
Parent Handbook



Everything you need to know about
Children's Ministry at Bethel Church.

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Dear Parents,

Firstly, thank you for letting us serve your family by teaching and caring for your children. Here at Bethel, we think are awesome! Kids hold a special place in God's kingdom and we intentionally invest extra resources on ministering to children, youth, and young families. They are such a vital part of what God is doing among us.

Our goal is simple - we want to create an environment where kids can:

- **worship** God
- **grow** in faith
- **show** the world who Jesus is

We believe that a child's spiritual formation begins at home, and you are the primary spiritual influence in your children's lives. God chose you for this very important role. That is a big task! Our job is to be your champion – to encourage and support you as parents in raising your kids to know and live for Jesus. Just as Deborah said to Barak, "Surely, I will go with you." (Judges 4:9). Parents – you are not in this alone!

We are committed to each child's spiritual growth through all aspects of our ministry. We provide a safe and nurturing environment with a structure of safety policies and volunteer accountability.

Through music, Scripture, prayer, fun and, relationships, we hope to ignite a deep love for Christ in each child we serve. In teaching the message of God's love, salvation through Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we help kids recognize their place in God's Big Story. We work to make Bethel Kids a place where all children are known, loved, and welcomed.

We hope this Handbook helps you gain a clear picture of what our Children's Ministry is all about. If you have questions, please contact us anytime.

Blessings!

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How do we teach Kids about Jesus?

Curriculum

Our children's ministry uses **Lifeway's *The Gospel Project for Kids*** as our core curriculum. The Gospel Project provides a chronological, Christ-centered Bible study plan for all ages. It takes 3 years to cycle through the entire bible from beginning to end. These studies are age appropriate and aligned with Scripture to help our kids grow in faith. What we love most about this program is that all ages learn the same content each week and every lesson points to God's plan for salvation in Jesus.

Classes & Learning Goals

Below is an outline of our different children's classes as well a list of learning goals for each age group. Each stage is a building block of a maturing faith, and it's our hope that children will graduate from Bethel Kids knowing and trusting God's Word, loving Jesus as their friend and excited to share the Gospel with others.

CLASS	AGE	We hope children in this stage will:
Nursery	0 – 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow to feel comfortable at church and know their leaders.• Learn that God created them and loves them.
Toddlers	Ages 2– 3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know that God loves them deeply.• Learn to talk with and respond to God in prayer.• Know that we're God's children, created by God to love.• Experience church as a lively, secure place where people care about and listen to them.• Make friends in their class and know their leaders.

<p>Pre-K</p>	<p>Ages 4 - 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value the Bible as a special book that tells of God’s love and shows Christians how to live. • Know the church as a family of God’s people. • Know Jesus is their friend. • Be able to say a simple prayer in their own words. • Show simple acts of kindness to others. • Know what it means to be a follower of Jesus.
<p>Grade 1</p>	<p>Ages 6 - 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise & celebrate God through worship. • Actively participate in singing, praying & bringing an offering during Kids’ Worship. • Know a core of Old & New Testament stories. • Know the church is not just a building, but God’s people. • Feel loved by God & their church family. • Know the story of Jesus’ birth, death & resurrection. • Begin to understand who the Holy Spirit is & why God sent Him. • Pray for others.

<p>Grades 2 & 3</p>	<p>Ages 7 - 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know Jesus as God’s son who offers love and forgiveness. • Expand their biblical literacy, understanding the difference between the Old & New Testaments. • Be able to look up Scripture with some assistance. • Understand that prayer is a way to hear God’s voice. • Learn how to become a follower of Jesus. • Seek opportunities to be helpful in their church family and larger community.
<p>Grades 4 & 5</p>	<p>Ages 9 – 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand they are gifted by God with unique talents & abilities. • Use their talents to serve the church body. • Participate in & Lead aspects of Kids’ Worship. • Read & respond to the Bible (be able to discuss and ask questions). • Be able to look up Scripture on their own. • Expand their knowledge of the Bible by learning different types of Bible literature (history, letters, poems, etc.). • Know how to become a follower of Jesus. • Share the Gospel with their friends. • Live out the Gospel in their lives by showing kindness & compassion to others.

When You Come to Church

Intake Forms

- Each year, all families participating in Bethel Church Kids' Ministry are required to complete a family intake form. This is required for insurance purposes.

Check-In

Before you Arrive:

- Please conduct a Wellness Check for your child **before** leaving for church. This includes a temperature check, as well as assessing your child for the following symptoms:
 - fever
 - dry cough
 - tiredness
 - aches and pains
 - sore throat
 - runny nose
 - headache
 - loss of taste or smell
 - skin rash
- If you or your children exhibit **ANY** of these symptoms, please stay home.
- Use the Church Center App to check in your child **before** you leave for church.

