

St. Andrew's Preschool Seasonal Gazette

November 2022

From the Director

With beautiful fall afternoons, I love opening my office window listening to the sounds of children playing on the playground. It helps me remember just how powerful learning through play is for a young child. As the children play, I hear them telling stories, pretending, walking up the slide, and pulling pumpkins and friends in wagons. The natural world is a wonderful resource for helping children meet their early learning goals.

I continue to be amazed at a classroom of children growing into a community of learners. At the beginning of the year our students are unfamiliar with each other, not sure of routines, and wondering why they need to leave their house to come to us. Familiarity and trust lay the groundwork for a powerful learning community. Plentiful unstructured and structured playtimes create a place where children take chances, make mistakes, discover new things, build relationships, and ask thoughtful questions. This transformation is beginning to happen in our classrooms. It is a beautiful reminder of the importance of an engaging classroom.

The MITRE Corporation, Girl Scout Troop 5214 and Cub Scout Pack 1346 will pack 600 bags of food this month to sustain our Food For Friends program through March. We are very thankful for their generous donations to our community outreach program.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday. When we return, it will be time for Christmas! We will look forward to seeing you in the Parish Hall for our Christmas programs.

Monday 12/12

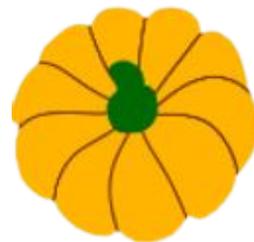
Fish Sing A Long 9:30 AM
Puppy Sing A Long 11:30 AM

Wednesday 12/14

Penguin and Lion Christmas Program 11:30 AM

Thursday 12/15

Frog Sing A Long 9:30 AM
Kitten Sing A Long 11:30 AM
A reception will follow each program



We are privileged to work with your family and be a part of your child's educational journey.

Many blessings,
Tami



The Lion Class



Hello Lion families, here is the first edition of “The Life of a Lion”. We are loving our Lion class this year and we are enjoying getting to know all the personalities that we get to see five days a week. The kids are really coming together as a team and we are seeing new friendships form each week. The beginning of each year we really focus on transforming our little people into the pre-k wonders that they are today (and they will only continue to grow during the year). In this newsletter, I will try to highlight and give you a “sneak-peak” into the life of your Lion. So here it goes...

In September we try and keep things simple since we are trying to focus on getting to know our Lions and just teaching the general rules of the classroom. We had learning units about starting school, all about me, families and apples. We did many projects that were multi-purpose to teach skills, while also assessing what our Lions can already do. September project highlight from the teacher perspective -family and self-portraits. We learn so much sitting with our Lions as they draw. They usually talk/narrate as they go which is why sometimes you will see me write something on their paper that helps explain or narrate their pictures. Self-portraits are fun since I use them to see how far our Lions progress during the year. September activity highlight – playing at the apple orchard and making applesauce. It was amazing to see how the kids took turns shopping and checking out all the various apple items. As a teacher sometimes you work really hard on something and it completely bombs, so it is very exciting when it not only works educationally for the class, but the kids like it. I don't think the kids liked the applesauce much, but it is a good lesson that sometimes it is the process of doing things vs. the product that counts. The Lions probably like the process of cutting the apples, but really loved the product of the cupcakes we made for our Halloween snack in October. Variety is the spice of life, you need to have both! On to October...

In October we continued our apple unit, talked about pumpkins and of course had a unit on Halloween. October is such a fun month to teach preschool, it is so magical for a child (and for big children who happen to be teachers). There is a reason most of us teachers love teaching this age group! After being in school for a month our Lions have really adjusted to our routine. The Lions know their jobs and are taking responsibility for them and often remind us of what still needs to be done each day. Project highlight for October – our crazy witches. I love how unique each one ends up. Activity highlight –definitely trunk-or-treat. Thank you for all the parents that helped with this. What an awesome event! Also, another highlight is the progress of our Lions during circle time when we work on sight words. Each week we have a new sight word and we attempt to make a sentence with that word. Making a sentence was challenging for our Lions in September, but in just a few short months they are now not just copying the sentence I give as an example, but creating them on their own. Seeing their growth is very rewarding, but most of all I am just excited that they are excited about words. If you aren't excited about something you might end up learning it, but it will not be a lot of fun (and what's the point of being a kid if it isn't fun?) On to a preview of November and December.

The Lion Class cont...

