

# St. Andrew's Preschool Seasonal Gazette

## Spring 2026



### 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 13 (Puppy, Fish, Penguin) and May 14 (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 20 and 21 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 2026-2027 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](mailto:preschool@standrews.net). They can also visit our web site [preschool.standrews.net](http://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 2026-2027, 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! Thank you for a wonderful year!

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 and move on to Kindergarten, but I know that this class is well prepared to take on all that Kindergarten has to offer!

In April we talked about Easter, both the religious aspect and the Easter bunny, eggs, candy and more. Our Lions pretended to be in our veterinary clinic taking turns being the Doctor, Nurse, Groomer and Customer. They took care of many different types of animals and practiced sorting every day when cleaning up the area matching the animals with the labels. 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 felt wall hangings. Our dramatic play area morphed into bunny land and the Lions played with and sorted eggs and bunnies. We made patterns with colored eggs and played an egg color matching game. Our Lions are excited to host their special guests 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 finally had our first book swap and will have another one or two before the end of the year. After the first swap, we will have each Lion bring in a book from home that they are willing to share and when we collect enough books for everyone (with some additions from Mrs. Nyman and Mrs. Jacobs) each Lion can bring a book home to keep.

In April we also introduced our unit on 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. Our Farmer's Market and Tractor arrived in our classroom 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 the "field". The Lions played with corn and our horses in our digging bin. 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 and 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 (I try and give real life examples of how sorting helps us stay organized in the classroom and the real world too)! For our art projects we created horses and pigs and we worked together to create our Farm mural outside of our classroom.



## The Lion Class continued

We finished the month of April getting into the spirit of spring as we learned about world of Eric Carle, Spring and Insects. 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 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. We will have a castle in dramatic play as our Lions pretend to be part of the royal court. We will have many castles 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.

Our morning meeting activities have continued to evolve as the Lions just get smarter and more insightful each day. The connections that they start making as the year evolves always amazes me! Instead of just counting on the number line (aka our Linear Calendar), I will ask questions about numbers so the Lions really have to think about what I am asking vs. just guessing. Incorporating the words more, less, addition, and subtraction into the Calendar make it a great teaching tool for math. We also use our morning meetings to help reinforce our literacy skills. Since we have completed the entire alphabet, we will pick different letter activities each day based on interest and area of need. We will continue to learn and commit to memory our first and last names (and identify it in writing). We will continue to talk about syllables and practice counting the syllables of different words. We will also continue to reinforce the important skills needed to be an independent kindergartener. Packing and unpacking our bags, opening snacks, and solving our problems on our own when appropriate. This is such an important (and difficult life skill) that is only learned when practiced. 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.



## The Lion Class continued

We will miss our class, and each Lion has huge gifts to give to this world. 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.

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 a little over a month of school left. The time has really flown by! 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 Easter and insects. We are looking forward to a wonderful celebration for our 100th day of preschool. We will hit that milestone later this month. The children are excited about it! 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 will talk 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 1-14 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, Rumi, the stuffed penguin. The children have been enjoying taking Rumi home for a few days. We love reading each child’s story about their time with Rumi and seeing the picture they drew. We have a few more weeks to go until every child has had a turn.

The children are really excited about our Spring Tea on Wed., April 15 (11:45 am in the Parish Hall) and look forward to being a host for their special guest.

In May, our class will be talking and reading about camping, summer, and going to kindergarten 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 Wednesday, May 13, and our transition celebration in the Parish Hall on Wednesday, May 20, 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



Hello from the Fish and Frog Classroom! It is hard to believe it is already time for our last newsletter of the year. As the saying goes, “time flies when you’re having fun,” and we can truly say that has applied this year. There is a lot of joy in our classroom every day! This year, we have loved watching our little friends grow into determined, focused, creative, and kind little people. Next year, we have some friends moving on to Pre-K classes, and some friends making that big leap to Kindergarten. And although we will miss our classes, we are so excited to see what the next years will bring for them! We also want to say a big thank you to our classroom families, as you’ve supported us and your child this year.

Each time of year brings fun themes, and Spring is no different. We began April with our Easter theme and had a wonderful time with a variety of egg activities, including matching alphabet eggs, egg pattern matching, and our special digging bin. We had cute tiny chicks, ducks, and bunnies to hide in plastic eggs, as well as colorful rice for making egg shakers. Another highlight was our Easter bunny nest. We had a stuffed egg that a bunny would sit on, and the children practiced scissor skills by cutting up colorful crepe paper into a soft nest for our bunny egg. They took turns sitting on the egg and making nesting material!

For art, we noticed the beautiful blossoms on the trees outside, which was recreated in our cherry blossom tree art. We also loved using plastic eggs to roll paint around on an Easter egg shape to make beautiful patterns.

