

Musical Rehearsals begin starting on 2/29 (*This year's Children's musical, "A Technicolor Promise", will be performed on April 22, 2012.*)

Expectations of Participants

We ask that children participate every week and that their caregivers volunteer regularly. We believe education for their faith is as important as any other commitment our children may have. Sporadic attendance lessens the importance of Qabats. Participants are expected to take part regularly and fully in all aspects of the program.

****A call to the church office (271-6537) by 4:00 PM is expected when your child cannot participate on any given Wednesday. You may send an e-mail to any member of the Qabats leadership team or leave a message on the voice mail of Chris (ext. 101) or Becky (ext. 118).*

Regular weekly participation in Sunday worship remains important. Participants share the gifts and skills they develop in Qabats and enjoy showing their parents and friends what they are learning.

Drop-off and Pick-up Procedure

In order to help the program run smoothly and make sure children are in the right place at the right time, we have established the following guidelines:

- For the month of October (or until each child has established a routine) we ask all parents to escort their child(ren) into the building and to where they need to be. We ask that families arrive on time (5:30pm).
- From 5:00-5:30, “The Early Show” is available. The Early Show offers supervised activities in the Celebration Center for children who need to arrive early (children of volunteers or children who have a sibling in bell choir). Your child may also want to bring something to keep him or herself occupied (homework, a book, etc.).
- At the end of the evening all children must be signed out as they are picked up. This is very important for the safety & security of all children.

Emergency Cancellations

In the event that Qabats needs to be cancelled on any given Wednesday (usually due to weather), we will send out an e-mail and make phone calls no later than 3:00pm as per the information on your registration form. ***Please be sure that we have an e-mail address or phone number where you can be reached on Wednesday afternoons so that we can notify you in the event of a cancellation.*** On questionable days, please call the church office after 3:00pm to check.

Rules & Behavior Policy

In Qabats, we have one guiding rule:

We are children of God and we will treat each other that way!

This is the basis of discipline in the Qabats program. We also follow the 5C’s of behavior (see page 3 of the handbook) set out by the Children’s Ministry Committee. Being a child of God entitles each of us to a place in God’s house. Courtesy is expected at all times, whether in study or at play. Behavior concerns will be handled in a positive and loving way, promptly and as consistently as possible. Questions about disciplinary procedures should be addressed to one of the Program Directors or the Children’s Ministry Coordinator.

Congregation Participation

At its inception, our Session voted to make the Qabats program a priority program of Third Church. Therefore, it is not simply a children's program. Caring and concerned adult members are called to serve in a variety of ways as part of Qabats. The ways adults (parents and non-parents alike!) can show their care are: being a table parent, working in the kitchen, being a workshop leader or helper or sponsoring a child through a donation to the scholarship fund. Invite a friend to volunteer--we love to have non-parent adults involved!

Parent Participation

Parental and general adult involvement is an important component of Qabats. Active participation by at least one adult is required of each family. We expect that if your child is enrolled in Qabats, an adult will be involved in some way in the program. It is our experience that children and adults alike discover a deepened faith and stronger connections to the congregation by participating in this program. Nursery care is available for children whose adult caregivers are volunteering at Qabats.

The volunteer roles include—

- “The Early Show” leader (weekly commitment)
- Kitchen Crew (flexible—weekly or bi-weekly)
- Workshop Center leader/helper (4 week commitment per workshop)
- Table Parent (every week commitment)
- Nursery Care Provider (every week or every other week)
- Laundry (weekly job that is done at home)
- Choir Parent (every week commitment)

Registration and Fees

ALL CHILDREN IN GRADES 1 – 6 ARE WELCOME! Completed registration forms along with payment should be returned to the Church office (checks marked with “Qabats” and your child's name). Fees include supplies, meals, and fees associated with the Children's Musical including a T-shirt for each child and a DVD for each family.

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| The fee for Qabats is: | One child | \$ 95.00/year |
| | Two children | \$165.00/year |
| | Three or more children | \$220.00/year |

Families with one child in the Qabats program and one child in the youth program may deduct \$5 from the registration fee for each child.

There is a minimum deposit of \$35.00 per family due with the registration form by the fall parent meeting (9/18). The balance is due at the end of November.

Adult volunteers are not required to pay for their meals—we value your gift of time! However, if you do eat with us and would like to make a contribution towards the cost of your meal, donations are gratefully accepted.

Qabats is a self-sustaining program that is financed primarily by the tuition paid by the families involved. The majority of the fee goes towards food. All of us are responsible for the prompt payment of fees. This program depends on it!

No one will be excluded from Qabats because of financial need. If you need scholarship money, or if the time deadlines listed above are a problem, please contact the Children’s Ministry Coordinator. All requests will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Questions parents or caregivers may have about Qabats

My child has too much homework. How can Qabats fit into his/her schedule?

We usually take time for programs that are important to us. Teaching children that their faith is an important part of who they are is a lesson we take seriously. Work with your children’s teachers so that they might be able to do some work ahead of time to leave Wednesdays open.