In November we will learn about bats, scarecrows, stone soup and Thanksgiving. It is a fantastic month to reinforce all the soft skills we teach in the classroom. Kindness, thoughtfulness, and being thankful are just a few of the skills we reinforce every day and there is an entire holiday devoted to this! We are excited that we get to celebrate Stone Soup as a group again. The kids will get to use a knife and cut our vegetables for our soup (such an amazing fine-motor activity, but obviously it needs to be highly supervised) and the kids get to host a special person to share their soup. December is always a whirlwind and we try to create lots of things the kids can give to you. We teach about giving, not just receiving since that is hard for kids to internalize especially during Christmas. My favorite dramatic play of the year shows up in December – Santa’s workshop.

It has been an amazing start to the year. At back-to-school night, we try and tell you how our day works, but I will be honest it is always ends of changing and I keep it a fluid process, since we have to make changes based on what works with the new group of Lions. I am so excited that our question of the day and our journals have been a success so far. I am always learning as a teacher and sometimes it takes a year to learn how it will work with a different group of kids. We keep trucking through the alphabet learning how to write using the Handwriting Without Tears lingo and I am thrilled with how well the kids can write their names (again a big thank you to the parents and the teachers from last year)! We are constantly talking about patterns, sorting, counting and we have added math equations to our circle time routine. Not all our kids get this right away, but the more they are exposed to something the less scary it becomes.

As always, if you have any questions, please let me know.

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





The Penguin Class

Happy Fall, everyone! The Penguin class has been enjoying the gorgeous fall weather while outside on the playground. The children love to run around and chase each other as they climb and slide. They enjoy giving each other rides in one of our wagons, bouncing together on our school bus structure, tossing a ball back and forth between teachers and friends, and playing in the sand box. It is so important that they have this time to move about freely to develop muscles, coordination and friendships.

We have spent time in morning circle learning class rules to keep each other safe and happy. The children enjoy all the jobs we do in the morning, some of which include counting the days on the calendar and singing our "days of the week" and "months of the year" songs, identifying the daily weather on our weather dial, and choosing a greeting song to sing.

In addition, circle time is an opportunity to work on learning our letters. We have covered the proper formation of the letters A, F, E, H, T, I, U, and C. We start with the easiest letters to form and work our way to the hardest ones. We've enjoyed playing the "What's Missing?" game with objects that start with the letters that we are working on in class. This game helps us identify the beginning sounds of the items. We've also been learning the "Mat Man" song, which helps children remember to draw all the parts of a person in a picture. The children have learned so much already! You might ask them to sing one of our songs for you.

We continue to work on handwriting using our name cards and spending time with number recognition and cutting practice.

New friendships have formed during our classroom free play time as the children play with playdough, sort items in our digging bin, do free art, play games, build with blocks, or "cook" together in our kitchen. These activities incorporate matching, color recognition, alphabet recognition, counting, sharing and the ability to take turns in a larger group activity. Some favorite toys among the children that you might be hearing about are Magna-tiles (magnetic building tiles) and Alpha-Bots (letters that transform into 26 cool robots).

We have recently been learning about being thankful. It's been fun to talk with the children about giving thanks for all the wonderful people, places and things in our lives. The children have enjoyed our previous units on Halloween, Fall, and Apples. We have done many fun art projects geared to these units and read some wonderful books.

We are looking forward to all things Christmas starting in December!

We are thankful for the many children in our care along with their families. We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Mrs. MacArthur and Mrs. Kockler



The Fish & Frog Classes



What an awesome start to the school year! All Fish and Frogs have adjusted very nicely. We are very proud of them! At the start of the school year, we learned about making new friends, safety procedures and classroom procedures. We also discussed our favorite colors. The kids used their fine motor skills while coloring, cutting items and holding a pencil.

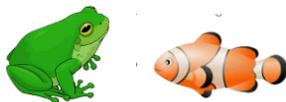
Later in September, the children learned about colors and created self-portraits. In May, we will compare the children's pictures. It's likely to be a remarkable transformation. They also reviewed how to identify and draw shapes. In both classes, the children have been practicing spelling their names and identifying their last names. Finally, we finished all the Frog Jump Letters (F,E,D,P,B,R,N, and M). The children are doing well sitting at circle, doing their circle time jobs, transitioning to different activities, using the restroom, learning to line up and walk in a line, and sitting and enjoying snack time. We've also practiced the preschool flip with their coats so they can put their jackets on by themselves. Transitions can be challenging for the children, especially those new to preschool. They are handling it all fabulously!

