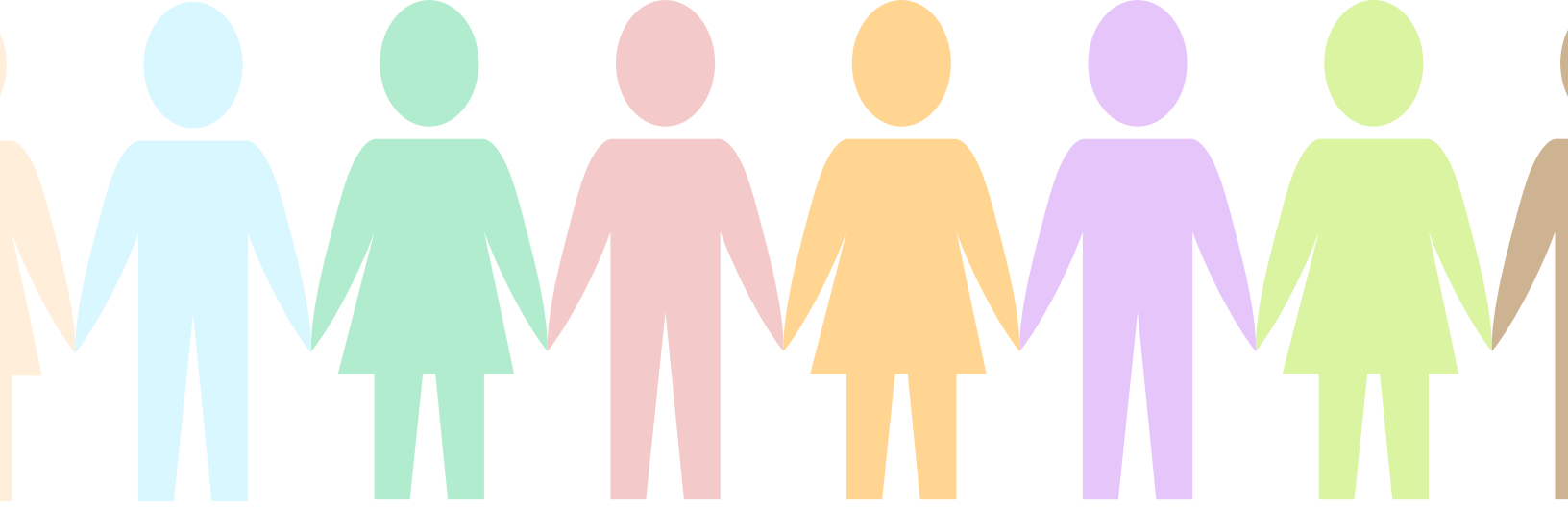




Handbook

2026-2027



This Handbook has been thoughtfully and prayerfully compiled and updated by the following people:

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This Handbook is intended to be a helpful tool as you serve in ministry with kids!

Further info and resources (including ministry role descriptions, lesson plans, and more) are available on our website under the “Shepherd Resources” page and the “Serving with Kids Ministry” page.

We welcome your thoughts and ideas for next year’s revision of our Handbook. To give feedback, email Julia Brown (brown@lefc.net) or Brianna Kauffman (kauffman@lefc.net).

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Our Heart for Ministry with Children	3
Our Values	3
Discipleship Pathway	4
Kids Ministry Staff Team	5
Welcome to YOUR Ministry	6
LEFC Lingo	7

SHEPHERD INFORMATION

Info for ALL Shepherds	8
Info for Nursery Shepherds	12
Info for Preschool & Elementary Shepherds	18
Lesson Plan Essentials	18
General Procedures	22
Bathroom Procedures	26
Classrooms & Facilities	27
Classroom Expectations	28

APPENDICES

Appendix A (Emergency Procedures)	32
Appendix B (Campus Map)	35
Appendix C (Kids Ministry Map Key)	36



Our Heart for Ministry with Children

The vision and mission of LEFC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this by sharing Christ in our relational worlds and pouring into the lives of others. We seek to be people who love God, love people, live truth, and proclaim Jesus. In our ministry with kids here at LEFC, we have the same mission, and we say it like this:

We are partnering with families to help kids know, love, follow, and share Jesus!

Our Values

At the heart of our Kids Ministry is a desire to follow God's heart in loving and investing in children and families. These values help clarify what matters most and guide how we serve—shaping our decisions, our environments, and our relationships as we seek to faithfully help children know, love, follow, and share Jesus.

We see this reflected in the following values:



GOD'S WORD

We value children understanding the Bible as one unified story—God's plan of redemption through Jesus.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

We value giving children opportunities to encounter who God is and to practice the rhythms of faith that help them know and follow Him.



CHURCH FAMILY

We value children as a vital part of the body of Christ. Our ministry does not exist in isolation—it thrives within the life of our church family.



RELATIONSHIP & ACTIVE LEARNING

We value meaningful relationships and engaging, hands-on learning experiences as essential to how children grow and learn.



OIKOS

We value equipping children and families to live out and share the gospel in their everyday lives—where they live, learn, and play—both locally and globally. As part of this, we value helping children and families develop meaningful, prayerful connections with our global partners.



TEAMWORK

We value each person serving in Kids Ministry, recognizing that God uses their unique gifts to build His kingdom as we serve together.



PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We value partnering with parents and families, walking alongside them in the discipleship of their children.



SAFETY

We value creating environments where every child is safe, cared for, and known—both physically and emotionally.



Discipleship Pathway

Recognizing that spiritual formation takes place over time, we partner with families—knowing that children learn what they live, and that faith is formed and practiced in everyday life.

At the heart of our pathway is a simple desire: to help children know, love, follow, and share Jesus.

We see this take shape through the following pathway – not four steps in order, but one journey always in motion:

KNOW

Children grow in understanding of who God is and the story of His Word.

Welcome - Be known, welcomed, and learn to welcome others

Worship & Pray - Connect with and respond to God in worship and prayer

LOVE

Children experience belonging in the church family and develop a growing relationship with God.

