

St. Andrew's Preschool Seasonal Gazette

Spring 2023

From the Director

As this school year comes to a close, we are happy to have had a successful year of growth in who we are and what we do. St. Andrew's Episcopal Preschool is an amazing place to work and go to preschool. I am thankful to be part of a community that values the importance of nurturing both children and adults so they can develop into the people they were intended to be.

We loved seeing your end of year colorful snow cone faces at the picnic.

We will celebrate our rising kindergarteners at the end of the month with their transition ceremonies and receptions on May 24 and 25. Look for more details in the weekly email.

We are looking forward to seeing you at Summer Fun and Enrichment Camp!

This time of year is difficult for us as we say goodbye to those families who will not be with us next year. We wish you the best in the coming year. Please know you will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers as you start your new adventure.

We will also say goodbye to Mrs. Winand this year as she will not be returning to our preschool staff as a co-teacher. Mrs. Winand has been with our staff since 2016. As you know, she has a beautiful grace that radiates throughout our building. Mrs. Winand will be attending to the needs of her family as she sees her oldest off to college. We will miss her immensely!

This summer we are looking forward to completing some projects in partnership with the church and a few Eagle Scouts. New flooring will be installed throughout the preschool, an extension of the outdoor classroom will be built, and new bookshelves will be installed in the preschool office.

We still have a few spaces left so if you know families interested in registering for preschool next year, please ask them to contact the preschool office at 703-455-8458 or email preschool@standrews.net. They can also visit our web site preschool.standrews.net where they can take a virtual tour and fill out an inquiry to receive more information about enrollment or begin the registration process through our software ChildPilot.

We love working with you and are fortunate to be a part of your family! Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2023-2024!

Warm regards,
Tami



The Lion Class



To all our Lion families, this year has been full of excitement, fun and learning as we have watched your children grow-up right before our eyes. I would like to thank all of you, our parents, for trusting us to keep your children safe. It is hard to believe we only have a month left with our Lions. It will be sad to see our Lions graduate to kindergarten at the end of the month, but I know that this class is well prepared to take on all that kindergarten has to offer!

Enough of that, now to what we have been doing. We began the month of April with an author study about Leo Lionni. We introduced the Lions to many different books by the author such as; "Swimmy", "A Color of His Own", "Fish is Fish", and "Frederick" to name a few. We showed the Lions how the books were similar or different based on the story and the art work. The Lions recognized that Mr. Lionni wrote books mainly about nature and animals. It is so important for children to be exposed to many authors and writing styles as they develop into readers and writers. Following this, we jumped into Easter before Spring Break. It is such a fun unit to not only talk about eggs, bunnies and candy, but to talk about the religious aspect of Easter and the Easter story in the chapel.

After learning about Mr. Lionni, we explored the world of Fairytales and Folktales. We discussed the elements of a Fairytale and how it is different from a Folktale. As well, we discussed that these are stories that are repeated throughout time. We read different versions of several stories showing how the same story can be told with a different twist by different authors. The class made castle suncatchers, princess and the pea beds (counting the mattresses), castles made from shapes and painted castles at the easel. We made magic mirrors and Bean stalks that included Jack and the castle in the clouds. The Lions loved playing in our castle and with all the other fairytale toys to help make our unit come to life.

Following Fairytales, we will be getting into the spirit of spring as we learn about Eric Carle. We will read a non-fiction book about the artist/author learning how he created his art using various paint techniques. We will discuss how he cut out shapes to make his wonderful animals and characters come alive in his books. As a class, we will work together to paint paper with many different color and texture combinations. Each Lion will create individual works of art using this painted paper inspired by the art of Eric Carle. We will read the story "The Tiny Seed" and "The Very Hungry Caterpillar", and many more stories by the author and illustrator. Our dramatic play area will turn into a flower shop as our Lions pretend to buy, sell and arrange silk flowers. The Lions are excited to host their special person at our Spring Tea. This is always a fun event that I looked forward to when my children attend St. Andrew's and I love it just as much as a teacher. It is always nice to have these events to help demonstrate to our Lions that it is important to give to others, especially the people that take care of them. They might be little, but they can give their time, talent, love and attention and it means the world to the people around them.



