

St. Andrew's Preschool Seasonal Gazette

Spring 2025



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. I am thankful to be part of a community who values the importance of nurturing both children and adults so they can develop into the people they were intended to be.

Before we close the school year, we have a few more school activities planned.

The end of the year picnics are May 14 (Puppy, Fish, Penguin) and May 16 (Kitten, Frog, Lion) on our playground. You bring your lunch and a blanket and we will provide the snow cones! We will also celebrate our rising Kindergarteners at the end of the month with a "Crossing the Bridge to Kindergarten" ceremony and reception- May 21 and 22 at 11:30 AM in the Parish Hall. See the weekly email for class specific dates and times.

We are looking forward to seeing you at Summer Fun, Enrichment Camp, Wet and Wild, and Little Chefs! Sign ups are available in Celene's weekly email. If you have any questions about our summer programs, please don't hesitate calling our office or sending an email.

We still have a few spaces left for 2025-2026 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.

It is a privilege to be a part of your family as your children learn and grow! If you are returning to us in 2025-2026, we will look forward to seeing you next year! If you are moving on to Kindergarten or not returning to us, please know your family will always hold a special place in our hearts! Best of luck in your new adventure!

Warm regards,
Tami



The Lion Class



To all our Lion families, this year has been full of excitement, fun and learning as we 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!

We finished the month of March learning about the farm. Our big red barn made its appearance, and the kids loved buying, selling and farming the vegetables at our farmers' market. They helped feed the bunnies and chickens and watched over the cows, sheep and goats in their "field". The Lions loved to dig in the mud with the pigs (our mud is otherwise known as black beans) enjoying the sensory experience of pouring and scooping the beans. We talked about what farms produce, the animals that live on the farm and how farms have changed over time. We sorted animals and food that live and are produced on the farm with those animals/food that are produced and live elsewhere. Sorting and categorizing helps children with the understanding of patterns and relationships. Sorting helps build memory skills, develops visual perception as well as improves problem solving skills. These are some of the best skills for all parts of life and learning! For our art projects we created horses and pigs, while we also worked on special projects for our Spring Tea.

Before and after Spring Break we talked about Easter, both the religious aspect and the Easter bunny, eggs, candy and more. We added some Easter Basket building to our farm dramatic play and worked on several Easter projects. The kids loved making their special Easter projects for you and they got to pick if they wanted a bunny or an egg for their mini-canvas. We used crayons to color plastic eggs and then dyed them. We played a roll and tally game trying to get an egg into a bunny's mouth. Then the kids tallied the egg count. After a few days, the kids were setting up a chart on the whiteboard on their own. They outlined the chart and wrote their names on their own to tally and keep count of their eggs. We were so proud to see how they took charge of this activity and copied what we had done in class. We made patterns with colored eggs and played an egg color matching game.

Following spring break, the Lions are excited to host you at our Spring Tea. This is always a fun event that Mrs. Jacobs and I both looked forward to when our children attended St. Andrew's, and we love it just as much now. 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 every day. They might be little, but they can give their time, talent, love and attention and it means the world to the people around them. We finished the month of April getting into the spirit of spring as we learned about Eric Carle. We read a non-fiction book about the artist/author learning how he created his art using various painting techniques. We will discuss how he used those unique painted pieces to cut out shapes to make the 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 (just like the author/artist did). Each Lion will create individual works of art using this painted paper inspired by the art of Eric Carle. We



The Lion Class continued

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/garden center as our Lions pretend to buy, sell and arrange silk flowers.

During May we will learn about Fairytales. Our barn will become a castle as our Lions pretend to be princes and princesses. We will have many castle and fairytale toys to help support the books we read. One of the favorite “toys” we bring out during this unit is our gold solo building cups. We have used the plastic party cups for several different units and the Lions LOVE to stack them, create castles and different creations with them. Stacking blocks and other objects help kids build their problem-solving and math skills and helps build their language and social skills. It is also an easy way for kids of all abilities to build their self-esteem. We will discuss the elements of a fairytale and how it is different from a folktale. As well, we will learn that these are stories that are repeated throughout time. We will read different versions of several stories showing how the same story can be told with a different twist by different authors. We plan to make castle suncatchers, beds from the story “The Princess and the Pea” where we count the mattresses, and castles made from shapes. We will finish the month reading several stories about making friends and starting kindergarten.

