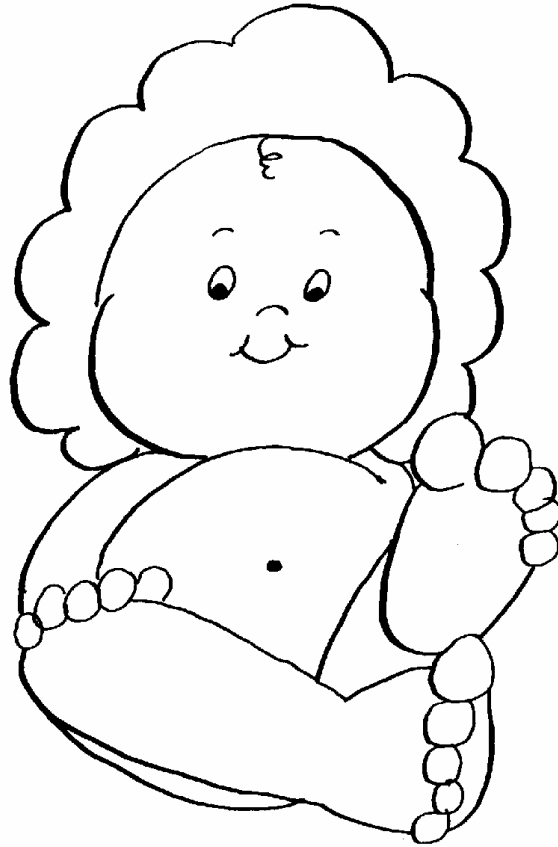


# ***T.L.C. Ministry*** **Parent Information**



## **GUIDING PHILOSOPHY, PRICIPLES, AND POLICIES OF THE GRACE BAPTIST T.L.C. MINISTRY**

The pulpit is the heart of Grace Baptist Church and the focal point of its ministry. We highly esteem the preaching ministry and value the proclamation of God's Word, because we believe it is God's one emphasis for the ministry of the New Testament Church (II Timothy 3:15-4:20.)

Providing a safe, healthy nursery for our church family and for our visitors is important. However, safeguarding and contributing to the effectiveness of the preaching of God's Word is essential. The primary purpose of the nursery ministry, therefore, is not for the convenience of the parents, but to contribute to the effectiveness of the proclamation of the Word of God.

The nursery of a local church can significantly promote or impede the ministry of God's Word. Maintaining a reliable and confidence-inspiring nursery ministry is crucial to an effective and unhindered worship service. If we fail to provide or make use of such facilities, we potentially detract from the effectiveness of the ministry of God's Word, both to ourselves and to others.

Obviously, a nursery ministry is not directly addressed in Scripture. However, Biblical principles of ministry, testimony, and stewardship govern the nursery ministry as much as any other aspect of the local church.

The following statement endeavors to draw upon Scriptural principles in order to form Biblical philosophies that, in turn, will govern and explain church policies relating to the nursery ministry.

### **I. MINISTRY**

Scriptural Principle (I Timothy 3:15-4:2, Nehemiah 8:1-8)

Nehemiah 8 contains an instructive story that provides a helpful direction for the church as we attempt to balance the centrality of the Word and the care of children. After decades of living in other countries as refugees under the chastening hand of the Lord, Judah was finally brought back to her own land by God. Once the necessary construction projects had been completed, God's people were unified and motivated by a single, driving passion: a hunger to hear the Word of God proclaimed.

*And all the people gathers themselves together as on man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. (Nehemiah 8:1)*

They constructed a pulpit of wood for this occasion, so that the sight of Ezra would be even more visible and his words more audible (8:4,5). From that pulpit, Ezra read God's Word to the people "*from the morning until midday*"! Not only is the length of the sermon amazing; even more impressive is the people's willingness to "stand" and their ability to be "attentive" to the Word of God for that entire time (8:3) – so great was their hunger and reverence for God's Word. Meanwhile, Ezra and his assistants "caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (8:7-8).

How could they remain so attentive for so long? The text included one small detail regarding Ezra's audience. Ezra read the book of God's law "before the congregation of both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding: (8:2)

It seems more than accidental that the writer attaches to that detail the result: "and the ears of all people were attentive unto the book of the law" (8:3). And it seems more than coincidence that this was a profoundly worshipful experience for God's people:

*And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. (8:6)*

That is the spirit and experience, the hunger and reverence, we desire to foster in our services at Grace. We do not know what kinds of "nursery" arrangements were made on this occasion, but we do know that God's people so valued God's Word that they made whatever arrangements were necessary to removed every unnecessary distraction from the proclamation of God's Word.

### ***Biblical Philosophy***

The effective, unhindered, and non-distracted ministry of the Word of God to "those who can hear with understanding" is paramount.

### ***Church Policy***

Therefore,

1. If your children are too young to remain quiet in the services, we strongly encourage the use of the excellent nursery facilities and the trained nursery workers we strive to provide.
2. Please keep sick children at home. Sick children cannot be admitted to the nurseries, and sick children in the services compromise the health of others and create unnecessary distraction from the ministry of the Word.

## **II. TESTIMONY**

As Christians we do not live to ourselves, oblivious of or apathetic toward the impression others have of us, our church, and most of all, our Savior. Our motivation is not that people think well of us for our sake, but that people think well of what and Whom we represent. This extends to our demeanor and practices, as well as to our conscientious care for the possessions God has given for the furtherance of the ministry.

### ***Biblical Philosophy***

The primary purpose, on a horizontal level, of virtuous life and conscientious practice is to make the teaching of God's Word admirable and attractive to others.