The Lion Class cont.

As we move into May we will be learning about the farm. This is a fun unit since there are so many opportunities for the Lions to use their imagination to pretend and use their language to make their animals come to life. We will read both fiction and non-fiction stories and learn how all the different parts of a farm work together to produce something that we all use in daily life. Following the farm we finish the year with lots of books about kindergarten and remembering all the favorite things we did this year.

In the last month of school we will continue to reinforce the important skills needed to be an independent kindergartener. We will continue to learn and commit to memory our first and last names (and identify it in writing), identifying and becoming familiar with money, sequencing, counting, and matching upper and lowercase letters to name a few. We will continue to talk about syllables and practice name the syllables to different words on our word wall. The Lions love to make math equations by adding and subtracting and using our number line (our linear calendar). We will talk about shapes and count the vertices and sides. We will be talking about what Elementary school everyone will attend just to familiarize them with this for next year (and for our Transitions ceremony). We will continue practicing writing our last names and writing our first names using an initial capital letter followed by lower case letters.

This class is phenomenal, and every single Lion has huge gifts to give. I tear up as I write this because it always amazes me how each class comes together as a family. I know I'm a little sentimental (okay a lot), but these kids have left a little mark on each one of the teachers at St. Andrew's forever.

Please keep in touch. Once a Lion, always a Lion.

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





The Penguin Class

It is hard to believe that our preschool year is coming to an end! Your children have been a big part of our lives. Their individual personalities entertain us and keep us on our toes. They are helpful, sweet, excited, inquisitive, smart, and so much more.

During the month of April, we learned about farms and insects. We also had a wonderful celebration for our 100th day of preschool with 100 balloons in the classroom! The children had a blast playing with them all that week.

In art, the children made stained glass tulips to decorate our windows, painted tulips cut out of toilet paper rolls (very pretty!), decorated barns with farm stickers, and made a chicken which laid enough eggs to write a letter of their name on each egg! In our dramatic play area, the children enjoyed playing with treehouses and a huge doll house with lots of people and furniture. It is so much fun to see where their imaginations take them.

During circle time we learned about the letters X and Y and practiced writing uppercase and lowercase versions of each letter. We will learn about the letter Z in May and review all the letters.

Since the beginning of April, we have been learning sight words and will continue working on them until the end of the year. As your children learn to read, knowing these sight words will really help them. Some of the words we've talked about are: me, my, I, is, in, we, the, and, a, see, for - to name a few.

In addition, the children have practiced identifying the numbers 1-12 through games. We have worked on cutting out shapes and have reviewed our Mat Man song which helps us remember all the parts of a person when drawing.

The children really enjoyed our Spring Tea at the end of April and loved being able to host their special guest. Thank you for coming!

In May, our class will be learning about Eric Carle and reading many of his wonderful books! We will finish off the year by reviewing our favorite things from the school year and talking and reading about summer and going to Kindergarten!

On Wednesday, May 24, we will hold a transition celebration in the Parish Hall for the Penguin class as they prepare to move on from preschool and attend kindergarten in the fall. More details will be coming soon.

We are so proud of our Penguins and all they have learned and accomplished this year! Thank you for sharing your children with us! We will miss them. Please say "hello" when you see us around.

Mrs. MacArthur and Mrs. Kockler



The Fish & Frog Classes



It's hard to believe that we've made it this far!! The time has flown by – and we've enjoyed every minute of it. The kids continue learning through play, which teaches them so many life skills. In early April, we focused on Fairy Tales. We discussed princes, princesses, knights, and dragons. We read fun fairytale stories! The kids played with fairytale creatures and built their very own castles with blocks. The children created their very own beanstalks and mastered writing their last names. The experience was truly amazing!

During the second week of April, we focused on working in a flower garden. The kids enjoyed creating beautiful floral bouquets. We helped the children create their very own beanstalks with lima beans and some of the beans even sprouted! The kids created lovely flower art with egg cartons. Finally, they made their very own cherry trees in honor of the Cherry Blossom Festival.