During May 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) and we will be talking about what elementary school everyone will attend just to familiarize them with this for next year (and for our Crossing the Bridge to Kindergarten ceremony). We will practice writing our last names and writing our first names using an initial capital letter followed by lower case letters. Most of all we will discuss all the favorite things we did during the year as we remember the fun we had as a family of Lions.

We will miss our class, and each Lion has huge gifts to give to this world. Our kids have left a little mark on each one of the teachers at St. Andrew’s forever and most of all Mrs. Jacobs and me.

Please keep in touch. Once a Lion, always a Lion.
With love and a roar, Mrs. Nyman and Mrs. Jacobs





The Penguin Class

It is hard to believe that our preschool year is coming to an end. We have just about a month of school left. The time has flown! 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.

We started the month of April learning about insects and Easter. We had a wonderful celebration for our 100th day of preschool, just before spring break, with 100 balloons in the classroom! The children had a blast playing with them for a couple of days and loved our special “100” graham cracker/cookie treat. We will end the month learning about Eric Carle and reading many of his wonderful books!

In our dramatic play area, the children have loved taking care of many animals in our play “vet clinic” – including walking the animals, feeding them, and bathing them. Later this month, we will have a flower shop where the children can “sell” lovely floral arrangements to each other. It is so much fun to see where the children’s imaginations take them.

During circle time, we have been learning the alphabet letters formed with diagonal lines. These are the hardest letters, developmentally, for the children to learn to write. Our last few letters to learn are W, X, Y, and Z. We will practice writing both the uppercase and lowercase letters on little slates, as well as practicing the sounds of each letter, and identifying words that begin with those letters. The children have learned so much! During our last couple of weeks of the year, we will review the whole alphabet.

We have been working on 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.

We love our class mascot, Waddles, the stuffed penguin. The children have enjoyed taking Waddles home for a few days. We love reading each child’s story about their time with Waddles and seeing the picture they drew. We have a few more weeks to go until every child has had a turn.

The children were really excited about our Spring Tea on Wednesday, April 23 and enjoyed being a host for their special guest.

In May, our class will be talking and reading about camping, summer, and going to kindergarten! We will also review some of our favorite things from the school year.



The Penguin Class continued

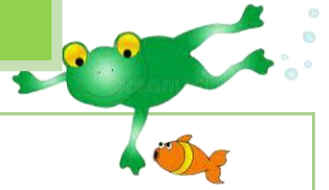
We are looking forward to our End of Year picnic on Tuesday, May 13, and our Crossing the Bridge to Kindergarten celebration in the Parish Hall on Wednesday, May 21, for Penguins who will be attending kindergarten in the fall. More details are coming soon.

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 over the summer. Please say “hello” when you see us around.

Mrs. MacArthur and Mrs. Kockler



The Fish & Frog Classes



April in the Fish and Frog room brought a post office to the dramatic play center. The students enjoyed writing, stamping and delivering bills and greeting cards to others in the classroom. As our unit on community helpers wrapped up, we moved to a flower shop in the dramatic play center. Students received written orders for flower arrangements that they filled and then delivered to classmates.

May is author month in the Fish and Frog room. This year we will feature three authors (one each week) Mo Willems, Dr. Seuss and Eric Carle. We have planned a fun Piggie and Elephant craft, a colorful Dr. Seuss sorting digging bin and an Eric Carle sequencing workbook.

Throughout the year the students have been completing small written activities during centers for their work example books. These work example books will be sent home during the last week of school. We can't wait until you see all the progress they have made with sequencing, coloring, sorting and writing over the last year!

We have enjoyed working with your children this year and look forward to a strong finish during the month of May!!

Mrs. Bailey and Mrs. Steele





The Puppy & Kitten Classes



Hello from the Puppy and Kitten classroom! It is hard to believe this our last newsletter of the year. Without fail, as soon as we feel a true groove in the classroom, we are so sad to realize how close the end of the year is! We also marvel over the progress we see in our little friends by the end of the year. They seem to come into our classroom as babies, and grow into mature, flexible, independent, friendly, smart, and unique little people ready to move on to the next level. As much as we will miss them, we are excited for what the next years will bring for them!

All year long we say, “this is our favorite theme!” and it’s hard to not say it about our springtime themes as well! In April we began the month with an Easter theme. Our digging bin was a carrot garden, complete with number-matching carrots to plant, and bunnies to munch on them. We also had a Bunny Barn, where there was a preschooler-sized nest the children could sit in, along with some stuffy bunny friends. Our play kitchen area included an Easter tree to decorate, and a build-your-own Easter basket station where the children filled Easter baskets with eggs, carrots, and chicks or bunnies. We worked with them to practice filling their baskets and then putting them away in the right place, as well as noticing other friends’ baskets to make sure there were enough basket-fillers for everyone. We were flexing those social muscles we love to work on in preschool!

