

St. Andrew's Preschool News

March 2022

From the Director



Welcome to March! So it was 2 years ago that St. Andrew's Preschool closed due to the pandemic. I remember that very clearly since I looked at the shamrocks on the class calendars for the next few months when time stood still. I entered a very quiet building each day wondering what in the world was happening and how would we ever come back! We did come back! We are thankful for our preschool families. You are a blessing to us. We continue to be grateful for the opportunity to watch your children learn and grow. It's what we love.

If you were not able to attend the Kindergarten Readiness Workshop last month or want a refresher course, Celene has placed the PowerPoint presentation in our Weekly Email.

Just a heads up that we have scheduled Picture Days April 13 and 14. Individual and class photos will be taken by Victor O'Neil studios. Once the photos are taken, the proofs will be sent to your email address where you can complete your purchase. There is no obligation to buy.

Science is a large part of our curriculum. The past two years we have not hosted Science Night but it's coming back Wednesday, April 27th from 5:15 pm-7:15 pm. Save the date! More details coming soon!

We are looking forward to warmer temperatures and lots of outdoor time!

Warm regards,
Tami



Save the Date!!



Easter Egg Hunt St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Sunday, April 17th at 10:30 a.m.

Vacation Bible School Preschool Families! Please join us this summer for our annual VBS program! This year our theme is Jerusalem Marketplace and it will take place in person July 18-22. More information and registration links will come out towards the end of spring. Please mark you calendars, if you are interested in attending.



The Puppy and Kitten Class



February has been a fun month in the Puppy and Kitten class. We began the month with a transportation unit. The children enjoyed creating their own vehicle with various paper shapes. They were so creative! This is one of our favorite art projects as it really shows each child's individuality. We also had a great time working on valentine art and sharing our love and friendship. We read Valentine's Day books. The children loved making valentine sun catchers to decorate our room. The students had so much fun filling their friends' valentine bags with cards and goodies. Thank you for all you did to make that day special.

Our focus switched to "Community Helpers" at the end of February. We learned about police officers, firefighters, mail carriers, school bus drivers, doctors, dentists, veterinarians...the list goes on and on! During the first week, our Dramatic Play area featured a variety of "doctor gear," including pretend stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, thermometers, bandages, and medicine cups. The children enjoyed putting on their lab coats and giving medical checkups to the classroom baby dolls. We added several stuffed dogs and cats in need of medical attention, so that the children could pretend to be veterinarians. We added Fire Fighter and Construction Worker gear to the dress up box and filled it with firefighter coats, hats, hoses, and fire extinguishers. The children had fun suiting up in their uniforms and fighting "fires" all over our classroom! Participating in pretend play is an important aspect of childhood development, and we try to give our preschoolers plenty of opportunities to do it!

Some of our manipulatives included play dough and play dough tools, puzzles and small mailboxes where they practiced sorting shapes and colors. All of these help strengthen fine motor skills.

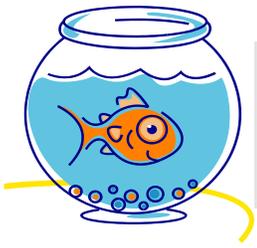
Our sensory bin changed a couple of times. We started the month with tiny colored beads, red buttons, plastic hearts, gems, small animals and valentine heart erasers. For our Community Helper theme, our sensory bin changed to dried black beans with glass beads, tissue paper, recycling trucks, small recycling bins and scoops. Our sensory bins provide opportunities for children to stimulate some or all of the following senses:

- Visual (sight)
- Auditory (hearing)
- Tactile (touch)
- Olfactory (smell)

For the month of March, we will read Dr. Seuss books in honor of his birthday, March 2nd. We will also make Dr. Seuss inspired crafts. Our thematic unit will focus on St. Patrick's Day and Fairytales.

We feel blessed to have your wonderful children in our lives.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kroeger and Mrs. Stites



The Fish and Frog Class



In February we celebrated love and learned about different modes of transportation. We dedicated a whole week and extended the Transportation unit since the children were having so much fun. They loved playing with the train table, cars, dump trucks, airplanes and many other vehicles. We made boats out of paper and had them float in the water. Thank you for your kind compliments on the 3D hot air balloons and airplanes. We read books and had conversations about visiting places they have visited with family and friends. This helped us transition to our next unit — Valentine's Day.

The children worked so hard on their decorative valentine cards taking time to add their names. All of the children can recite their first and last names. It was astonishing to see how many children are able to spell their name out loud or write it on paper. Using their fine motor skills, the students decorated their valentine bags with stamps and stickers. This unit ended with a Valentine's Day celebration which included cookie and goody bags for both our classes. The last week of February we read Dr. Seuss books and made Dr. Seuss inspired crafts.

Next month our thematic unit will focus on community helpers, which will include police officers, firefighters, mail carriers, teachers, doctors, dentists, veterinarians, bakers, chefs and carpenters.

Thank you for your continued support and letting us spend time with your awesome children!