Our dramatic play is a Veterinary Clinic. The children have dogs, cats, rabbits, and a frog under their care! They can be a pet owner or a vet, and share what is wrong with their pet or what the pet needs after an exam. We have bandages, thermometers, stethoscopes, and other tools to aid in their care. The children especially love putting a leash on the pets and taking them for a “walk” around the classroom. We have loved practicing care, teamwork, and being community helpers!

Following Easter, we moved on to our theme, “On the Farm.” This theme gives us fun opportunities to learn about the animals and people that live and work on a farm. Our vet clinic continues to be useful in taking care of farm animals as well! We have a chicken coop, where the children can gather eggs, and then play a color matching game with them. We have lots of learning we can do through counting, matching, and sorting farm animals at the table. We are making cute baby animals in art, and singing Old MacDonald Had a Farm! We have blocks and magnetiles along with farm animals to work on our building and cooperation skills.

Coming up next, we are excited to feature “Bugs and Birds” as our theme! We will be learning about insects in the Discovery class as well, so our learning will be doubled! We will learn about wings, the different parts of insects and birds, and their life cycles. Our classroom will be turned into a bird-watching area, where there will be stuffy birds hidden around the room! The children will use binoculars to spot birds and then mark which ones they’ve seen on their birdwatching list. In addition,



## The Fish & Frog Classes continued



we'll have a variety of insects to play and learn with in the digging bin and our fine motor center. We will have an "outdoor" market which may lead to some insects that invade a picnic or a bird watching expedition with a packed lunch!

Our last theme of the year will be about flowers where we will notice the wide variety of colors in flowers, learn the seed life cycle, and the parts of a flower. We will be trying to grow our own seeds, and of course make some lovely flowers in art. Our dramatic play area will then be a flower shop, with the children being florists to make bouquets of flowers for their customers. A shop is always a favorite for the Fish and Frog classes so we thought that would be a fitting last dramatic play!

All year long, the children have been working hard on a notebook that they will be able to take home at the end. It includes their handwriting practice, drawings, and pictures of them during various activities throughout the year. We hope they will love looking through them and be proud of all the work they completed and how much they have learned! We are so very proud of them.

Mrs. Winand and I have been so blessed to get to know these awesome little friends. It has been a privilege to be their teachers! We have loved spending the year with them and watching them progress. We wish you all a very happy summer! "Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye my friends to you! God bless you everywhere you go, in all you say and do! Mwah!"

Kristin Stites and Lisa Winand, Fish and Frog Class Teachers





## The Puppy & Kitten Classes



Happy Spring Everyone!

We hope you all had a lovely Spring Break. It is hard to believe the end of the year is almost upon us! It is so inspiring to see the progress our little friends make from the start of school to the end of the year. Just looking at their ability to walk calmly in line through hallway transitions shows how well those school skills have been practiced and mastered. It has been so fun to watch them grow, and though we will miss them, we are excited to see what the next year 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. Over in dramatic play, we had an Easter Basket Factory where the children filled Easter baskets with eggs, carrots, and hopping chicks or bunnies. We worked with them to practice filling their baskets and also 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!

Spring will continue in our classroom with a unit on Birds and 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 do some 3D art with insects and flowers, and we will make some cool bird nests. We will also have birdwatching in our dramatic play center, complete with binoculars, camping chairs, and a big bin of beanie baby birds for our friends to take turns placing around the room for each other to find. We hope we will get to observe some real bugs and birds outside as well with trips to our outdoor classroom!

Coming up in May, we will move into our On the Farm theme. Our dramatic play tent will transform into a barn with a chicken coop, pig pen, and cow pasture. The children will be able to feed and care for the animals. We will also transform our kitchen into a Farmer's Market with rainbow fruits and veggies, baked goods, a food scale, and the coveted cash register. We have so many fun songs, books, toys, puzzles, and decorations for the farm that will make an appearance during this time.

This brings us to the end of our school year together! We will spend our last unit enjoying the well-loved favorites from throughout the year. There are always some activities that are a big hit, so we’ll revisit as many as we can during this Preschool Favorites unit. 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



Thank you for a wonderful year and for sharing your wonderful children with us. It has been such a joy to be their teachers and to work alongside such amazing families! We hope you have a lovely summer.

Holly Welty and Aline Steele, Puppy and Kitten Class Teachers





## The Discovery Room

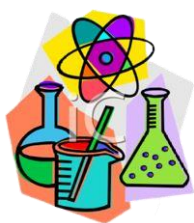
### “Where no discovery is too small”

The last few months of preschool seem to be moving at lightspeed pace! Throughout the months of April to May, we will complete space, insects, and rocks/recycling! At the end of March, I squeezed in an additional unit on the Human Body. I did not address this theme of our fact-filled unit in the previous newsletter, so I will explain topics we covered in this unit below.