Welcome — Be known, welcomed, and learn to welcome others

Worship & Pray — Connect with and respond to God in worship and prayer

FOLLOW

Children respond to God with faith expressed through obedience and love.

Respond — Recognize and follow God's invitation in faith and obedience

Give — Develop a heart of generosity and love for others

SHARE

Children live on mission—sharing Jesus both here and around the world.

Share — Share the good news of Jesus with their oikos

Go — Engage in God's global mission through prayer, support, and awareness

Kids Ministry Staff Team



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Welcome To YOUR Ministry!

In Rick Warren's Purpose Driven Church, he reminds us of what Scripture teaches saying: "Every Christian is created for ministry [Ephesians 2:10], saved for ministry [2 Timothy 1:9], commanded to minister [Matthew 20:26-28], to be prepared for ministry [Ephesians 4:11-12], needed for ministry [1 Corinthians 12:27], accountable for ministry, and will be rewarded according to his or her ministry [Colossians 3:23-24]. It is a privilege to serve and invest in the discipleship process with children! Whether you serve once a month, in the summer, every week, or behind the scenes, you are a significant force in the big picture of children and families being supported and poured into on this journey of learning to know, love and follow Jesus!

We want our atmosphere to be one that is overflowing with love and honor for one another. Romans 12:10 [ESV] says, "love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor."

HONOR =

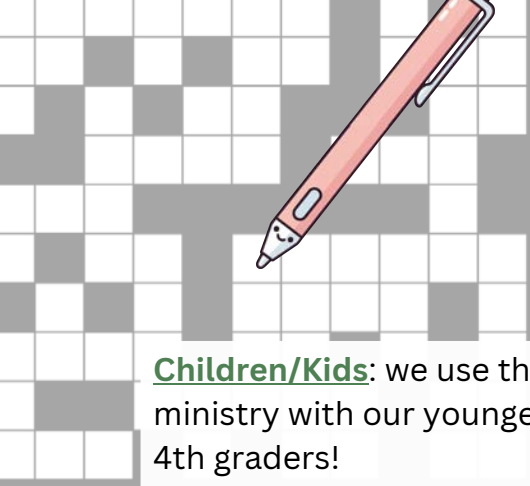
**Treating people
as special**

**Doing more than
what's expected**

**Having a
good attitude**

We understand from Scripture God's heart and desire for how we interact with one another. Here are just a few of the Scriptures that encourage us to truly love and honor one another:

- **Proverbs 19:11** -- "A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."
- **1 Corinthians 13:4-5** -- "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."
- **Ephesians 4:29** -- "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."
- **Colossians 3:13** -- "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."
- **John 13:35** -- "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- **James 4:11** -- "Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgement on it."



LEFC Lingo

Children/Kids: we use the words children and kids interchangeably to describe our ministry with our youngest people in our church family, infants 2 months old through 4th graders!

KidMin: this is the abbreviation that is used when referencing LEFC's Kids Ministry

Shepherd: this is what we call the people who lovingly invest in children's lives in our classes.

Hands and Feet Buddy: a person who is part of our Hands and Feet ministry, who serves specifically with one child to provide support and encouragement to make Sundays great.

Junior Shepherd: this is what we call those who serve, helping Shepherds and investing in kids' lives, who are under 18 years of age.

Junior Shepherd Mentors: this is what we call the people who serve by leading our VIP for Junior Shepherds [which is a time for understanding the vision, getting info and training and praying together for the ministry].

Hallway Support: people who serve specifically to support our Shepherds as they serve.

Kids Ministry Welcome Desk: this is where you can register your child[ren] for attending Kids Ministry! Our welcome team will assist you in finding your child's class and knowing how to sign in [after you have registered] each week.

Kids Ministry Lounge: this is the area you see when you walk into our Kids Ministry area that has couches and a fun kid-friendly world map on the wall!

Parent Resource Table: a table set up with resources for parents and families in the Kids Ministry Lounge.

Oikos: this is what we call the circle of people with whom we work, live and play, and with whom we share the hope of the gospel. We are not talking about yogurt here.

Global Partner: this is what we call our missionaries or those who serve vocationally, sharing the gospel in other cultures.

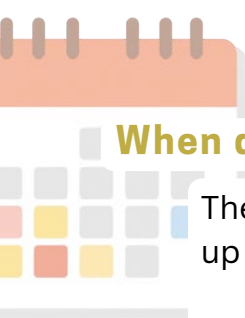
World Mobilization: this is what we call cross-culture missions or world outreach.



Info for ALL Shepherds

Who is on my team?

Your coordinator will give you a list of people serving in your ministry area so that you know who's on your team, who's serving during the "other service times," as well as a list of people you can call if you need to find a sub.



When does the Kids Ministry year begin and end?

The Kids Ministry year begins the Sunday after Labor Day. This is when the kids move up to their new classes for the year.

The last Sunday of our Kids Ministry year is typically the last Sunday in June. Generally, Shepherds serve twice a month from September through June, on 1st/3rd Sundays or on 2nd/4th Sundays.

There are typically four "5th Sundays" each year. We ask our 1/3 and 2/4 Teams to serve on some of the 5th Sundays. The specific dates that you/your team will serve are listed and communicated in advance, so you know the dates for the whole ministry year. Fifth Sundays [and who is serving] and other important dates are listed on our Kids Ministry Important Dates document that you receive as part of your orientation as you begin serving in Kids Ministry!



Sunday Morning Class Times (Nurseries - G4 Kids)

- **8:45 AM** - Doors to Kids Ministry Area opens to families
- **9:00 - 10:20 AM** - First Service class time
- **10:20 - 10:50 AM** - Transition time, for kids coming and going, including kids who are staying for both class times
- **10:50 AM - 12:10 PM** - Second Service class time

If parents would like to pick up their kids earlier than 10:20 AM or 12:10 PM we ask that whenever possible, the parent would talk with their child's Shepherd before class so that they have a heads up that their child will be picked up early.