In late April, we began our Community Helpers unit. The kids were asked what they'd like to be when they grow up and created hats that represented that job. It was so fun! In addition, the kids enjoyed dressing up in Community Helper outfits. They read books about police officers, firemen and teachers. In May, we will focus on Authors. We will discuss the various parts of a book: the spine, the front and back covers, the author, and the illustrator. We'd also like the children to understand the moral of the story, the characters, and the overall theme of the book.

In addition to the weekly units from above, we also focused on:

Letter recognition and practice:

Spelling and writing their names.

Letter and Word of the week

Letter matching and the Letter Detective

Sensory Play:

Digging bin

Fidgets

Free art

Blocks

Fine motor

Cutting

Painting

Lacing

Using tongues

Playdough

We've truly enjoyed spending time with your children and watching them grow into unique individuals. They make us smile every day. We look forward to finishing up the school year strong! Your support has made all the difference, and we thank you!

Warmly,

Amy Bailey and Lisa Winand





The Puppy & Kitten Classes



Happy Spring, everyone!

We hope everyone had a relaxing Spring Break. We are glad to be back at school.

Thank you to all of the Puppy and Kitten families again for the wonderful treats and cards for Teacher Appreciation week. We really felt appreciated!

For the month of April, we have been talking about Easter, Spring and Eric Carle. We enjoyed making salt painted Easter eggs and Fizzy paint, with the Fizzy paint we mixed vinegar, water colors and baking soda. The children had fun using droppers with watercolors and were very excited to see the outcome. This was a science experiment and art project all in one.

The children have been enjoying free art and creating whatever they like.

We transformed these art creations into Eric Carle style art. Making caterpillars, flowers and lady bugs.

We also have been working on beading using pipe cleaners and beads making bracelets and necklaces. Stickers and dot markers have also been a favorite. All of these activities they enjoy and are great ways to improve fine motor skills. The art table is always very busy in our classroom.

In our sensory bin this month we had colored rice, plastic eggs, bunny and chick erasers and gems for Easter. We changed it and have added flowers, butterflies and pink glass beads for our Spring unit. The children enjoy digging for all of the treasures.

During our circle time we have been reading wonderful stories relating to our themes, including Eric Carle books and the children loved making Eric Carle style art during Center Time.

We also have been playing games practicing sorting and identifying colors.

We have enjoyed the outdoor classroom more and now that the weather is warmer the sand box has been popular.

May will bring us to the end of the year. Our theme for May will be flowers, trees and Mother's Day. We have learned so much this year and we have enjoyed watching the children grow and make new friends.

Thank you for sharing your wonderful children with us.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kroeger and Mrs. Stites

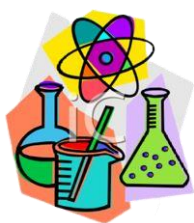




The Discovery Room "Where no discovery is too small"

How does the solar system hold up its pants? With an asteroid belt, of course! Learning about the two belts within our solar system (the other belt is called Kuiper) is just one example of the plethora of astronomical facts students discovered beginning in March. We started our unit focusing on the day/ night cycle and planetary characteristics. We read Nelson's Day and Night book, which clarified a popular student idea that the sun turns off or gets too tired to keep running in the evening. We conducted a mini experiment using a flashlight and foam earth ball to demonstrate where the light shines as earth rotates on its axis. Students practiced critical thinking skills by justifying why it is better to do certain activities at night or during daytime. I was really impressed by the depth of conversation generated by this unit. Students even learned to differentiate between the frequently confused twenty-four-hour rotation versus yearly revolution. The moon was introduced with Gail Gibbon's fact filled The Moon Book. Students practiced identifying and ordering the moon's phases. We concluded the unit with a popular bottle rocket experiment which uses a plastic snap top film canister containing a shaken mixture of water and antacid tablets placed upside down on pavement. The one rule after you shake it is to run and watch what happens! By the conclusion of this unit students could easily identify and order all eight planets with the help of the following famous acronym: My very eager mother just served us nachos.