Arrival at Check-In:

- Please enter the church via the main entrance doors. You will see the Bethel Kids Flags marking the entrance. Follow the dots downstairs to the Check In table.
- Kids Check-In is located downstairs, just outside the washrooms. You can enter the church though the main entrance where the Bethel Kids flags are posted.
- Please make sure your children have used the bathroom and washed their hands before checking into Kids' Church.
- Please check your child into Kids' Church before the start of service.
Check In will be open at 8:30-9:15am & 10:30-11:15am.

- Touchless Check-In will be available. When you arrive, an attendant will give your child a name tag and you will receive a matching security sticker for picking them up. Do not lose this sticker! You must show this after service to pick up your children.
- All personal belongings must stay with the parents. Please do not bring any toys or food from home. We do not provide snacks during the service so please make sure your kids are well fed before coming to church! Toddlers can bring a sippy cup or water bottle with their name clearly labelled.
- Please keep your security sticker with you. You need this to pick up your kids after the service. **No sticker = No kids!**
- To limit numbers and maintain safe physical distancing, only Kids Team members are permitted in our Kids' Wing. Parents will not be able to escort their kids to their classroom. One of our Kids' Team members will be there at check-in to escort your children to their classes where their teachers will be waiting for them.

Dismissal

- To allow adequate time for cleaning between services, please be sure to pick your kids up quickly after the service is over.
- Immediately after the service, please go outside and return to the Kids Check-In desk to pick up your child. Once you have shown your security sticker to the attendant, they will send a Kids' Team member to retrieve your child for you.
- **Important! No sticker = no kids!** We must see your security sticker to safely check your child out to you.
- To support physical distancing measures, we will limit the number of people moving through our Kids' hallways during services. Only Kids Team Members are permitted downstairs during Drop Off and Dismissal.
- We ask that the same family member who dropped off the child pick up the child. This must be an adult and cannot be a sibling.
- Children and family members will not be able to come back into the classrooms after they have been checked out.

Wellness Policy

- We require children and Bethel Kids Team members to stay home if they are sick.
- Before coming to church, we ask parents to conduct a quick wellness check for their children. This includes a temperature check for fever.
- If anyone in your family has **any** the following symptoms, please stay home:
 - ✓ fever
 - ✓ dry cough
 - ✓ tiredness
 - ✓ aches and pains (headache, stomachache, achy joints, etc.)
 - ✓ sore throat
 - ✓ runny nose
 - ✓ headache
 - ✓ loss of taste or smell
 - ✓ skin rash
 - ✓ lice
 - ✓ Pink Eye (unexplained itchiness or redness of the eyes with discharge)
 - ✓ diarrhea or vomiting
- At Check In, the attendant will also ask each family some quick health questions before children can enter their class.
- If your child demonstrates or develops any of the above symptoms during Kids' Church, parents will be paged immediately for pick up.
- If anyone in your family develops the above symptoms, we kindly ask that you enjoy the livestream service from home for 2 weeks before returning to in person services.

Health Measures

Class Time:

- Kids Team members and children are not required to wear a mask but may do so if they wish.
- To keep contacts low, our teaching teams will be consistent for each service. Each class will have 2 teaching teams who serve on a 3 weeks on / 3 weeks off rotation.
- Even though games and activities will be prepared with physical distance in mind, we do not expect children, especially in our toddler & Pre-K classes, to always maintain a safe 6ft distance from others.
- We will do our best to limit sharing by providing each child with their own craft or game supplies and will clean all high touch surfaces after each service.
- Supplies and toys will not be reused between services.
- There will be select toy bins for each classroom. Each service will have its own set of classroom toys. All toys will be washed and sterilized after Sunday services.

Bathroom:

- Children age 20 months to 3 years old MUST have a parent take them to the bathroom or change their diaper.
- Please take your children to the bathroom **before** checking them into Kids' Church.
- If your child needs bathroom assistance, we will page you to come and help them.
- Our paging monitor is located to the left of the auditorium stage. If a parent is needed, their child's number will flash in red numbers on this monitor. Please make sure to sit where you can see easily see this monitor.
- Your child's paging number will be their classroom number, followed by the 2 numbers on their security tag. (For example – Sarah is in Kids Room 1 and her tag says R2D2. Sarah's paging number is 122.)
- Parents can enter the Kids' Wing via the locked double doors in the foyer. A security usher will be in the foyer to escort you to and from the Kids' Wing.

Allergies:

- Parents are responsible for letting Bethel Kids Staff and volunteers know about their child's allergies.
- All classrooms are a nut-free zone and we do not serve any snacks during kids' church as a preventative measure.
- If a child has an allergy, a note is made on their profile and their specific allergy is indicated on their printed nametag and attendance sticker.
- If a child has emergency medication for a severe allergic reaction, classroom teachers must be notified. If necessary, medication can be left with the classroom teacher at Check-In.

Cleaning & Hand Hygiene:

- After each service, Bethel Team members reset each classroom with clean toys and supplies and wipe down all high touch surfaces.
- Classrooms are thoroughly sanitized by our janitor each week.
- All toys and supplies are cleaned and sanitized each week.
- There will be extra hand sanitizing stations throughout the Kids' Wing. Children will be asked to clean their hands at Check-In and in their classroom. All children will clean their hands before dismissal as well.