What do I do if I find I'm unavailable on a Sunday that I am scheduled?

It is your responsibility to find a substitute. Your coordinator will provide you with a Team List which includes the people who serve opposite weeks in your class, as well as people who are available for subbing. We recommend you start by asking to switch Sundays with another person on your team, and then if needed use the sub list.

When you have confirmed a sub, please let your coordinator know so that they can make sure the sub has the lesson plans and other needed details for that day. You can also ask to switch Sundays with others who serve in your class.

In case of an emergency, email Julia Brown at brown@lefc.net (emails are checked on Sunday mornings).



What is the VIP Meeting?

VIP stands for **V**ision, **I**nteraction, and **P**ray. The VIP meeting provides time for us to meet and pray together for the kids and their families, get real-time updates, and be reminded of our mission in partnering with families on this journey of discipling kids!

The VIP Meeting is held in room **C1**, right by the KidMin Check-in Desk. All Shepherds are also welcome to visit our Shepherd Lounge, located in room **B8**, anytime before or after the service. Here you'll find helpful resources (like paper copies of future lesson plans) and also some yummy snacks!

MEETING TIMES



1ST SERVICE SHEPHERDS:

8:30am

2ND SERVICE SHEPHERDS:

10:20am

If for some reason, you are not able to attend our VIP meeting, we ask that you arrive in your classroom 15 minutes prior to the start time of the service so you can be ready to greet the children and families warmly.



The Shepherd Lounge

New for the 2026–2027 ministry year! We're excited to welcome you to our new Shepherd Lounge—a space created just for you.

Designed to encourage, equip, and support you as you serve, the Shepherd Lounge is a place to pause before or after your class. Grab a snack or ice water, pick up your printed lesson and other ministry resources, or spend a few moments connecting with fellow Shepherds.

The Shepherd Lounge also includes shelves for classroom bins. At the end of the morning, simply return your classroom bin to its designated shelf so we can get it ready for the following week of ministry.

Our prayer is that the Shepherd Lounge will be more than just a place to pick up supplies. We hope it becomes a place where you feel encouraged, appreciated, refreshed, and equipped as we partner together to help kids know, love, follow, and share Jesus.



Large Group Rooms & The Wiggle Room



Our Large Group rooms are great spaces for kids to be outside of the classroom and together in larger groups – like Kids Worship!

The Wiggle Room is designed specifically for our Preschool classes. We know that our two- and three-year-olds are naturally wired for movement and play! So in addition to their interactive, hands-on Bible learning in the classroom, part of their schedule on Sundays will be to “visit” the Wiggle Room. We will get to use the Wiggle Room for WBF Kids as well as Re:charge Kids too!

Schedules for using the Wiggle Room and Large Group Rooms will be posted in your classroom and in the Large Group Rooms.



The Oasis

The Oasis is a sensory breakout room designed for kids who benefit from a break from the classroom. It is an amazing blessing to have a space dedicated to investing in and ministering to kids whose unique needs are best met in a space that is intentionally designed to allow for movement, engagement, and individualized support.

To be clear, The Oasis is not a separate class but rather a breakout space where our Hands and Feet buddies can be with kids as needed.

How do I check in on Sunday morning?

At the Kids Ministry Check-In area, you'll be able to sign in at one of the kiosks. Simply type in the last 4 digits of your phone number, select your name, and then you should see your Shepherd Group as an option (Nursery, Preschool, etc). Then click the check in button, and a name tag will print for you to wear. Wearing your name tag is important as it allows you entrance into our secure Kids Ministry Area.

If for some reason, you are unable to check in and get a name tag, go to our round check-in desk where one of our Welcome Team members will be happy to assist you.



Safety for Shepherds

Safety for our Shepherds is a priority! Serving with kids of all different ages can be physically demanding at times. Please know that we want to support you. So if sitting at a table with kids rather than being on the floor is best for you, that's great! And if picking up kids is not for you, that's ok too! We ask you to communicate with us so that you don't feel pressured or put in a position where you overextend what's best for you.



Info for Nursery Shepherds

Nurseries A-F

We currently have six nurseries for our youngest children, age two months old through two years old.



TAKING ATTENDANCE

As children are dropped off, mark off their name on the attendance sheet (this is alphabetized by first name). If a child's name is not yet on the list, write in the child's name at the end of the list. ***Just make sure they are checking into the correct class first.*** Sometimes the reason they are not on the list is because they were brought to the wrong classroom. You can verify this by checking which class is listed on the child's name tag.

Keep the attendance sheet on the clipboard near the door in the event of an evacuation. At dismissal, **check for matching guardian tags at pick up** -- there is a number on the child's tag that should match the number on the guardian tag that is presented by whoever is picking them up. Do not remove the child's nametag.

CHILD NAME TAG ICONS

Some children will have special icons at the top of their name tag to alert Shepherds about something. Below you'll find a key to what each of those icons means. You will also find this key on the clipboard in your room with the attendance sheet (hidden underneath the attendance sheet for discretion).

If you have any questions about an icon on a child's nametag, you can ask a Hallway Support member.



1st Visit



Birthday in the
next 7 days



Allergy



Special Needs



Legal Note
(see staff with
questions)



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

There is a Birthday Cart in the KidMin lounge area that is manned by someone every Sunday morning. They will have a list of all children (**Walkers through 4th Grade**) who have a birthday during the current month. So if it is a child's birthday month, they can go to that Birthday Cart on their way to or from class on any Sunday of that month and pick a special prize!

They'll also receive a personalized birthday card and a sticker. So if a child says that it's their birthday and they're not wearing a sticker, check to see if they've stopped by the Birthday Cart yet! (***Each child gets one visit/prize from the Birthday Cart – we will have a list there and check off which children have already claimed their prize that month***)



"MY MORNING" CARDS

When parents drop off their child in one of our infant nurseries, we ask them to fill out a "My Morning" card. This is a place where parents can jot down important information about their child for the Shepherds to know (bottles, snack, naps, etc). This also includes other helpful info that is specific to each child and very helpful for Shepherds to be able to care for the child well.