Warmly,
Lisa and Nandita



The Penguin Class



February has been a fun month for the Penguins! We began the month with the final week of our transportation unit. The kids enjoyed creating their own vehicle with various paper shapes. They were so creative! This is one of our favorite art projects as it really shows each child's individuality. We also had a great time working on Valentine art and sharing our love and friendships in and out of the classroom. We read lots of Valentine's Day books, and the children loved making valentines to decorate our room and to take home to their families. Thank you for all the wonderful cards, words, and gifts during the Valentine season. We feel blessed to have your wonderful children in our lives.

During our circle time, we worked on the letters D, P, B, and R by thinking of words that begin with those letters, talking about the sound each letter makes, and practicing writing the letters on slates. We also discussed and read books about feelings and how they change. The children loved all the different facial expressions that accompany feelings. We practiced identifying numbers and counting and adding by throwing multiple dice and figuring out the total number represented.

The Penguins worked very hard preparing their "hugs" to send to grandparents or other relatives or friends! The children colored teddy bears and hearts, wrote their names, and cut out their hearts to mail with our class letter to their loved ones. These activities are great ways to strengthen their hands and prepare them for writing in Kindergarten. We have really enjoyed receiving mail back and reading the letters in class. As the mail comes in, we share them during circle time or at the end of the day and then return the letters to the family. We look forward to receiving more letters in the coming days! Thank you so much for sending in addresses!

At the end of our Valentine unit, we spent some time talking about family love. We read many books about families and learned that all families are different. Each Penguin drew a portrait of their own family and they are proudly displayed in our room. You will really enjoy seeing these when we send them home sometime in March.

We ended the month reading books from our favorite authors, including Dr. Seuss. This is such a great unit filled with fun stories, rhyming opportunities, artwork and writing. We will continue this unit through the first week of March.

The weather in February provided us with many opportunities to play in our indoor playground where the children enjoyed riding scooters and hoppity horses and trying different obstacle courses set up by the teachers.

We hope that the weather cooperates in the coming weeks for more outside play in the sunshine!

Mrs. MacArthur and Mrs. Kockler



The Lion Class



What a whirlwind we had in the month of February! We started off the month with a unit on arctic animals, and the science of snow and ice. The Lions loved learning about a new arctic animal every day. They made great connections and we even used our background knowledge to figure out how the animals adaptations helped them in the arctic. The Lions pretended to be Arctic explorers, went ice fishing for alphabet letters and even went ice skating! We had lots of fun pretending with our Arctic animal habitats too. It was really neat to see the Lions "fix" the habitats to put the correct animals together when they got mixed up. They are paying attention! We talked about the shape of snowflakes and read a great non-fiction book about snow and ice. We created a life cycle of a snowflake and we read many fun fiction books about snow and snow people. It was fun watching the Lions excavate the arctic animals from the ice. Thank you for all the cans. The Lions LOVED making "ice" towers and castles with them.

After learning about arctic animals, we jumped into lots of Valentine fun and playing at the post office. The Lions enjoyed writing Valentines for you and their friends. They are learning to copy common phrases like "I love you", "you're the best", and others. This is a fun way to practice writing. The Lions pretended to blow you kisses and decorated a page full of hearts. The Lions had a blast on Valentine's Day and the kids loved handing out the cards to their friends and decorating cupcakes. We moved right into an author study on Jan Brett. We started with reading several versions of the folktale "The Mitten". The Lions compared and contrasted the different versions, which helped them recall details of each text. This is an important step in learning to read. This is a simple way to teach about similarities and differences between two things. It helps develop vocabulary and the important skill of making text to text connections. We defined the words character and setting and the Lions identified them for each story. We used a Venn Diagram to compare the two stories (introducing another way to graph and compare information).

We have mixed things up during circle time by sorting pictures by their initial letter sound. This helps them by not only identifying the correct word (since it has to match one of two letters) and then figure out which letter it matches. The Lions still love the linear calendar and counting the days of the school. During the first week of March we celebrated our 100th day of school and Dr. Seuss' birthday! The Lions have been counting the days since the beginning of the year and they are very excited about our 100th day. In March we will also celebrate St. Patrick's Day and rainbows. We love talking about rainbows since it adds a little science in with our discussion of Leprechauns and all things green. The Lions are very excited about finding that silly Leprechaun that they are sure is hiding at St. Andrew's.

With love and a roar, Mrs. Nyman and Mrs. Jacobs



The Discovery Room "Where no discovery is too small"



What is a lion's favorite activity? 'Lion' around! We spent the month of February exploring biomes. The main biomes we focused on included marine, polar, tundra, savanna, desert and tropical. Students enjoyed discovering the different species of animals and plants that live in each habitat and the adaptations they have to help them survive.