Keeping Kids Safe

Photo Permission:

- We regularly use images or video from our Kids Program for a multitude of uses, including print and social media.
- Parents must decide if they give permission for their child's image to be shared by signing a Photo Release upon registration in our Children's Ministry.
- Names are never used, and children are not tagged on social media.
- Any family can opt out of consent at any time with an email or note to the Children's Director or Assistant.

Volunteer Screening:

- All Bethel Kids Team members must meet the following qualifications:
 - ✓ Complete a Bethel Kids Personnel Application (including 3 references)
 - ✓ Complete a Provincial Online Criminal Record Check (These are valid for 5 years.)
 - ✓ Be a regular church attender for a minimum of 4 months
 - ✓ Complete our Bethel Kids Training which includes "Plan to Protect" policies (to be refreshed annually)

Safety & Accountability:

- **2 Leader Rule** – At all times, we insist that leaders are never alone with a child. We always have 2 leaders in each class. This may be two adults or an adult with a youth helper.
- **Open Door/View Policy** – All classrooms either have an unobstructed window or are required to have at least part of the door open to maintain a view into each classroom. When speaking one to one with a child, our leaders always do so in open view of other leaders or church staff.

- **Bathroom Policy:**
 - **Babies up to age 3** must have their parents take care of diaper changes and bathroom visits. Parents will be paged by our Kids Team if their child needs assistance.
 - Our team may escort **children age 4 and up** to the washroom. Children age 4 and up must be able to take themselves to the washroom unattended. Kids Team members never enter a bathroom or stall with a child. They also never take a child alone, but rather always go in a group of 3 or more. Leaders will check that the bathroom is empty before propping the door open for children to go in. Leaders then wait outside in the hall until all children have finished before escorting the group back to class.
 - **Children from Grades 2 and up**, may go to the bathroom without a leader, but must take a class buddy with them.

Emergencies

- If there is an emergency that requires leaders and children to evacuate the building, leaders are responsible for taking your children to safety. They will gather in the parking lot outside the building, in front of the garbage bins. This is where parents will meet their children. Bethel Kids Team volunteers are trained in earthquake, fire, and lockdown procedures.

Ministry to Families

Special Needs

- We are here to provide a church home for each family who comes to Bethel Kids. We understand that for children with special needs, feeling at home often requires special care and attention. Our role is to partner with parents, so their children feel confident, comfortable, and loved at Bethel. We like to begin with a conversation with parents (and child where appropriate). We'll meet to discuss what does or does not work for your child, their strengths, and challenges, as well as how we can best minister to your family.
- Staff will communicate with the Kids Team any necessary information that will help your child enjoy their class, while maintaining confidentiality for families. If possible, we will provide a Church Buddy for your child – a trained volunteer who is intentionally paired with them for Sundays and Kids Ministry Events.

Family Life Groups

- We encourage all families to get involved in a Life Group at Bethel Church. They are a great way to engage the whole family in relationships with other believers, provide opportunities for families to serve together, and deepen the life of worship in our church through intergenerational connectedness.
- If you would like to join a Life Group, please talk to Assistant Pastor – Adrian Bonin.

Baby Dedication

- A baby dedication is a wonderful opportunity for parents to present their child to God before their church family. A time to ask God for wisdom and grace as they raise their child to love and follow Jesus.
- While baby dedication does not replace baptism, it is a symbolic moment that recognizes that this child is a gift from God and that the parents have a responsibility to be a godly example to them.
- For more information, please contact our Children's Director or one of the pastors.

Join the Team!

God created us to support each other, love each other and serve the body of Christ according to our unique gifts and abilities. We encourage all families to get involved in some ministry area at Bethel. We invite all parents to participate in our Children's Ministry, not just with their own kids, but with their children's friends and other youth and adults who desire to pour out God's love to all kids at Bethel.

Here are some ways to get involved:

- Join the Teaching Team as a Class Teacher, Assistant or Substitute
- Join our Check In Team on Sunday mornings
- Help with Toy & Classroom Cleaning
- Volunteer at a Special Event
- Lead a Life Group for Families
- Spread the word! Invite friends and neighbours to your Life Group, to special events or to come worship with us on Sundays.

Please talk to Lisa or Andrea about joining the Kids' Ministry Team.

Seasonal Calendar

Specific dates for all Bethel Kids events are set on a quarterly basis. Here are some of the events to look forward to each year!

Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Fun Fair • Move Up Sunday • Stories @ Skaha
Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids Christmas Rehearsal & Performance • Christmas Movie Night • Family Advent Resources • Family Day – Community Event
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Holy Week Resources • Kids’ Easter Celebration • Church-wide Picnic (special kids’ activities)
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach Meet Ups • Bethel Kids Camp • Grade 5s graduate to Middle School

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Thank you in advance for your partnership in ministry and entrusting your children to the loving care of volunteer leaders at Bethel Church.

- Lisa & Andrea