In early October, we studied "The Season of Fall and Apples." The children made colorful stained-glass leaves to display in the hallways. We studied pumpkins and life on the farm. In addition, the kids created apple pies and apple art from real cut apples. We had so much with the Halloween and fall units. The children really enjoyed our digging bin looking for leaves, skeletons, miniature pumpkins, and scary spiders. We learned some songs about fall and Halloween which we hope the kids shared at home. Their favorite was the "FIVE LITTLE PUMPKINS" rhyme.

Our next unit will be all about Thanksgiving and food. There will be some food related crafts to go along with this unit. We will also read stories about food and Thanksgiving and discuss things we are thankful for every day. After a two-year reprieve, we are so excited and thankful to host **Stone Soup** before Thanksgiving.

We've enjoyed spending time with your children and getting to know them. They make us smile every day. Please don't hesitate to call, email or text us with any questions or concerns. Thanks for all your support!

Happy Thanksgiving!
Warmly,
Amy Bailey and Lisa Winand





The Puppy & Kitten Classes



The Puppies and Kittens have been learning our classroom routine and they are already doing a wonderful job transitioning from one activity to the next. They are making new friends and we've enjoyed watching them interact with each other, especially on the playground. The children really enjoy playing outside in the sand box, climbing on the "bus" and sliding, too.

Both classes are starting to learn responsibility from doing their classroom jobs, such as line leader, weather watcher, calendar helper and flag helper. We take turns with the jobs so everyone can have a chance to do each one.

In September, our themes were "All About Me", "The Five Senses" and "Colors". We learned about all the wonderful things our bodies can do. We also learned how we can mix two different colors to make new ones.

At the art table, we have had fun doing a variety of arts and crafts and projects that pertain to our theme each week.

For the month of October, we shifted our focus to learning about "Apples and "Farm" and "Pumpkins and Halloween". We learned all about farm animals and we sang fun songs such as "Old MacDonald Had A Farm". The children played with Little People barns, farm animals and farm vehicles. We also talked about apples, pumpkins, and Halloween, and did some classroom activities related to the season. We had so much fun Trunk or Treating and dressing up in our Halloween costumes. It was a really fun month.

Our Dramatic Play area changes when our theme changes. The children enjoyed playing in the kitchen and with baby dolls in September. In October, we set up an apple stand which then converted into a pumpkin patch with a cash register and baskets. The children had a lot of fun pretending to pick and buy apples and pumpkins.

Our sensory bin changes as well. In September, we filled the bin with rainbow gravel, colored beads, apples and farm vehicles. We then switched it to corn kernels, plastic farm animals and we added pumpkins, bats and spiders for some Halloween fun. After Halloween we transitioned to Fall and added leaves and acorns, for November. The children love digging for all the different treasures. We've enjoyed reading books together at our closing circle.

To wrap up, here are some of the books we read and activities we have been working on that helped our Puppies and Kittens work on important developmental skills:

- **Books:** The first week of school we read "Pete the Kitty's First Day of School", we also read "Mouse's First Day of School". One of our favorite books about our bodies is "Eyes, Nose, Fingers and Toes". We had fun acting out all the motions in the book, like clapping our hands and stomping our feet. Our books change when we change themes. In October, some of the books we read were, "All About the Farm"; "An Apples Life"; "Down by the Farm"; "Five Little Pumpkins" and "It's Pumpkin Time".

The Puppy & Kitten Classes cont...

- **Fine motor/eye-hand coordination:** We did Halloween stamping with farm and fall stamps and peeled the backs off stickers to create a Halloween scene, and putting beads and straws on bead trees. We also have a puzzle that gives the children an opportunity to practice zipping, snapping and buttoning.
- **Hand strength:** We used pinchers and scissors in the play dough area and other play dough tools.
- **Gross motor:** We had fun with playground activities such as pulling friends in the wagon, climbing on the playground equipment, and walking across the balance beam.

In November we will be learning more about Fall and Leaves. We will be talking about all the changes that happen as the weather changes and becomes cooler. We will also discuss the idea of thankfulness and giving, as well as make stone soup. We are looking forward to having parents joining us to celebrate. We will also be making Thanksgiving crafts.

In December, we will focus on the holidays and making fun Christmas projects.

We're looking forward to a wonderful year of learning and growing with the Puppies and Kittens!