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road? It didn't have the guts! In April, we took a look inside the human body. As an introduction to the unit, we read numerous books on the topic including My Doctor Visit, Bones, Muscles, and The Human Body. One favorite station was the organ vest where children can take off all the organs and Velcro them back on. Students also explored adding playdough muscles to skeletons, completing skeleton and human body layering puzzles, studying x-rays, brushing and flossing teeth, and diagnosing illnesses and injuries while completing check-ups on dolls in a simulated pediatric hospital complete with stethoscopes and baby scales. There was a miniature hospital and ambulance for the students to role play an emergency situation and stretch their imaginations through dramatic play. The sensory bin had a model of blood components. The ping pong balls were the white blood cells and the red poker chips were the red blood cells. The pink foamy pieces were the platelets and the water the plasma. Group favorites were the "match the smell to the picture station" and the blood typing (A, B, AB, O) with food coloring stations. The students had to attach all five senses to Mr. Potato Head by taking turns picking cards and matching a body part to the sense pictured on the card. One station in particular really surprised the kids this year and everyone had a small adjustment period because it looked so realistic. The students were asked to put "fake teeth" into clay gums in the proper locations along the gumline. The teeth were sourced from a temporary tooth replacement company which made them appear and feel like real teeth. Some students refused to attempt the station until I explained to them that the teeth were fake! The students especially enjoyed performing experiments. One experiment demonstrated the process of digestion by asking them to smash various foods mixed with water in a sandwich bag to



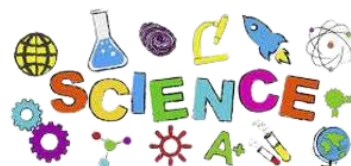
The Discovery Room cont.

observe the food disintegration process. The easiest to digest foods were Goldfish. Skittles and marshmallows took longer to "digest." It was gross but lots of fun!

Next, we decided to 'bug out' with an entomology unit which will continue throughout early May. The students were immersed in the insect experience from books, to stations, to art, and even hands-on insect experiences. The students discovered that insects have six legs, three main body parts, two antennae, an exoskeleton, and most have wings. We learned about how butterfly wings are symmetrical by folding splattered paper to observe the same pattern copied on both sides. Did you know that insects use their antennae or feelers to touch, taste, hear, and even smell? We played with plastic bug scenes, insect versus non-insect sorting containers, insect puzzles, felt scenes, and examined insect slides under a microscope. If you ask at home, each student can probably regale you with a 'head, thorax, abdomen' song to the tune of "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes." The next few weeks of this unit focused on life cycles. The students sorted the life cycles of butterflies, beetles, ants, and even frogs! They enjoyed using plastic versions of these animals and accompanying charts to sort each life cycle in the proper order. To reinforce the order, students completed oversize ant, butterfly, ladybird beetle, and frog life cycle foam puzzles. Students created aluminum foil lily pads and tested how many frogs could float in a mini pond using STEM skills they learned in the previous machines unit. Two containers of caterpillars will soon arrive in the mail and we will watch them grow over the course of two weeks from tiny larvae to giant pupae wrapped in chrysalis. The pupae will be transferred to the butterfly habitat containment and we look forward to releasing the butterflies as soon as they emerge. We will spend the final week of our insect unit specifically focusing on ants, bees, and non-insect arthropods, including worms. Students will gain new respect for ants and bees after learning about their complex social structures and how they have more in common with us than we thought. The book *Hey, Little Ant* by Phillip and Hannah Moose imparts the critical message that it is important to care about all creatures, big or small. In Discovery, students will play the honeybee tree game, placing tiny bees on flowers to pollinate them, and explore an interactive garden complete with dirt, ants, and even lifelike gelatinous worms hidden throughout the display. They will use packing foam and pipe cleaners to create their own anatomically correct ants. The unit will culminate with each class going on a bug hunt complete with their own bug containers, tweezers, and checklists.