SNACK AND ALLERGIES

There are Cheerios in each of the nurseries to give out as a snack if the parent permits. You may give snack to the children at your discretion anytime during the service; there is not a set time for snack time in the nurseries.

If tables are used for eating snack, please wipe them off after snack is finished. Use one of the gray cloths and the surface cleaning spray provided by the sink. Put the used gray cloth into the "Dirty Linen" container on the counter.

Children with allergies have the **allergy icon** on their name tag. You'll find an **Allergy List** hanging above the counter in your classroom that lists children in your class that have allergies and what that allergy is. If a child has the allergy icon on their name tag but you don't see their name on that list, ask a Hallway Support member to look up their allergy for you.



Allergy



BOTTLE/CUP LABELS

If a child has a bottle or cup that they drink from during their time in the nursery, we ask that the Shepherds label it with the child's name (if the parents haven't already). That way there is no confusion about which bottle/cup belongs to which child.

Labels for bottles/cups are located on the counter. They are decently waterproof (can withstand a wash or getting wet in the bottle warmer) and stick well without leaving residue on the cup when removed.



NAPPING AND CRIBS

There are four sleeping rooms attached to Nurseries A & B, outfitted with cribs, monitors, and sound machines. When a child is put in a crib, write the name of the child and the corresponding crib on the white board that is on the sleeping room door. After each use, put dirty crib sheets in the hamper, and put new, clean sheets onto the crib.



CHANGING DIAPERS

Diapers may only be changed by **females** who are **16 years or older**. Wear new gloves each time you change a diaper. Use items that are in the child's diaper bag, if provided. If not, you may use what is at the changing station in the room.

Please place a diaper sticker on the child's name tag on their back (these are located in the changing table). This will help communicate between shepherds and to parents who has been changed.

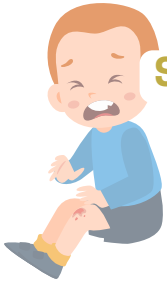
Clean the changing table after each use, using the disinfectant spray and a gray cloth or paper towel. Dispose of your gloves and the dirty diaper in the diaper genie.



UPSET CHILD

The time frame for when to notify the parents about an upset child varies from child to child. A general guideline is 10-15 minutes. But a few key factors or questions to ask are:

- Does the child seem like they may not be feeling well?
- Did the parents ask you to try to push through separation anxiety?
- Is the child fussy, or crying really hard?
- Did the parents say the child might sleep, and they are crying as they fight sleep?
- Is the family new and/or just starting to use the nursery, and we don't know their preferences yet?



SICK OR INJURED CHILD

We have a team of people in Kids Ministry whose role is to be in the hallways and available to help as needed. This team includes Kids Ministry Staff team members and our Hallway Support Leaders..

When a child is sick or injured, please contact the parents [either you as the Shepherd, or a Hallway Support Leader, or a Kids Ministry Staff team member will contact the parents].

Stay calm for the child until the parent is located and comes to the classroom. Communicate with the parents about the situation when they come for their child.

For situations where a child is hurt or injured, we have a folder marked “Incident Report Forms” beside the door to your room. The Hallway Support Leader or Kids Ministry Staff team member will help you complete the “Incident Report Form” so we have written information about what happened. Completed forms can be turned in at the Welcome Desk. Our Kids Ministry Staff team will follow up with the family.

END OF SERVICE PROCEDURE

The First Service Shepherds stay with the children until the Second Service Shepherds arrive (around 10:35am). At the end of each service, if you know that a child has been putting a toy in his/her mouth, put the toy in the “dirty” bin by the sink.

On Mondays, we have a team of people who invest time in cleaning toys, checking and refurbishing supplies, and making sure the rooms are ready for the next time of ministry!



EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In case of an emergency, there are evacuation procedures pictured on the wall by the door of each classroom. See **Appendix A** for all evacuation details.



MOVING CHILDREN UP TO THE NEXT NURSERY

We have “Nursery Move-Up Cards” available at the Kids Ministry Check-in/Welcome desk. When a parent would like to move a child to the next nursery, direct them to the Welcome Desk where they can complete a “move up” card regarding this proposed move. The Nursery Coordinator will follow up and contact the parents regarding their child moving to the next nursery.

If you clearly see that there is, for example, a crawling/walking child in the Infant Nursery, you may inform parents about the cards at the Check-in/Welcome desk. Please do not advise or push parents. Instead, just communicate with parents who may not know the process and let them know that the cards are available at the Check-in/Welcome desk.



Info for Preschool & Elementary Shepherds

Preschool | Pre-K & K | 1st-4th Grade

Lesson Plan Essentials

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

We use a Christ-centered, Bible based and developmentally appropriate curriculum which gives our very young children a strong foundation for beginning their journey of knowing, loving and following Jesus. Our Preschool classes will be introduced to basic truths about God's character including his love, power, and trustworthiness. The children will also learn about God's promise to save people, Jesus' life, and the significance of his death and resurrection.

PRE-K THRU 4TH GRADE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW



We use a Christ-centered, chronological, and theologically rich curriculum called the Gospel Project that goes through the entire narrative of Scripture over a span of 3 years. Our Coordinators customize and supplement the lessons to fit our ministry. The lessons are designed to promote relationships, teach the Bible, and provide hands-on opportunities for kids to process, practice, interact with, and internalize God's word and encounter God personally.

Note: Our eight Summer Sundays in July and August are a purposeful part of our three-year curriculum cycle, which takes kids through the narrative of Scripture. However, Summer Sundays are structured a little differently from our Sundays in September through June. If you serve during the summer, our Kids Ministry staff will make sure you have everything you need, including an overview of the summer schedule, lesson format, and other important details.

The policies and procedures outlined in this Shepherd Handbook apply throughout the entire ministry year, including Summer Sundays.

