

## Parent Pickup

Please abide by the parent pickup policies of each program. Parents/guardians of elementary school aged students (PreK-Gr.5) must come into the building to pick up their child. Waiting in the parking lot or another part of the building for your child to find you is not safe. Students in Middle School and High School can meet parents in the parking lot or another part of the building, but they should never wait alone, especially outside. When in doubt, students should stick with a buddy or a youth leader.

If arrangements are made with the program leader ahead of time, siblings in Middle School or High School can serve as shepherds, helping younger students connect with their parents/guardians after church school or rehearsal. Youth shepherds must know it is their responsibility to watch out for their younger sibling, and should always know whom to call if something goes wrong.

## The Foyer

The foyer is a great place to hang out, but not alone. Children who spend time in the foyer before or after worship or rehearsals must have a parent nearby. Youth must have a buddy. Sitting in the foyer alone is not the safest choice.

## The Buddy System

One of the best ways to help foster a safe environment at Trinity is to remind children and youth of the buddy system. Trinity is a big place, children and youth should never be alone. Let us all help our youngest members remember to stick with a buddy, when going to the bathroom, when hanging out after church, when waiting for rehearsals.



**Safe Sanctuaries  
at Trinity UMC**



## In Worship

Children and youth are an important part of our church family. We hope they feel welcomed and encouraged by many of the adults in the congregation. We hope they think of Trinity as a safe space. However, if we are to foster a safe environment for everyone, especially the children and youth of the congregation, there are some practices we need to observe. This is the work of all of us, not just parents, not just children and youth. We all play a role in fostering a safe and welcoming community.

## Bathroom Breaks

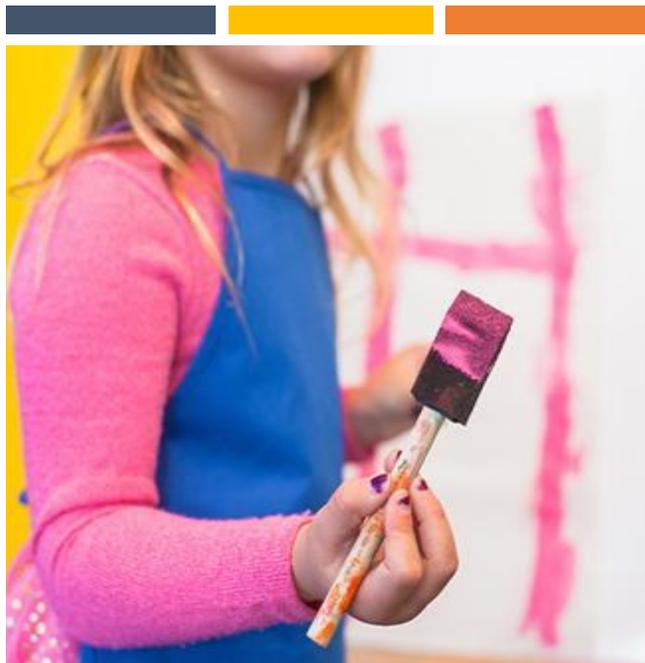
Bring a buddy to the bathroom. Children and youth who have to use the bathroom during worship should not go alone. Children must go with buddy who is 14 or older, such as a parent or a youth helper. Youth can go with a friend, a peer.

## The Balcony

The balcony has been an unofficial youth hang-out space for years. It is somewhat removed from the rest of the congregation and gives youth a little freedom and independence. Here are some safety guidelines for the balcony.

No one should sit in the balcony alone. All youth who decide to sit in the balcony should sit with someone they know and trust.

Sitting in the balcony is a privilege for students who are in high school. Children and middle school students who wish to sit in the balcony must be accompanied by an adult (21+).



**“This is the work of all of us. We all play a role in fostering a safe and welcoming community.”**

## The Balcony (cont.)

Those who sit in the balcony must know to come downstairs if they feel unsafe for whatever reason, and they should report the incident to a parent or staff member.

## Free Time

Staff and many volunteers of the church know the Safe Sanctuaries policy and enforce it when leading church school, Chapel Kids, rehearsals, and other programs, but what about when worship or the program ends? Children and youth are not permitted to roam about the building unsupervised. This is not a safe choice. It is the parent’s responsibility to know where their children and youth are. But, everyone else plays a role as well. If you see an unsupervised child, ask “Where are your parents?” It is also ok to remind the young person that they need stay with his or her parent or group.