

Third Presbyterian Church Children's Ministry HANDBOOK



We are so glad that you are interested in 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 a member of the Children's Ministry Committee or a staff person with any questions or concerns.

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2017-2018 CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

Children's Ministry Coordinator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch
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Qabats leadership
Becky D'Angelo-Veitch (Staff) & Vicky Austin—Directors

Children's Ministry Committee
Sarah Boyce, Tori Brugger, Sheila Elliott, Jane Liesveld, Keira Mahar, Becky D'Angelo-Veitch (staff)

About the Children's Ministry Committee

The Children's Ministry committee oversees all children's programming including Sunday School, Qabats and many special events. Membership is open to all in the Third Presbyterian Church community. The Children's Ministry Committee currently meets 5 evenings a year (date and time TBD). We are always looking for additional members! Contact Becky to join!

Sunday School Faculty

Nursery Coordinator	Cassidy Barnum
Preschool & Kindergarten	Shannan Monrad
1st & 2nd Grade	Darcy Ormaechea
3rd Grade	Jan & Ron Roach
4th & 5th Grade	Tim Allyn Jennifer Schafrath Sean & Patty Singh
6th Grade	Melanie Jones Sean Ossont

**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 and follow Christ.
- ✦ 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 community.
- ✦ To allow every child through the program and beyond to seriously think about and explore his or her own faith.

The program will be set up to support, teach and strengthen our understanding of our faith 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;
- ✦ Providing opportunities so that children are included and welcomed as part of the whole church community;
- ✦ Planning and promoting intergenerational events (i.e. Qabats, Fellowship events, children's participation in worship)
- ✦ Relating the Sunday School program with the worship service so the family unit may strengthen its understanding of God;
- ✦ Structuring offerings for children so they want to become fully involved in worship as they age out of Sunday School; 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—sharing your gifts by participating in class

Curious—willing to learn new things!

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.)—Sunday School for pre-school through 6th grade

11:45am—Carol Choir meets *as part of the Sunday School program*

12:00 noon—Sunday School is dismissed—children may be picked up at 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 grades 4-6)

5:30-7:30pm—Qabats Program for children in 1st through 6th grade
(includes: Junior Choir, 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, rock climbing, swimming parties, picnics, family mission opportunities and other events. 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.



About Sunday School at Third Presbyterian Church

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

Sunday School concludes at 12:00noon (when children are brought to coffee hour for pick-up) unless otherwise noted. Children in the nursery may be picked up at any time. With the approval of Session, we are using the Presbyterian Curriculum “Growing in Grace and Gratitude.”

Special Events during the Sunday School year:

A few variations to our usual schedule that parents should be aware of:

Children in communion *(the first Sunday of selected 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. This year, children will be present for communion on October 1, January 7, March 4 and May 6. A series of videos on children and communion created by Educator Becky D'Angelo-Veitch and Pastor John Wilkinson can be found on the children's page of our website.

Children's worship table

(offered on a rotating basis for classes and on certain Holiday weekends during the program year, and weekly in the summer for school-aged children.)

We offer a "children's table" under the Arnold Park balcony so that our Sunday School classes can experience worship regularly as part of their Christian Education. Each class will remain in the service during worship once every 5-6 weeks. The table is stocked with some basic craft supplies and books from the children's library, as well as activities related specifically to the theme of the worship that day. Classes in first grade and older will rotate in to the sanctuary to sit at the table (or for older classes who would prefer, together in the balcony), throughout 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 (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 our children's ministries 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 available, parents are invited to bring in snacks for our classes. Healthy snacks (fruit, cheese & crackers, raisins/other dried fruit, granola bars, etc.) are particularly appreciated. Parents should contact their child's teacher or visit the link on the children's page of our website to sign-up to bring in a snack to share periodically, or send in a 'shelf-stable' snack to be kept in the classroom at any time.
- *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 Sunday School on their own. We know that families may have individual preferences and situations, but we offer this guideline—we suggest that children in second grade and younger be escorted to and from Sunday School each week. Children will be brought to the Celebration Center at the conclusion of Sunday School (around noon), where parents can pick them up from their teachers. (Infants and toddlers should be picked up in the nursery.) 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

This year, our church-wide theme is "A year of Stewardship". This theme is not just about finances, but about how we care for our church, our building, and the world. It is about sharing not just our money and things, but ourselves as an expression of our faith, and as a way that we might return thanks to God for all that we have.