G4 KIDS

4th grade is an exciting milestone in Kids Ministry, and this year marks the beginning of a new Sunday morning routine designed especially for this age group.



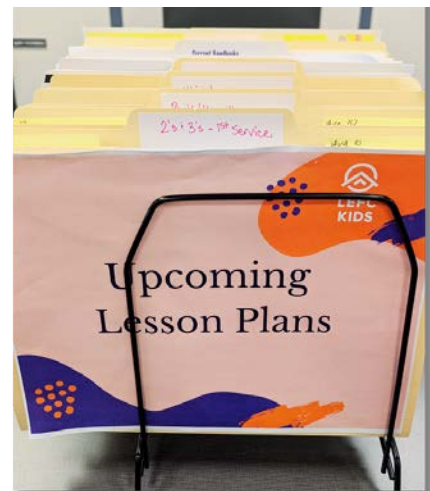
During first service, fourth graders will gather for engaging small group discussions based around the book of Matthew where they can learn how to study the Bible, ask questions, deepen their faith, and learn how God's Word applies to their everyday lives. They will also have the opportunity to interact with one another and build friendships along the way.

During second service, fourth graders will continue in the Gospel Project curriculum (mentioned earlier) that they have been learning from throughout their elementary years in Kids Ministry.

Our desire is to help every fourth grader grow in their knowledge of God, strengthen their faith, see themselves as an important part of our church family, and confidently prepare them for Crossover Ministry.

PREPARING FOR THE LESSON

You will find all our lesson plans two weeks in advance on the LEFC website, www.lefc.net/shepherdresources. If you do not have access to the internet or a printer, we also keep a few physical copies of future lessons in the Shepherd Lounge (Room B8). On a Sunday morning, you can pick up a physical copy of the next couple Sundays' lessons.



As a Shepherd in your class, you know your kids best. As you read and pray over the lesson as you prepare for this ministry, adjust the plans as needed based on your kids and your group dynamics. To clarify, while one activity might be effective in engaging one group, it may not be as effective with another group. Adjust the activities and plans as needed, as you are guided by the Holy Spirit, to create an atmosphere where the kids are truly engaging with God's Word and its relevance in our everyday lives.

The lesson plans are scripted so that shepherds can get an idea of what the presentation might sound like as they are speaking to the children. The plans are not intended to be read aloud to the children.



LESSON SUPPLIES

The Kids Ministry team provides and prepares all supplies that you will need for your lesson. These items are placed in a plastic bin specific to your class and the service time you are teaching, and the bin is labeled accordingly (i.e., 4th grade | First Service).

We have an amazing team of people who serve in Kids Ministry throughout the week—giving of their time to invest in this ministry! This team gathers and prepares the supplies so that your bin will be in your classroom Sunday morning, ready with everything you need.

Important to note: There are some supplies that are always kept in your classroom that will not be in the supply bin for you (i.e., scissors, pencils, crayons, etc.). The cabinets in the classroom are labeled for your reference, so you can see what supplies are in the room and where they are kept. Please make sure all classroom supplies are put back in the correct spot in the classroom at the end of the service.



CHILDREN'S OFFERING

We know from Scripture that giving of our resources is part of our worship of God. We include “children’s offering” as a part of our ministry with children because learning to give generously, out of faith in God’s provision and a cheerful heart, is part of being a follower of Jesus.

Here are several Scriptures you can read together with your children to talk about giving generously: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, Acts 20:35, 1 Corinthians 16:2, and James 2:16.

The children’s offering box is located on the wall just after the Kids Ministry Lounge as you walk into our Kids Ministry hallway. Throughout the 2026–2027 ministry year, our children’s offering will be given to bless our ten Global Partner Families adopted by Kids Ministry.

GLOBAL PARTNER FAMILIES

As a Kids Ministry, we have adopted 11 Global Partner families that we pray for, care for, and support. Many of the children in these families attend one of our Kids Ministry Classes when they visit the USA! We want LEFC Kids and our Global Partner families to feel connected even when they are far apart.



“Friends From Afar”

In our **Preschool - Kindergarten** classes, there is a portion of the lesson when kids learn and pray about the work of our Global Partner Families. We are teaching children that even though they may not see these Global Partners often, we can still be their friends! Each week features a new interactive activity introducing the culture that the family of the month lives in and the work that they are doing to share the love of Jesus with people in different countries. These activities may include games, crafts or videos. Each session will end with a short prayer to lead the children through to talk to God about our Global Partners. Because of certain security measures we must maintain for the safety of families living internationally, these activities will not be published online with each lesson. All the information for Friends From Afar will be stored in a binder in each room.



Pen Pal Letters

1st - 4th Graders have the unique opportunity to communicate with our Global Partner kids by sending pen pal letters! Each classroom has a “Pen Pal Bin” with cards, templates, stickers, and envelopes for children to draw pictures and write notes to kids in their grade who are serving with their families on the other side of the world. This past year, we had quite a few letters sent (emailed!) back and forth between kids! This is a special opportunity for our kids at LEFC to encourage one another and to connect with our Global Partner families.

General Procedures



TAKING ATTENDANCE

As you greet children, mark off their name on the attendance sheet (this is alphabetized by first name). If a child's name is not yet on the list, write in the child's name at the end of the list. Children who are visiting for the first time will be given a yellow visitor sticker when they check in, and a star symbol will appear at the top of their name tag, so that you know to give them an extra warm welcome!

Keep the attendance sheet and clipboard near the door so that it is easily accessible in the event of an evacuation. At dismissal, please check that the guardian tag number and the number on the child's tag are matching. Do not remove the child's nametag.



CHILD NAME TAG ICONS

Some children will have special icons at the top of their name tag to alert Shepherds about something. Below you'll find a key to what each of those icons means – you will also find this key on the clipboard in your room with the attendance sheet (hidden underneath the attendance sheet for discretion).

If you notice that a child has the star on their nametag, you can make sure they feel welcome on their first visit to LEFC! If you notice the birthday cake, you can wish them a Happy Birthday and make sure they know to visit the Birthday Cart! If you have any questions about any of the other icons, you can ask a Hallway Support member.