During May we will explore rocks and recycling before recapping favorite units throughout the year. I look forward to seeing everyone immerse themselves in various science units we completed throughout the year and some new bonus experiments! Thank you for sharing your little learners with me. They never cease to amaze me with the immense amount of knowledge they are capable of absorbing and retaining!

Yours in discovery,
Mrs. Smith



Music



Spring was a busy season in the music room! During the first week of March, we celebrated Read Across America week with songs and activities inspired by a variety of beloved children's stories. We kicked off the week singing musical versions of Eric Carle's "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and "Brown Bear, Brown Bear." Then we celebrated Dr. Seuss with some very wacky songs like "Topsy Turvy Zoo," where the children pretended to be crazy mixed-up animals like "ele-corns" (elephant/unicorn) and "floc-odiles" (flamingo/crocodile)! We also acted out the classic tale of "The Three Little Pigs" and played a hilarious game of "What Time is it, Mr. Wolf?" during which the children were gobbled up one by one by a wolf puppet whenever his dinnertime arrived!

Later on in the month we spent some time learning some musical concepts such as tempo (the speed of the music) and how to keep a steady beat. The children explored these concepts while playing a variety of different instruments, including egg shakers, hand drums, wood blocks, and rhythm sticks. We have continued to reinforce these skills over the past few weeks by patting and clapping along to the beat of many of the songs we sing in class.

During the last week of March, we prepared for the coming of Palm Sunday and Easter by reading some stories about Jesus in our children's Bible. We sang "Jesus Loves Me" and learned the sign language that goes along with the words. We also sang and acted out a song called "When Jesus Came to Town," which recalls the story of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem on a donkey. After returning from spring break, we celebrated the miracle of Easter Sunday singing "It's a Happy Day/Jesus is Alive" while dancing with scarves. One of the children excitedly remarked that it was a "Jesus party!" We also talked about fun Easter traditions like egg hunts and Easter baskets. We went on a pretend Easter egg hunt and then got a lot of exercise hopping around the room like Easter bunnies!

Many of our music lessons this spring correlated with the curriculum being studied next door in the Discovery Room with Mrs. Smith. When the children were learning about astronauts and outer space, we sang songs about the planets and acted out a trip to the moon aboard a rocket ship. During the human body unit, we danced and sang "Dem Skeleton Bones" and moved all of our limbs to the "Parts of the Body" song. We certainly got lots of exercise nodding our heads, waving our arms, lifting our knees, and wiggling our toes!

During this last month of school, we'll focus on spring and summer themes like insects, picnics, and the beach/ocean. The Pre-K classes will also start working on a special song to perform at the transitions ceremony at the end of the school year. I also hope to teach a few lessons using pitched percussion instruments like boomwhackers and handbells. No matter what we do, we always have a fun time in the music room! I have really enjoyed getting to know all of your wonderful children and I'm looking forward to another great year of teaching music at St. Andrew's next year!

-Mrs. Elliff



Chapel News



We are wrapping up our school year - I can't believe it! The last month of chapel we will learn about the Good Samaritan and Pentecost and Father Will will have one more chapel with each class. As always, please feel free to drop in on a chapel to see what we do!

Mrs. Amy Tibbetts

Church News

Vacation Bible School (July 17th-21st) is our camp for kids ages 3½ to rising 4th graders. We start each morning at 9:00 a.m. and spend the day making crafts, playing, singing, eating snacks, and listening to Bible stories until pick-up at 12:00 p.m. Classes will be both inside and outside (weather depending) so dress kids appropriately.

Registration is now open (<http://tiny.cc/VBS2023>). The cost is \$30/child (\$70 family max - registration cost only) and \$10/t-shirt (t-shirts are optional). Money & registration are due by June 19th. We also need lots of volunteers to make this week work. Volunteers can use the same registration form to sign up to help. There is no registration cost and t-shirts are free for volunteers.

Contact Amy Tibbetts if you have questions. amy@standrews.net



Upcoming Events

St. Andrew's Episcopal
Preschool



Summer Fun

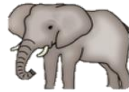


May 31 - June 2

June 5 - 7



Enrichment Camp



June 12-16



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!!



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