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 (in the Children's Library).

Communication—Where to find information and who to contact

Because Third Presbyterian Church is a large congregation 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](#) or find under the "resources" tab on the children's page of the website.
- Our weekly e-mail congregational update which includes limited information about events coming up in the week ahead (to be added to the distribution list, e-mail Cindy Mark at cmark@thirdpresbyterian.org).
- The Children's Ministry newsletter, a monthly newsletter e-mailed to all households with children registered for Sunday School (to receive this newsletter, be sure to register online or in your child's class on a paper form, using your current, preferred e-mail address) .
- Facebook groups—there is a "Third Presbyterian Church" group, as well as a "Qabats" group. If you are active on Facebook, be sure to join these, and search for some other Third Church specific groups.
- Remind.com is a free texting service that parents have the option to join if they would like to receive information and reminders via text. The service keeps all phone numbers private, and can also work via a free downloadable app. If you signed up last year, you are all set to receive text reminders again this year.

To join:

- text "Qabats" to 81010 or [click here](#) to join the Qabats group
- text "tpcss" to 81010 or [click here](#) to join the Sunday School group
- text "tpcjrchoir" to 81010 or [click here](#) to join the Jr. Choir group

How to contact us. . . If you have any questions about the children's programs 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 class (generally, up to age 3).

With parent OK, a snack of water 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 are invited to set their cell phone to vibrate, and leave their number with the staff for emergency contact).
- 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, Cassidy Barnum, is in the nursery every week and oversees the 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 volunteers on a regular basis. Shepherds are there to assist the Nursery Coordinator. Please introduce yourselves to them!

Shepherd duties:

- arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of service
- make sure parents sign children in and out
- change diapers when necessary (with gloves and a washable changing pad)
- help clean up toys
- assist Nursery Coordinator
- play with the children

***To volunteer as a nursery shepherd, please contact Cassidy or Becky. We ask that before volunteering to be a shepherd, individuals participate in the life of the church for at least six months. To provide consistency, shepherds are asked to commit to a minimum of 5 sessions (8:30am-12 noon) per year.*

Parent Volunteers & Teen Helpers

Parent Volunteer & Teen Helper 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 Cassidy Barnum. 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, activities, 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, activities and fun, loosely based on the LOGOS program.

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 it will be a time to focus on building relationships and nurturing our children into Christian discipleship.

Qabats Format!

In the spring of 2016, we underwent a re-visioning process, where we crafted a new model for the program. Both participants and volunteers enjoyed taking part in a variety of activities including:

- Mission Madness
- Arts & Crafts
- “Get Moving”
- Fun and Games



This year, we are refining this model a bit more, both to reflect feedback from last year, and to incorporate the preparations and rehearsals for the Children’s Musical, “The Old Testament Fast Forward” coming up in the spring.

Our schedule will include:

- Mission-focused activities
- Movie nites using the series, “What’s in the Bible with Buck Denver”
- Special guests from the congregation with activities including a game night, and an organ demonstration among others
- ‘Get Moving’ physical activities
- The eternal favorite, “Bring a Friend Night”



We believe that this model will give the kids some different options than we had before, lessen the burden of preparation on our volunteers and enhance the range of activities that we engage in.

Wednesday Night Qabats Schedule for 2017-2018:

<i>Time</i>	1st & 2nd Grade	3-6th grade
5:30-6:10	Glorious Voices	Activities
6:10-6:50	←----- Dinner -----→	
6:50-7:30	Activities	Junior Choir

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 Mary Ann--ext. 101 or Becky--ext. 118) or e-mail by 4:00 PM is requested when your child cannot participate on any given Wednesday.*

Regular participation on Sundays is important. In addition to the worship leadership our choirs provide, participating in Sunday School and worship is an important aspect of our life together.