Following Easter we are exploring other aspects of Spring, beginning with a unit on Bugs. We will incorporate the wonderful art and stories of a preschool favorite, Eric Carle. We will be discovering different kinds of bugs, as well as the life cycle of a butterfly, as told in “The Very Hungry Caterpillar.” We will use Eric Carle-style art techniques to build our own bugs during art. We hope we will get to observe some real bugs outside as well, spending plenty of time in our outdoor classroom with the warmer weather.

Another fun event in April is our school Spring Tea! We invite a special person to join the children for some tea and cake. We spend the weeks leading up to the event working with the children on a special gift to send home with you. We love the chance to spend time together with you all and thank you for the support you give your child and our preschool!

Coming up in May, we’ll move into our Flowers and Flying Friends (Bees, Butterflies, and Birds!) theme. Our dramatic play area will include a Flower Shop and a Birdwatching area. The children will be able to design and “sell” vases and pots of flowers. They will also be able to watch birds through binoculars from our tent, and mark off what they see. Our classroom will have birds around for them to spot! We’ll have some fun associated stories and art projects.

This brings us to the end of our school year together! We will spend our last week of class enjoying the well-loved favorites from throughout the year. There are always some activities that are a hit, so we’ll revisit as many as we can. Our summer camps begin just after the end of school, and we’d love to see you there! They are a fun way to extend the school year and kick off summer!



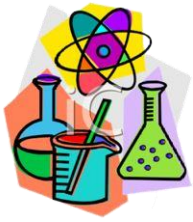
The Puppy & Kitten Classes continued



It has been such a joy to be a part of your children's preschool experience and get to know your families. We have loved working with such wonderful people! We hope you have a lovely summer. "Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye my friends to you. God bless you everywhere you go, in all you say and do!" We love our Puppies and Kittens!

Kristin Stites and Holly Welty, Puppy and Kitten Class Teachers





The Discovery Room

“Where no discovery is too small”

Why did the bike fall over? It was too tired. Throughout the first half of April, we explored the physics field by switching 'gears' to simple machines. I was amazed by how much information the students retained during this unit. I spoke with a fellow teacher and she informed me that her child is also learning simple machines right now--in the eighth grade! Students explored wheels and axles, pulleys, levers, screws, wedges, and slopes (with a little mini unit on springs as well). Students moved pom-poms in buckets using a pulley system. We explored wedges by hammering nails into Styrofoam blocks. We also made many slopes using found objects and raced cars with different weights/body types to compare velocities. With self-constructed inclined planes, we tested to see how slope steepness, friction, and ball mass impacts speed. Students made their own catapults and used them for target practice by shooting pom-poms across the hallway. Students drilled plastic screws into boards and assembled mini vehicles. During review, I was overcome by how well students could identify the different types of machines in household objects. In fact, ask your child about what simple machine can be found inside your body right now.

We plan to "bug out" over insects during the remainder of April! The students will be immersed in the insect experience from books, to stations, to art, to science journals, and even hands-on insect experiences. I will introduce the unit with insect versus non-insect differentiation. We will learn about the primary characteristics used to identify an insect. The students will discover that insects have six legs, three main body parts, two antennae, an exoskeleton, and most have wings. We will learn 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 will play with plastic bug scenes, insect versus non-insect sorting containers, insect puzzles, felt scenes, and examine insect slides under a microscope. If you ask at home, each student will 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 focuses on life cycles. The students will sort the life cycles of butterflies, beetles, ants, and even frogs! They will enjoy using plastic versions of these animals and accompanying charts to sort each life cycle in the proper order. We will utilize Jack Kent's *The Caterpillar* and the *Polliwog* to help us differentiate between the frog and insect life cycles. In previous years students were excited to discover what a polliwog became at the conclusion of the story. To reinforce the order, students will complete oversize ant and butterfly foam puzzles. Students will create aluminum foil lily pads and test how many frogs could float in a mini pond using STEM skills they learned in the previous machines unit. Four containers of caterpillars are arriving in the mail and we will be watching 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 cage and we look forward to releasing butterflies as soon as they emerge. We will spend the beginning of May specifically focusing on ants, bees, and noninsect 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