Jennie Kroeger and Kristin Stites





The Discovery Room

"Where no discovery is too small"

Why did the germ cross the microscope? To get to the other slide! Our September unit began with an introduction to class rules, materials, terminology, and safety. We learned about scientist parts (such as the scientist's nose to smell and four other senses); utilized scientific tools (pipette, microscope, beaker, magnifying glass, balance scale, etc.), and I introduced the experimental method. We read a book about Einstein and students enjoyed conducting their own experiment making a lava lamp using water, oil, and antacid tablets. The next unit we covered was "Colors." Students were excited to mix colors using pipettes and "primary" colored water within ice cube tray compartments to create "secondary" colors. Pipetting is a fabulous way to develop pincher grip skills and I will include more experiments developing this skill throughout the year. Students sorted color balls into different test tubes; created rainbow rain by pipetting colored oil into water; painted on a milk canvas; mixed colors melting skittles; and they used scratchers to create pictures on black paper. We read Mix it Up! and everyone reviewed their color knowledge using colored overlays. The students learned ROYGBV by drawing their own rainbows within their scientific journals. We learned more in-depth color terminology including: shades, tints, and complementary colors.

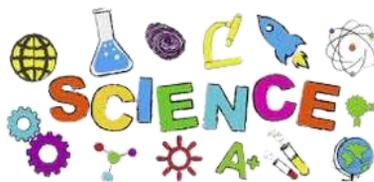
October was action-packed as students explored three topics: magnets, pumpkins, and spiders! Beginning with magnets, students performed numerous hands-on activities such as sorting objects to determine if they were magnetic/ not magnetic and painting using magnetic balls. New terminology was introduced including north/south poles, horseshoe magnet, bar magnet, attract, repel, metal, magnetic field, and compass. We made many magnetic structures such as robots, tunnels, and buildings. Students even developed writing skills using a special magnetic drawing board. The next unit focused solely on pumpkins, their composition, and life cycle. Terms in this unit included the life cycle process beginning with seed, seedling (sprout), vine, flower, green pumpkin and finally the orange pumpkin stage. This process was brought to life with many nonfiction pumpkin life cycle books and pumpkin activities. The most popular science station was pumpkin hammering. The students used mallets to hammer golf tees into pumpkins while practicing counting skills. The students picked "ripe" orange pumpkins from a large faux pumpkin patch and identified the life cycle with card labels. Students also used a balance scale to weigh various mini pumpkins until the scale was balanced. Real pumpkin dissections using tweezers were performed by students to aid in part identification of pumpkin skin (rind), stem, blossom end, ribs, flesh (pulp), fibrous strands, and seeds. The pumpkin unit culminated with a final large group experiment called "foaming pumpkin" during which I mixed two chemicals to show the process of a "chemical reaction" placed inside a jack-o-lantern resulting in spooky oozing from its mouth and eyes. It was so much fun to hear the students giggle as they observed this creepy experiment. The last week of the month we increased the spookiness factor by studying spiders. Powering a remote-controlled tarantula all around the school's hallway really seemed to make their arachnophobia disappear!

The Discovery Room cont...

November was extra exciting since it was time for our month-long celebration called "Dinovember!" I began the unit explaining that Dinosaur means "terrible lizard." We reviewed important dinosaur related terms including herbivore, carnivore, predator, prey, oviparous, extinct, paleontologist, fossil, and reptile. The classes completed a fact or fiction identification sheet in their science journals. We sorted dinosaurs into herbivore and carnivore categories using a Venn diagram. The students were incredible at distinguishing that a carnivorous dinosaur ate meat, walked on two legs, moved fast, had sharp teeth and claws, eyes in front, and was predatory. Herbivores were prey who ate plants, walked primarily on four legs, had flat teeth, and eyes on the sides of their skull. We learned that the purpose of spikes, plates, and fancy spines were to protect themselves against predators. During the latter part of the month, we focused on individual dinosaurs including the Iguanodon, Ankylosaurus, Triceratops, T-rex, Velociraptor, Apatosaurus and Stegosaurus. Students completed individual chit-chat sheets within their science journals by filling in missing words after listening to in depth articles discussing each dinosaur. An exceptionally popular activity was playing in Dino Land, where students recreated dinosaur habitats through dioramas using wood pieces, rocks, figurines, and fake plants. The students transformed into paleontologists with brushes and sifting tools in hand to excavate dinosaur skeletons and fossils from sand at the digging bin. Students also created their own fossils using molds and magic sand. Another popular station was taking apart and reassembling a T-Rex and Triceratops using a battery-operated 'power drill.' The students learned to match dinosaur figurines to their names and even just dinosaur Toob skulls to identify them. We watched a few YouTube clips of dinosaur episodes from a show called Storybots. If you have the chance, check them out. You won't be able to get the songs out of your head! One, two, three, check out my horns! Dinosaurs were everywhere in the Discovery Room. They were in the digging bin, on the light table, and in each of the building buckets. A special dinosaur named "Trixie" made an appearance at the end of the month. The dinosaur unit concluded with a paleontological dig challenge using chocolate chip cookies to determine how many chips students are able to excavate using miniature "tools" without breaking them apart!