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 5:00-5:30pm, "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 want to bring something to keep himself 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 a "Remind" text notification no later than 3:00pm as per the information on your registration form. ***Please be sure that we have an e-mail address and/or you have registered for "Remind" so that you can be reached on Wednesday afternoons to notify you in the event of a cancellation.*** On questionable days, you may 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 pg. 3) 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 Becky or Mary Ann.

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. Child care is available for children whose adult caregivers are volunteering at Qabats.

All families participating will be asked to join one of the following teams:

- Kitchen team
- “Mission Madness” team
- Movie Nite & special events team
- “Get Moving” team
- Table Parent

**Other jobs include Child Care & The Early Show*



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).

The fee for Qabats is:	One child	\$ 95/year
	Two children	\$155/year
	Three or more children	\$210/year

The Qabats fee includes Dinners as well as a copy of the DVD of the Children’s Musical as well as a children’s musical T-shirt for each child.

Qabats is a self-sustaining program that is financed primarily by the fees paid by the families involved. The majority of the fee goes towards food. We appreciate the prompt payment of fees. This program depends on it!

Adult volunteers and children in child care are not required to pay for their meals—we value your gift of time! However, those wishing to do so may make a donation in any amount to assist with the cost of meals.

There is a minimum deposit of \$35.00 per family due with the registration form by the start of the program. The balance is due by the end of the calendar year (if possible—contact Becky if you need additional time to pay).

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?

First and foremost, we can be flexible with individual concerns on any particular night, and will do our best to help your child avoid stress and get his or her work done, even if that means missing a portion of our evening. That said, 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. If possible, plan ahead (perhaps 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.

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. Please let us know if you need child care ASAP so that we can arrange appropriate staffing.

I don’t have transportation.

We are happy to help connect parents so that they can establish carpools, and to honor volunteer requests for opposite weeks to make carpools run smoothly.

Children’s Choirs 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 at the start and end of the program year are held from 5:30–6:15pm. Beginning in October, Wednesday rehearsals will be held as part of the Qabats program, shifting to the 6:50-7:30pm time slot. Sunday rehearsals are at 9:30am throughout the program year. The Junior Choir sings each Sunday in church at the 10:45am worship service, and their worship leadership is a valued and integral component in the life of the congregation. In addition to 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. 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 and use our voices to the best of our ability
2. Joyfully lead God's people in worship each week
3. Grow in love for God and one another
4. Build a supportive, encouraging community together
5. Present a well-rehearsed, fun, worshipful musical to the congregation in the spring (alternate years)
6. Let our music be a reflection of God's love in the world

THE CHILDREN'S BELL CHOIR rehearses at 5:00pm on Wednesdays. The choir is open to all children grades 4-6, however registration for 5th and 6th graders will be offered first, with any open spaces for 4th graders offered after the 5th and 6th grade registration deadline (as needed). This choir learns the fundamentals of note reading and handbell ringing.

GLORIOUS VOICES (1st and 2nd grades) meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:10pm as part of the Qabats program. Emphasis is on exploring the voice, pitch matching, developing musical sensitivity, and having fun with music through activities, games, and songs. The choir sings in worship about two times a year, including at the Nativity on Christmas Eve.

CAROL CHOIR (Preschool and Kindergarten) meets on Sunday mornings during Sunday 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.

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 warm-ups at the beginning of each rehearsal are crucial to the development of good vocal health, as well as the choir's overall sound and musical excellence. Learning our introits and anthems comes from a continual progression of teaching over the course of multiple weeks and rehearsals.

Of course, some absences are unavoidable. In case of an absence, please contact Mary Ann directly by phone or e-mail as soon as possible (see contact information below).

ATTIRE ON SUNDAYS Junior Choir members wear vestments each Sunday that they sing. Parents are asked to assist with robing throughout the year. A schedule for robing is sent to parents in September. All choirs should wear appropriate church attire on the Sundays they sing. Please avoid jeans, shorts, flip flops, and "Uggs"-style boots. Clean sneakers are appropriate.

CANCELLATION OF REHEARSALS Occasionally, severe weather will make it necessary to cancel a rehearsal. Please watch your e-mail for updates about rehearsals. Every attempt will be made to contact all parents by e-mail. 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:

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