My son or daughter is involved in after-school activities. Can he/she come to only part of the program?

Since most school activities do not run the whole year, it is suggested that the Qabats participant come to the program as soon as possible after the activity and resume full participation after the “season” ends. For special situations, please talk to a member of the leadership team.

What are the expectations for the adults involved in this program?

Each adult must take on at least one job in the Qabats program. Attendance is required at the parents’ meeting in September. Jobs and time involved vary.

I have younger children not old enough to be in the program. How can I volunteer?

There is childcare available for children whose parents/caregivers are helping out during Qabats

I don’t have transportation.

We will do everything we can to assist in developing car pools. Please call one of the Program Directors if you need help in establishing a car pool.

Is financial aid available?

Yes! If you do need scholarship aid, please call the Children’s Ministry Coordinator.

Children's Choir's Information

The children of Third Church have the opportunity to participate in a graded choir program beginning in preschool and continuing through 6th grade. In choir the children learn the joy of singing hymns and anthems with sacred texts that instruct, challenge, inspire and deepen their faith experience. By participating regularly in worship, the children understand the responsibility and satisfaction of leadership in the church community. The choir also provides friendship opportunities for the children within a Christian context.

The Children's Choirs of Third Church

JUNIOR CHOIR is for children grades 3 – 6. The choir rehearses every Sunday and Wednesday during the program year. Wednesday rehearsals are held from 5:30–6:15 pm. Beginning in October, Wednesday rehearsals will be held as part of the Qabats program , continuing at 5:30 pm. Sunday rehearsals are at 9:30am. The Junior Choir sings each Sunday in church at the 10:45 am. worship service through the program year. As well as weekly participation in worship, the Junior Choir presents several special programs, including the Nativity on Christmas Eve and a Spring Musical in even numbered years—This year's musical is "A Technicolor Promise", the story of Noah's Ark which will be performed on April 22, 2012. The choir occasionally travels to other churches to sing and participates each year in a 4-day summer Choir Retreat at Camp Cory on Keuka Lake.

Junior Choir Goals for the Year

1. Learn to sing to the best of our ability
2. Joyfully lead God's people in worship
3. Grow in love for God and each other
4. Support each other as we learn together
5. Create "Something Beautiful for God"
6. Let our singing be a reflection of God's love in the world

THE CHILDREN'S BELL CHOIR rehearses at 5:00 pm. on Wednesdays, before Junior Choir. The choir is open to all children grades 3-6, however preference will be given to 5th and 6th graders. This choir learns the fundamentals of note reading and handbell ringing. The choir is limited to 11 ringers.

GLORIOUS VOICES (1st and 2nd grades) meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:50- 7:30 pm as part of the Qabats program. The choir features a multi-activity program designed to introduce early-elementary children to basic musical ideas through games and songs. Emphasis is on exploring the voice, pitch matching, developing musical sensitivity, and having fun with music. The choir sings in worship about 4 times a year including at the Nativity on Christmas Eve. This year the Glorious Voices will play an important part in the spring musical "A Technicolor Promise".

CAROL CHOIR (Preschool and Kindergarten) meets on Sunday mornings during Church School from 11:40am - 12:00 noon. The children learn simple songs, play rhythm instruments, and explore musical ideas using movement and games. The Carol Choir traditionally sings in worship at the Nativity on Christmas Eve and Mothers' Day.

Procedures

ATTENDANCE—A choir is a team effort in every sense of the word. An individual absence affects the whole group. Likewise, with our limited rehearsal time, punctuality at rehearsals and on Sunday mornings is a vital part of a successful choir experience for the children. The vocal warm-ups at the beginning of each rehearsal are crucial to the development of the choir's sound and musical excellence.

Of course, some absences are unavoidable. In case of an absence, please contact the director directly by voice mail or e-mail (see contact information below). Attendance on anthem Sunday's are particularly important, as the children have invested great time and effort into the preparation of the anthem and want very much to participate on that given Sunday.

ATTIRE ON SUNDAYS Junior Choir children wear vestments each Sunday that they sing. Parents are asked to assist with robing the children twice a year. A schedule for robing is sent to parents in September. The Glorious Voices and Carol Choir should wear appropriate church attire on the Sundays they sing. Please avoid jeans or shorts. Clean sneakers are appropriate.

CANCELLATION OF REHEARSALS Occasionally severe weather will make it necessary to cancel a rehearsal. Please call the director's voicemail for updates about rehearsals. Every attempt will be made to contact all parents by email. Please note that Junior Choir may meet on days that public schools are closed due to weather. Sunday morning cancellations are very rare.

*"Out of the mouths of infants and children, God's name is praised above the heavens."
From Psalm 8*



DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S CHOIRS:

Christina A. Lenti, Associate Director of Music

clenti@thirdpresbyterian.org Voice mail: 585-271-6537 ext. 101