Why didn't the skeleton cross the road? It didn't have the guts! During the end of March and spilling into 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*, *My Five Senses*, *Bones*, *Muscles*, *The Human Body* and *Drops of Blood*. There was a plethora of stations for the students to explore throughout this unit. One favorite 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 the parts of the blood. The ping pong balls were of course 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. I encourage you to ask your child if they can name the largest bone in their body. It's the femur!

How does the solar system hold up its pants? With an asteroid belt, of course! During April, we will focus on planets, the sun, the moon's phases, and the day/night cycle. I introduced planets with the famous *A Place for Pluto* book by Stef Wade. We will make planetary headbands and practice rotating and revolving as various planets around a teacher 'sun' in the music room. We will discuss the moon utilizing Gail Gibbon's fact filled *The Moon Book*. Students will practice identifying the moon's phases. We will also read Nelson's *Day and Night* book which clarifies a popular student idea that the sun turns off or gets too tired to keep running in the evening. We will conduct a mini experiment using a flashlight and foam earth ball to demonstrate where the light shines as earth rotates on its axis. Students will enjoy making their own planets by coloring coffee filters with oil pastels and washing them with paint brushes dipped in water. By the conclusion of this unit students will easily identify and order all eight planets with the help of the following famous acrostic: My very eager mother just served us nachos.

We plan to "bug out" over insects during the beginning of May! 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



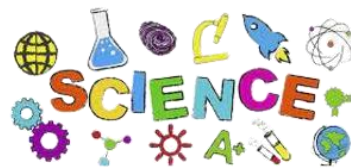
## The Discovery Room continued

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. We will spend the beginning of May 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, 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. We will study animal life cycles and this year we will be hatching baby chicks instead of watching caterpillars metamorphosize into butterflies! I am very excited to tackle this new scientific endeavor and I hope the students will be too!

What kind of rocks are sour? Limestone! We will conclude the year with our rock and recycling unit. We will learn how metamorphic, sedimentary and igneous rocks are formed and how to classify them. There will be 'gemstones' in the digging bin and students will break open rocks to reveal the gems within. We will also learn our three R's-reduce, reuse and recycle. Students will simulate neighborhood recycling with miniature scale trash and recycling trucks.

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! Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing many of you next year!

Yours in discovery,  
Karolina Smith



## Music



All the sounds of spring are music to our ears! We are singing lots of spring and critter themed songs at the moment, as well as practicing a song for spring tea. Next, we will sing and dance our way through fairy tales, the ocean, and insects. We have lots of movement songs for wiggly bodies, and we'll get another chance to play almost all of our instruments one more time before we finish up our preschool year. It's been a delight to witness and guide their joyful noise each week, and I look forward to the rest of our time together.



## Chapel News



After spring break, we've had the chance to revisit our Easter stories and take the time to explore the materials with a hands on work session. Soon we'll hear about the Ten Best Ways, and then we will have a couple of chances to revisit all our favorite stories from the year. Noah's Ark is always a favorite, and students especially love the "desert box" filled with sand that we use to tell stories of the Exodus. They will also be able to work with all of our parables and any of the materials we used to get ready for Christmas and Easter. It's always fun to end the year with the "greatest hits" and listen to how much they remember about all the stories we have shared.

Mrs. Katie Campbell

## Church News

### St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Vacation Bible School

#### Journey to Rainforest Falls!

**Dates:** July 27-July 31

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

**Ages:** 3 1/2 to 4<sup>th</sup> grade (fully potty trained littles)

**Cost:** \$55 per child; \$140 max per family; includes daily snacks and one tee shirt

**Link to sign up:** <http://tiny.cc/rainforest26>

*Register by June 1, 2026*



## Upcoming Events

### St. Andrew's Preschool Summer Programs



Summer Fun

May 27-June 3



Enrichment Camp

June 8-12



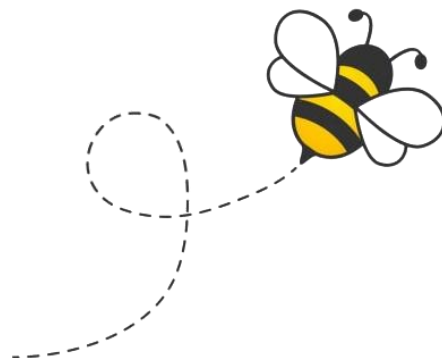
Wet & Wild

June 8-12



Little Chefs Camp

June 15-19



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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