December will bring a building unit and workshop where the students can put together and take apart many toys and other interesting items. Your children are wonderful and I am blessed to be able to work with them each day! When they get in the car to go home or at the dinner table ask them what dinosaurs ate, what they had on their bodies for protection, how they were grouped, and even theories about how they may have become extinct. Thank you for supporting my teaching effort with various students dressing in dinosaur themed shirts, sweaters, dresses, pants, and even masks all month long.

Yours in Discovery,
Mrs. Karolina Smith



Music



What's in the box?

IT'S A MYSTERY!

What's in the box?

LET'S GUESS AND SEE!

This is how we begin music class each day at St. Andrew's (after we sing the Welcome Song, of course). I have a special "mystery box" that has a different item inside it each time the children come for music class, and they take turns guessing what's inside. (Sometimes I give them a hint to help them along). The item always has something to do with the songs and activities we'll be doing in class that day. For example, I put a toy pumpkin in the box during the week before Halloween, and we did some songs and finger plays about pumpkins. I also use the box to introduce new instruments that we play in class, such as the egg shaker, sandpaper blocks, and claves. The kids have a lot of fun with this guessing game, and I love seeing the looks of anticipation and then excitement as they figure out the mystery item!

During the past few months in music class, I have strived to align my lessons with the curriculum that the students are learning in their classrooms. Topics have included apples, autumn, holidays, nocturnal animals, and dinosaurs, just to name a few! I have also been incorporating songs that tie in with the Bible stories that the children are hearing in Chapel each week. In addition to singing and dancing, we are also learning basic musical concepts (like clapping along to the beat) and playing a variety of different musical instruments. Soon we will begin working on our songs for the Christmas singalong performances coming up in December. I love teaching music at St. Andrew's, and I hope the students are enjoying it as much as I am!

Mrs. Rachel Elliff



Chapel News



Hello from Chapel! Your kids have been having fun learning our songs (God is Very Near, and Go Now in Peace – ask your kiddos to sing them to you!) and hearing stories. Once a month Father Will gathers them in the “big” church so they are getting that experience as well. We’ve told about the Ark and the Flood, Zacchaeus, the Mustard Seed and more! Coming up we will hear the Advent story and move into some new testament stories in the winter. As always, you are welcome to come sit in on your child’s chapel any time! We do a special birthday blessing and song for them on the chapel closest to their birthdays (and sometime in May for summer birthdays).

St Andrew’s church will be doing our annual pageant this year on Christmas Eve at our 4:00 service so email me at amy@standrews.net if you are interested in having your child(ren) participate. Also we are having a family movie night on Monday Dec 19th.

Mrs. Amy Dutton



Church News

Children's Christmas Pageant

If you would like to participate in our Children's Pageant, there are rehearsals on Sunday, Dec. 18th (w/ costume fitting) after Sunday School (12:30ish; food will be provided) and again on Dec. 24th at 2:00 p.m. before the service at 4:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please email Amy Dutton (amy@standrews.net).

Christmas Services

Saturday, Dec. 24th

@ 4PM - Children's Pageant & Holy Eucharist: Rite II

@ 7PM - Holy Eucharist: Rite II

@ 10PM - Holy Eucharist: Rite II

Sunday, Dec. 25th

@ 11AM - Holy Eucharist: Rite II



Christmas Program



We will be hosting a Christmas Program in December in the Parish Hall.

December 12

Fish class 9:30 a.m. & Puppy class 11:30 a.m.

December 14

Lion & Penguin classes 11:30 a.m.

December 15

Frog class 9:30 a.m. & Kitten class 11:30 a.m.



As the weather is changing please make sure your child has a seasonal change of clothes in their bag as well as jackets and appropriate shoes for outside everyday!!

St. Andrew's Episcopal Preschool

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*Happy Thanksgiving!
To You And Your Family*