During the first week of February, we focused on the marine and savanna biomes. Students interacted with a large diorama complete with brownish savanna beans, grasses, a blue water bead water-hole, plastic mountain, and numerous exotic plastic animals. Animals introduced included hippopotamuses, rhinoceroses, crocodiles, lions, cheetahs, ostriches, zebras, giraffes, mandrills, and water buffalo. Students noted how animal color and blending or 'camouflaging' played a vital role in their survival. They also learned to differentiate between predator, apex predator, and prey. Students hung plastic monkeys from a Baobab tree to see how many the tree could support before collapsing into a plastic crocodile pond below. The younger classes loved singing "Five Little Monkeys Hanging from a Tree." Everyone had the opportunity to water-color pictures of their favorite animals from both biomes. We learned that the Marine biome is the largest biome on earth and how it consists of five zones. Students got their hands wet, literally, by exploring tide pools complete with various tropical fish and plants. Important plant terminology, kelp and seaweed, was introduced.

Throughout the following three weeks additional biomes were added in the following order: tropical, polar, tundra and desert. Unique animals explored in the tropical biome unit included the tapir, okapi, toucan, jaguar, and anaconda. We read The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry and learned the importance of animal preservation and how one tropical tree can house so many species within its canopies. The person in the book decided not to cut down the tree to prevent the animals from becoming 'endangered' or 'extinct.' The entire polar biome was filled with water beads and plastic ice cubes. Penguins could slide down a toy ice burg while polar bears swam in the arctic looking for seals. Many large species of whales loomed in the background. Students perfected their hand-eye coordination skills by luring penguins at the electric rotating fishing game. The last week of this unit I added the tundra and desert biome displays complete with a snow substitute called 'real snow,' fake cactus plants, and smooth sand for desert creatures to make various tracks. Tundra animals included reindeer, brown bears, arctic foxes, arctic hares, and snowy owls. The desert biome contained mini plastic scorpions hidden below the sand, lizards, snakes, and camels. Once students could identify an animal's matching biome, we celebrated by reading books from the "Who Would Win?" series. Students loved voting for which animal would be victorious if two different animals were to encounter each other in the wild and engage in battle. I appreciate how each book is filled to the brim with fascinating animal facts and science terminology. The two most popular stations were biome puzzles and the "Mix or Match" wild animal magnetic game. It was so fun to hear the names of new student created animal species such as the 'eletiger' and 'crocophant!'

Next month we will travel to space and beyond! We will explore astronomy throughout March. It seems like almost each day I come home with an adorable story to share with my family about your funny, brilliant, and insightful children. Thank you for this teaching opportunity!

Yours in Discovery,

Mrs. Smith



Music

February was a month filled with transportation themed songs in the music room. We started the month off with songs about cars. We used pretend play to lose and find our car keys and take rides in miniature cars. We listened to race car sounds and pretended to drive electric cars to school.

Next was school bus rides. We learned rules about riding the school bus and heard and discussed the difference between several versions of The Wheels on the Bus. Each version contained differences in singers, instrumentation and verses. The students did a great job at noticing the differences and communicating them!

We then heard songs about older versions of transportation such as stagecoaches, trains and bicycles. The students enjoyed using their imagination to ride horses and trains around the music room. We even built train tracks and used toy trains to listen to some of the tunes.

We ended the month with a week of Mardi Gras. The students played instruments to Dixieland music and we discussed the common instruments associated with a Dixieland band. I showed each class a jaw harp and we all watched a video demonstrating the instrument. Many of the students were impressed to learn that anything that makes a sound can be an instrument!

Mrs. Bailey



St. Andrew's Preschool Chapel News

This month we dig into the life of Jesus - from baby to child to young man to the sad and serious events on Good Friday. We will learn about his life and what led to the sad events of Good Friday and the joyousness of Easter. We buried our Alleluias for the season of Lent and learned an Alleluia song which we will sing again when we un-bury them after Easter. Enjoy Spring Break and ask your kids about what happened to Jesus in the desert!



Mrs. Dutton

Chapel Schedule

Tuesday	Thursday	Story Sequence
3/1	3/3	Faces of Easter 1
3/8	3/10	Faces of Easter 2
3/15	3/17	Faces of Easter 3
3/22	3/24	Faces of Easter 4
3/29	3/31	Faces of Easter 5

St. Andrew's Episcopal Preschool

6509 Sydenstricker Rd.
Burke, VA 22015

Phone: 703-455-8458
FAX: 703-455-2927

Email: preschool@standrews.net
Preschooladmin@standrews.net



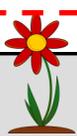
Spotlight: Science Night!

Science coming April 27th. 5:15 to 7:15. Save the date on your calendar. More details coming in the weekly emails.



COMING SOON!

Information and registration for our Summer Fun and Enrichment Camps. Once the preschool year is over, the fun can continue for a few more weeks!



NEWS

FROM

THE

CHURCH:

St. Andrew's Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 10th

Services @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:00* a.m. (Live donkey visit before the 10am service)

Maundy Thursday, April 14th

Service @ 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 15th

Services @ 12:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Easter Vigil, April 16th

Service @ 8:00 p.m.

Easter, April 17th

Services @ 7:30 a.m., 9:00* a.m., & 11:15* a.m.

Easter Egg Hunt at 10:30 a.m.

* Childcare available; children are welcome in all of our services