1st Visit



Birthday in the
next 7 days



Allergy



Special Needs



Legal Note
(see staff with
questions)



WELCOME/ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES

These activities set the atmosphere for Shepherds to connect with the kids relationally to start off the morning. They are intentionally planned ideas to trigger thoughts and point towards the discussion time/sharing time.



THE END OF FIRST SERVICE

During the transition between First and Second Service, the First Service Shepherds stay with the children until the Second Service Shepherds arrive (around 10:35am). This transition time is usually when snack is served.

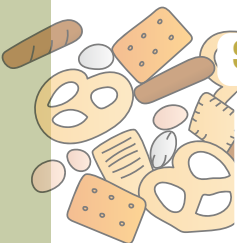
You can also use this transition time to be intentional about further building relationships with the children, and the children to build relationships with one another. There are games and activities in the closets of each room to set up on the tables. Playing games with the children during this time is a great way to foster community within the group. **Please note:** this transition time is NOT intended to be a “free for all” or time for ball play in the classrooms or for wrestling with the kids.

When the second service Shepherds have arrived and taken over, please return your lesson supply bin to the Supply Closet in the Shepherd Lounge so we can get it ready for the following week of ministry.



THE END OF SECOND SERVICE

Please stack the chairs in the room (5 chairs high) in the designated area before you leave. Please also return your lesson supply bin to the Supply Closet in the Shepherd Lounge so we can get it ready for the following week of ministry.



SNACK TIME

Snack is usually served during the transition between services for Elementary classes, and at the end of *both* services for Preschool classes. Wash your hands before serving the snack, and help the children to remember (or guide them) to wash their hands before snack time.

After snack time, use the cleaning spray and a gray cleaning cloth (located by the sink) to wipe down the tables. The dirty cloths can be put into your lesson supply bin so that they will be washed.

Snack time can be a fun and great way to connect with children personally and relationally!

Preschool Classes

In the cabinets beneath the sink in the classrooms, you will find a bag of Veggie Straws. You can use the gloves provided to put Veggie Straws into the small/short plastic snack cups that are kept in the cabinet.

In the same cabinet, there are also taller plastic cups provided if children would like water to drink. Simply use the water from the sink.

Pre-K through 4th Grade

In the cabinet under the sink, you will find a bag of Veggie Straws. You can use the gloves provided to put Veggie Straws on napkins or on paper towels. There are drink cups provided as well if children would like water. Simply use the water from the sink.



BOTTLE/CUP LABELS

In the Preschool rooms, if a child brings a cup/water bottle of their own, we ask that the Shepherds label it with the child's name (if the parents haven't already). That way there is no confusion about which bottle/cup belongs to which child. Labels for bottles/cups are located on the counter. The adhesive is decently strong but will not leave residue when the label is removed.



ALLERGIES

Children with allergies have the allergy icon on their name tag. You'll find an Allergy List hanging above the counter in your classroom that lists children in your class that have allergies and what that allergy is. If a child has the allergy icon on their name tag but you don't see their name on that list, ask a Hallway Support member to look up their allergy for you.



SICK OR INJURED CHILD

We have a team of people in Kids Ministry whose role is to be in the hallways and available to help as needed. This team includes Kids Ministry Staff team members and our Hallway Support Leaders.

When a child is sick or injured, contact the parents [either you as the Shepherd, or a Hallway Support Leader, or a Kids Ministry Staff team member will contact the parents].

Stay calm for the child until the parent is located and comes to the classroom. Communicate with the parents about the situation when they come for their child.

For situations where a child is hurt or injured, we have a folder marked "Incident Report Forms" beside the door to your room. The Hallway Support Leader or Kids Ministry Staff team member will help you complete the "Incident Report Form" so we have written information about what happened. Completed forms can be turned in at the Welcome Desk. Our Kids Ministry Staff team will follow up with the family.



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

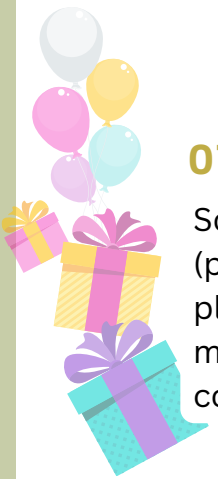
There is a Birthday Cart in the KidMin lounge area that is manned by someone every Sunday morning. They will have a list of all children (Walkers through 4th Grade) who have a birthday during the current month. So if it is a child's birthday month, they can go to that Birthday Cart on their way to or from class on any Sunday of that month and pick a special prize!

They'll also receive a personalized birthday card and a sticker. So if a child says that it's their birthday and they're not wearing a sticker, check to see if they've stopped by the Birthday Cart yet! ***(Each child gets one visit/prize from the Birthday Cart – we will have a list there and check off which children have already claimed their prize that month)***



LOST TEETH

If a child loses a tooth on a Sunday morning, we want to celebrate this milestone of growing up! Help the child clean up and/or calm down from losing the tooth if needed. Next, find one of our Hallway team members. They will go to the Shepherd Lounge and get the Lost Tooth Basket from which the child can choose a container to store the tooth in to take home. The child can also take a sticker to wear and a Lost Tooth Certificate that you as their Shepherd or Junior Shepherd can fill out for them to take home!



OTHER GIFTS FOR CHILDREN

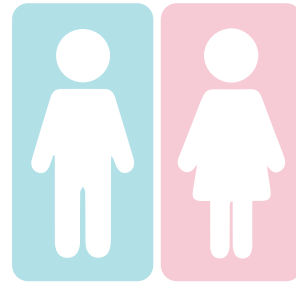
Sometimes a Shepherd might have an idea to purchase a little gift for each child (particularly at Christmas or Easter). If that is something you choose to do, please communicate with your coordinator BEFORE you make the purchase, and make sure there is one for every child on the class list (not just the ones who come at the service in which you serve).



EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In case of an emergency, there are evacuation procedures pictured on the wall by the door of each classroom. See **Appendix A** for all evacuation details.

Bathroom Procedures



PRESCHOOL ROOMS

Bathrooms are attached in these classrooms. The door may be left slightly open, but avoid entering unless necessary. **Female** Shepherds and **female** Junior Shepherds **[16 years and older]** may assist as needed.

PRE-K THROUGH 4TH GRADE CLASSES

Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms may use the individual bathrooms that are located just outside their classrooms, within Large Group 1 (see map on last page).

1st-4th grade may use the individual bathrooms that are in the hallway OR the children's bathrooms in the LEFC Kids Ministry Lounge area (see map). The bathrooms in this lounge area are for children only. This set of bathrooms is great to use particularly when taking a group together for bathroom use.

Children in 1st-4th grade may also wear a bathroom hall pass (available in each room) to walk to the bathroom independently.

You can use the small white board on the back of the classroom door as a place for kids to write their names if they are using a bathroom pass. This way you have a record of who is in the bathroom in the event of an evacuation. When the kids come back and return the bathroom pass, they can also erase their names.



Classrooms & Facilities



We are so blessed to have such a beautiful environment for investing in the children! We desire to be good stewards of the space God has provided for this ministry, and we are super excited to have an organized space to best support the ministry environment!

We love this motto: A place for everything and everything in its place!

RUNNING LOW ON SUPPLIES?

There is a whiteboard on the inside of the closet door in every room. This is where you can leave notes for our Kids Ministry team about anything that you're running low on or missing, or anything that may not be working correctly in your room. These whiteboards are checked by our team every Monday.



If you don't have enough of something that you need on a Sunday morning, you can let the Sunday team leader/Hallway Support know so that they can get it for you. You can also check the supply closet in the Shepherd Lounge. Just make sure that if you take something from the supply closet, you leave a note on the whiteboard inside your closet door. Then we know what was taken so we can make sure we continue to have enough in stock.

ROOM MAINTENANCE & CARE



Each classroom has strips designed to hang posters and artwork. If the lesson references hanging something on the wall, special wall-friendly white tape will be provided for you in your bin; please carefully remove tape before leaving that day.

If the lesson references putting tape on the floor to define spaces, painter's tape will be provided in your bin; please carefully remove the tape before leaving that day.

If you use the white boards, please wipe them clean before leaving. Please note: we appreciate you **NOT** taping things to the whiteboards. Please use magnets instead.

Classroom Expectations



In the context of showing love, honor, and encouragement, we have designed expectations for the children in our ministry environment. Teachable moments, reminders of expectations, and redirection toward honoring behaviors are all a part of the discipleship process.

NOTES FOR SHEPHERDS

Review expectations regularly. When giving instructions and reviewing expectations, expect students to be quiet and looking at you.

Make sure you are making eye contact with them.

Give directions in regular speaking tones. Please do not shout over students.

Ask the children to repeat instructions as needed to ensure they have understood instructions and/or expectations.

The following are talking points for shepherds to discuss with their class. Adjust these as needed for the age group of your class.

Expectations

1. We are kind
2. We are safe
3. We are good listeners
4. We make good choices

WE ARE KIND

- Use kind words
- Welcome others
- Take turns with toys

WE MAKE GOOD CHOICES

- Clean up toys/snacks
- Participate with your group
- Use bathroom at appropriate times

WE ARE SAFE

- Keep hands to yourself
- Stay in the classroom/with your class
- Use toys properly
- Keep shoes on
- Walk, don't run
- Sit on chairs or on the floor (in circle time)

WE ARE GOOD LISTENERS

- Follow directions the first time
- Raise your hand when you'd like to talk
- One person talking at a time

CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

1. Remind/redirect the child (See the 5-step approach for addressing behavior below).
2. Connect with the child [maintain eye contact] to remind and redirect them another time.
3. Have a conversation with the child [apart from the group, but not alone with the child].
4. Connect with the child's family to explore how we can best partner together and/or reach out to someone on our Kids Ministry Staff Team.

5-STEP PROCESS RESOURCE FOR RE-DIRECTING

The following is a resource for you. It is a process that is in sync with our desire to make the most of teachable moments as we disciple children. This is a 5-step approach, moving from one to the next as needed:



1. Look at the child. Often just catching his or her eye is all the reminder they need.
2. Move towards the child. Gently touch his or her arm if needed.
3. Address the child gently and quietly, without embarrassing him/her or interrupting the activity. Remind them of a better choice and clarify expectations.
4. Guide the child away from the problem or remove the distraction from the child.
5. Here are some ideas for positive, encouraging conversation afterwards:
 - What was the expectation that you were not following [from our four things –kind, safe, being a good listener, making good choices]
 - What choice will you make moving forward? How will it be different?

Helping Redirect Pretend Gun Play

It's not uncommon for preschoolers to begin pretending that sticks, blocks, or other objects are guns during free play. When this happens, our goal is not to shame or scold children, but to calmly and confidently redirect them.

One of the best tools you have is simply being prepared. Keep a few easy games or engaging activities in mind that you can quickly invite children to join. A scavenger hunt, building challenge, movement game, or imaginative group activity can redirect their attention while encouraging children to play together in positive ways.

Our desire is to create Kids Ministry environments where children experience kindness, friendship, creativity, and the love of Jesus. By gently redirecting children from pretend gun play toward activities that build relationships and encourage community, we help shape a classroom culture where every child feels safe, welcomed, and valued.

Thank you for helping make our classrooms places where children learn not only about Jesus, but also how to love and enjoy one another.

CONVERSATIONS WITH PARENTS

Please note: Junior Shepherds are asked not to have conversations with parents regarding children's well-being and/or behavior. This is just for the Shepherds.