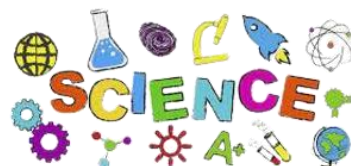


The Discovery Room continued

that it is important to care about all creatures, big or small. In Discovery, students will play the honeybee tree game, placed tiny bees on flowers to pollinate them, and explore an interactive ant hill complete with sand, tiny plastic worker/large queen 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 more students learn about Annelida, the less they became scared of these magnificent creatures which compose more than 90% of animal life on earth. The unit will culminate with each class going on a bug hunt complete with their own bug containers, tweezers, and checklists. Students usually unearth worms, ants, millipedes, larva, and beetles. Last year, we even saw a baby rat snake!

Thank you to all the families who volunteered and participated in Science Night. The basket raffle supplied will aid in funding a STEM based electricity/circuit/programming unit. Throughout our final month of school we will explore planet Earth with an emphasis on rocks and recycling. During the last week of school Discovery will conclude with favorite toys and games from each unit. 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,
Karolina 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. We also spent several days focusing on music and dance styles from various countries around the world. On St. Patrick's Day we listened to a jig and did some Irish step dancing. Later in the week we visited Mexico and learned the Mexican hat dance, and we sang a song with some Spanish lyrics called "Buenos Dias." The children also enjoyed dancing to salsa music - they were surprised to learn that salsa is not just a sauce to put on your tacos - it's also a style of music AND a style of dance!

During April, 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. The kids had a blast waving their "palms" and shouting "Hosanna!" When we return from spring break, we will celebrate the miracle of Easter Sunday singing "It's a Happy Day/Jesus is Alive" while dancing with scarves. We'll also talk about fun Easter traditions like egg hunts and Easter baskets, and we'll get 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 wore ourselves out by nodding our heads, waving our arms, lifting our knees, and wiggling our toes!

During the last few weeks of the school year, 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. It's been a joy getting to know all of the students this year, and seeing so many of them head off to kindergarten is bittersweet indeed! Thank you for sharing your wonderful children with us at St. Andrew's. Have a wonderful summer!

-Mrs. Elliff





Chapel News

Happy Spring dear preschool families!

It is hard to believe we are so close to the end of another school year. During the months of March and April we talked a lot about the life of Jesus and the meaning of Easter. We began with the "Mystery of Easter" story (Lenten Cross), talking about Lent as the time of preparation for the great celebration of Easter. We also talked about why the colors purple and white are used during this time and their meaning regarding Lent (preparation) and Easter (celebration).

Then, we went through "The Faces of Easter" story series. This one is divided into 7 parts that depict some of the main passages in Jesus' life. His birth and life as a baby, His experience at the temple as a boy, His baptism and time in the desert, some of His work helping people and, His crucifixion and resurrection. The children really got into the stories and shared some great thoughts. During our Easter extension week they had a chance to explore those two stories hands on, as well as, "The Legend of The Easter Eggs" story materials.

We will have a week to revisit some of the most popular stories, such as Noah's Ark, the Desert Box with Mt. Sinai, and some of the Parables. "The Mystery of Pentecost" will be our very last story (May 6 and 9).

It has been an immense pleasure to experience the Chapel stories with your beautiful children. I feel so blessed to have had a chance to get to know each one of them and I have certainly learned so much from them. I wish all of you an amazing summer, filled with joy, fun, and love. May God bless you and your loved ones!

With gratitude,
Aline Steele

Church News

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Vacation Bible School

Dates: July 28 – August 1

Time: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Ages: 3 1/3 to 4th grade

\$30 per child; \$70 max per family; plus \$10 for optional t-shirt

Link to sign up: tiny.cc/north2025

Information is also on the church website: <https://www.standrews.net/>



Upcoming Events

St. Andrew's Preschool Summer Programs



Summer Fun

May 28-June 4



Enrichment Camp

June 9-13



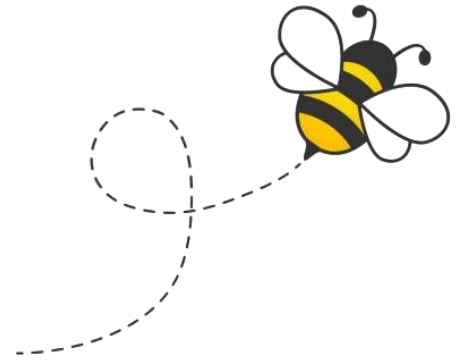
Wet & Wild

June 9-13



Little Chefs Camp

June 16-20



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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