### ***Church Policy***

Therefore,

1. When open, the nursery facilities will be properly supervised by trained and qualified workers.
2. The appearance and cleanliness of the nursery facilities must be consistently maintained at all times. Once the rooms and toys are cleaned, no unauthorized use of the nursery facilities can be permitted.
3. Nursery facilities will be open and staffed 15 minutes before services, and they will be secured at the end of each service.

## **III. STEWARSHIP**

The issues of testimony and stewardship clearly overlap. Some things we do for reasons of both testimony and stewardship. The concern of testimony is what others think not merely of us but of what and whom we represent. The concern of stewardship is primarily what God Himself thinks of us and of how we treat His gifts to us. This concern extends to stewardship over the facilities themselves which God has provided and which ultimately belong to Him.

### ***Biblical Philosophy***

The nursery facilities belong to the Lord and are a gift from God to His people for the advancement of the ministry. It is our responsibility, therefore, to take the best care possible of facilities that are set apart for special use within the context of the church's ministry.

## ***Church Policy***

Therefore,

1. Nursery surfaces and toys will be disinfected and rooms straightened and secured after each service.
2. In order to protect the cleanliness and condition of the toys and facilities, older children may not use the nursery facilities or areas.
3. Nursery facilities may be used only during designated service times or other authorized times. They may not be used as a general play area before or after services.

### **IV. FINAL WORD**

A balance between user-friendliness on the one hand, and principles of ministry, testimony, and stewardship on the other, is not easy to achieve or maintain. We desire the nursery facilities to be a blessing and an aid to both our church family and visitors, while also ministering to children. Please remember, however, that the chief purpose of the nursery ministry is not to provide a baby-sitting service for the convenience of the parents, but to contribute to the worshipful atmosphere and effective pulpit ministry of God's Word for all those who come to hear from the Lord – in short “that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified.” (II Thessalonians 3:1)

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

In an effort to avoid distractions that little ones often cause in the church services, we encourage you to use our excellent nursery facilities. We strive to keep our nurseries sanitary and staffed with capable workers, who serve often and get to know your baby. A Team Leader is in charge of the organization and order for each nursery, and she will be happy to answer any questions for you.

All ladies with children in the nurseries are expected to volunteer in the nursery. All other ladies are encouraged to volunteer in the nursery. Those who serve in the nurseries consider it a privilege to serve the Lord and you by caring for your precious little ones. Please see the Nursery Coordinator or Team Leader if you would like to participate in our nursery ministry.

- Please do not go into the nursery for any reason. There are several reasons for this: sanitation, safety, and ease of adjustment for the children.
- Please give the child to the worker and leave quickly, as your child will be able to adjust more satisfactorily if you do not linger.
- Please use the sign-in sheet and add any special instructions. Make sure the nursery worker knows your name, your baby's name and understands your instructions. You will be notified immediately if an emergency should arise or if your child cries for a period of 10-15 minutes. Only you may take the child from the nursery unless you indicate on the sign-in sheet the name of someone else, over the age of 18, who may pick up your child.
- Please **LABEL EVERYTHING** (diaper bag, bottles, blankets, etc.) with your child's name.
- Please take your bathroom-trained toddler to the restroom before bringing him/her to the nursery. The nursery worker will, of course, take your toddler to the restroom during church if you request it on the sign-in sheet. Pull ups are greatly appreciated to minimize messes in case of accidents.
- Please avail yourself to the nursing mother's room located at the back of our nursery.
- Please equip your diaper bag with the following items;
  - Three or four diapers
  - Plastic bottles – enough for your baby's stay. Because of the time involved and the need for caring for all the children, nursery workers cannot take time to feed your child their meals or food from home. Our nurseries will provide Cheerios, crackers, etc. at snack time. If your child has food allergies, or you just do not want them to have what is provided, please let the nursery workers know.
  - Pacifier, if needed.
  - Complete change of clothing.
  - Sipper cup for 1 and 2 year olds.
- Please pick up your child **PROMPTLY** after the service.
- Please do not leave packages in the nursery for other people to pick up. Give them out personally.

## **REGUARDING SICK CHILDREN**

We request that parents not bring a sick child to the nursery. We cannot accept into the nursery a child who is ill or appears ill. If a little one is not feeling well, the child will recover more quickly at home and the spread of illness outside of the family will be minimized. Some signs of illness in a child are:

1. Unusual fatigue or irritability
2. Coughing, sneezing, runny nose and eyes
3. Fever of 100 degrees F or higher within the last 24 hours
4. Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
5. Inflamed mouth or throat
6. Thick yellow or green nasal discharge
7. On an antibiotic less than 36 hours
8. Any unexplained rash
9. Any skin or eye infections
10. Chicken pox – until scabs and scars are gone

Please keep in mind that a child can still be contagious even though the child is “feeling better.” Please be sure that the contagious period of you child’s illness is over before you bring your child back to the nursery.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact the Nursery Coordinator or the Team Leader in your nursery.

Thank you so much for your help with these very important matters. We look forward to serving you. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

For the sake of His Name,  
*T.L.C.* Leadership Team

# The *T.L.C.* Ministry Leadership Team

## Nursery Coordinator

Chris Young

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Team Leader 1: Shanda Bordeaux (313-1218)

Assistant Team Leader 1: Beth Hayden (686-2409)

Team Leader 2: Beth Fredley (350-8869)

Assistant Team Leader 2: Barbara Rogers (793-3032)

Team Leader 3: Kerri Lancaster (686-5675)

Assistant Team Leader 3: Cameron Davenport (602-7757)

Team Leader 4: Tammy Mills (395-0804)

Assistant Team Leader 4: Sharon Batt (350-0126)

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call us.