Important things to remember when Shepherds are having conversations with parents:

- Our discipleship ministry with children is a partnership with families, so we want to have an attitude of honor [not judgement] and encouragement [as parents, we all like to hear encouraging words about our children].
- Maintaining open communication is vital in our partnership with families. As parents, we don't want to find out in December that there's been major challenges with our child, but we were not told. [Or worse, everyone seems to know but us as the parents].

More tips for talking with parents:

- Encouraging words are a blessing to moms and dads. As you greet parents at dismissal, let them know what you are noticing about their child.

"We appreciated Susan's great questions today as we discussed the application of the story."

"Nolan did a great job listening in circle time today."

"I could tell Tammy was working hard on learning her verse this week—she did a great job with that today."

"We love Cameron's energy and excitement about being here."

- **Brief** conversations usually work well.

“I’m enjoying having Mary in our class this year. Today, was a little tricky as we noticed Mary was hitting another child today and that didn’t seem to be her normal behavior. Is there an approach that you’ve found helpful that we could try?”

“I’m really appreciating all of Ian’s stories he’s sharing. And I’d love to ask you for some ideas that you’ve found that work to help him engage and listen during circle time. What are things you have found that work at home?”

“We’re noticing this...we have tried this but it doesn’t seem to be working...what ideas have you found that might be helpful for us?”

- Speak privately with parents/families

At dismissal you see the child’s mom or dad. “Hi! I’d love to touch base with you about a question.” Then, with the help of your teammate in the class, talk with the parent off to the side [rather than in front of other families].

- It’s okay to ask for help if you’re not sure how to connect with the parents

Email or call someone on our Kids Ministry staff team to share: “It was just one of those days. I’m not sure what happened but it was a tough morning. I just felt drained and wasn’t sure of myself in connecting with the parents after class. What do you recommend given what I’ve described to you how the morning went and how can I have a conversation and make sure to not sound accusing or judging when I talk with the parents?”

Appendix A

LEFC Kids Emergency Procedures

In any emergency that might happen in the Kids Ministry areas of our building, our primary concern is the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

EMERGENCY GO BAGS

- Each room contains a marked Emergency Go Bag. The bag contains the following: basic first aid supplies (gloves, band-aids), a small water bottle (8 oz), and laminated red, yellow, and green cards.
- The purpose of the laminated cards is for clear communication to our staff and security team once your class has arrived at the meeting spot outside during an evacuation:
 - Green: all accounted for
 - Yellow: child(ren)/adult missing or extra child(ren) in group
 - Red: immediate attention needed

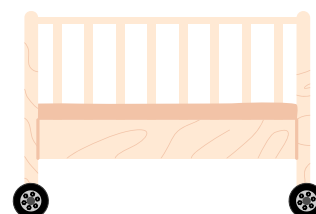


EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an evacuation, please ensure everyone in your class is taken to the designated meeting area outside.

Nurseries

- Nurseries where children are **NOT** walking
 - Place up to 5 children in a designated “evacuation crib” and transport them outside. Do not try to carry a child while wheeling a crib.
 - One shepherd should check each crib in the sleeping rooms to assure that no children are left behind.
 - Take emergency go bag and attendance clipboard, and move class to designated area, following the designated pathway listed in your room.
 - Close the classroom door as you leave.



- Nurseries where children **CAN** walk
 - Use walking rope to help children move through the building
 - Take emergency go bag and attendance clipboard, and move class to designated area, following the designated pathway listed in your room.
 - Close the classroom door as you leave.
- Welcome team members are designated to assist all nurseries as follows
 - 1 person check the Nursing Mother's Nursing area and assist any mothers and babies there as needed.
 - 2 people move to each of the youngest nurseries. Assist with loading evacuation cribs and wheeling children outside. If it is feasible, gather diaper bags and carry with you as you leave.
 - Assist Shepherds with carrying out room check as you leave.

Preschool through 4th Grade Classes

- One shepherd checks in-class bathroom and closet while other Shepherd(s) line children up at the door.
- Twos through Kindergarten line up with the walking rope.
- Take the emergency go bag and the attendance clipboard and lead children to the designated meeting area, following the designated pathway listed in your room. Close the door as you leave.
- One Shepherd leads, and one Shepherd is the last in line. Additional shepherds walk alongside the group and/or assist with children who might experience extreme anxiety with the change in routine.
- If you pass children in the hall that are not attached to a class (for example, coming back from the bathroom) take them along with your group. Do not let them "find" their class at this point.



When you reach the designated meeting area outside:

- Count children and verify names with the attendance roster. Place the appropriate colored card on the clipboard and display it so that Kids Ministry Staff and Security Team members can see.
- Settle children and start a calm activity, sing a favorite song together, or tell a favorite story. As Shepherds, stay calm so that children can feel your sense of calm.
- Remain with your class. Stay in your designated area unless First Responders, Security Team members, or Kids Ministry Staff/LEFC Staff direct otherwise.
 - If an **ALL CLEAR** announcement is made, take the children back inside to your classroom [the same way you came in] and resume your planned activities.
 - If **DISMISSAL** is announced by Security Team members, or Kids Ministry Staff/LEFC staff, you may dismiss children to parents when parents come to pick up their children.

****As of Summer of 2026, we are working on updating where the designated meeting area will be outside. This decision will be made and communicated to Shepherds before Promotion Sunday, September 13th, 2026. It will then be added to this Handbook for any future printing.**

Appendix B



Appendix C

Kids Ministry Map Key - 2026-2027

Nurseries

Nursery A	B10
Nursery B	B11
Nursery C	B12
Nursery D	B13
Nursery E	B14
Nursery F	B15

Preschool

Preschool A	B6
Preschool B	B5
Preschool C	B4
Preschool D	B3
Preschool E	B20
Preschool F	B21
Pre-K A	B16
Pre-K B	B17
Kindergarten A	B19
Kindergarten B	B18

Elementary

1st Grade A	B22
1st Grade B	B23
2nd Grade A	B24
2nd Grade B	B25
3rd Grade	B26
G4	B27

Supplemental Rooms

The Oasis	B7
Shepherd Lounge	B8
The Wiggle Room	B9