

St. Andrew's Preschool Seasonal Gazette

Fall 2026



From the Director

Fall brings so many opportunities to enjoy a variety of pumpkin treats. I enjoyed a pumpkin spice munchkin last week and it was spectacular! It is also time to delight in the beautiful crisp outdoors. Another treat for students will be attending after-school programs! For our younger students, being fully potty trained is expected in order to attend. This means children must come in underwear and be independent in the potty. If you have questions regarding your child being ready to stay for after-school programs, please contact your classroom teachers.

Two fall events are just around the corner- Trunk or Treat and Stone Soup. Your participation is requested for Trunk or Treat. It is always a favorite. I'm not sure who loves it more the parents or the children! Please sign up on the SUG in Amanda's weekly email. We will also host a Stone Soup event in November. Your child may invite one special guest to attend with them. Specific information with dates, times, and sign-ups will be in Amanda's weekly email.

Victor O'Neil Studios will be sending the proofs to your email address in the next two weeks. If you have any questions, please go to www.vosphoto.com/contact-us and complete the form about your photos.

October finds our students understanding their schedules and routines. They look comfortable and confident walking down the hallway. Our learners are beginning to notice what's around them and how different parts of our preschool work. They continue to ask great questions when they pass by my office. It's the best part of my day!

We enjoy working with your children each day. They are funny, smart, and curious. Now let's have some fall fun!

Warm regards,
Tami



The Lion Class



Hello Lion families, here is the first edition of “The Life of a Lion”. Welcome to a brand-new school year! We love teaching pre-kindergarten because it is such a special time filled with new friendships, exciting discoveries, and lots of opportunities to learn and grow. Our goal is to make your Lion feel loved, valued, and ready to learn. Sometimes what kids learn is brought home on a piece of paper, but often it is in their heart or their head.

During the first few weeks of school, we focused on helping all the Lions feel comfortable in their new classroom and learn about our daily routines. It is often an adjustment to a new classroom, group of kids and new teachers. I am happy to report that the Lions have all adjusted well and we are so proud of them! First and foremost, we worked on building new friendships while still loving our old ones. We practice taking turns, using kind words and playing cooperatively. We are working on creating an inclusive classroom which includes discouraging using the term “best friend”. We know that this is a normal part of childhood, but most often at this age it is not used appropriately and often leads to hurt feelings. Friendships at this age and development can vary day to day (which is normal) as children learn to navigate social situations. Creating an environment of inclusion helps kids feel free to make mistakes and make new friends without being limited by a group or label. We certainly know kids have their favorite people and that is okay and we don’t discourage that; we just don’t like to label them at school. We discuss the reasons behind various class rules as a learning exercise and use the term red and green choices and usually the kids can explain to us why we have different rules (for example to keep them safe, to avoid hurt feelings, to keep them healthy to name a few). We appreciate your help to reinforce these ideas at home! We are a team with you to help your kids grow 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 completed learning units about starting school, all about me, and families and apples. We created many projects that were multi-purpose to teach skills, while also assessing what our Lions can already do (cutting, writing etc.). A favorite September project is the self-portraits we include in our end of the year memory books. Seeing a comparison of the portrait they create in September vs. the one they complete in May is always remarkable. Our Lions loved playing at the dramatic play Apple Orchard, and it was amazing to see how the kids took turns shopping and checking out all the various apple items. We learned about the apple life cycle and the kids learned how to label the different parts of the apple. We made apple prints to see the core and seeds in the apple and made apple cake. We learned about collaborative art as the children’s individual artwork came together to make an awesome apple orchard outside our room. Each week we complete a new letter from the alphabet for our journal notebooks. The kids are loving our questions of the day and the cool button they get to push to hear the question each day (it’s also a big bonus that it makes the teacher’s life easier too)! On to October...

The Lion Class continued

In October we continued our apple unit and began the much-anticipated fun of Halloween activities. 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). After being in school for a month, our Lions have really adjusted to our routine. We are working hard to have our Lions take responsibility for their daily jobs and to use our job chart as a resource. We had a fun unit learning about bats and learned many facts about bats in the process. Our apple orchard morphed into a spooky fall mural as we added our bat artwork to the wall outside the classroom. Our dramatic play area turned into a pumpkin playground and potion lab. The Lions mixed eye balls, mice, insects and spiders to name a few and dressed up with Halloween masks and pretended to “trick-or-treat”. During October we made many fun projects to celebrate Halloween. I love how unique each project ends up. We read the story “Creepy Carrots” and made our own carrot patch (this is one of Mrs. Nyman’s favorites). Pumpkin muffins are always a hit in October. We love to bake with our Lions. Our Lions are working hard writing their names. We are encouraging our Lions to use initial capital and lower-case letters where appropriate. We are so proud of them no matter how they write their name, but most of all we are just happy to see how proud they are of their success. Seeing their growth is very rewarding, but most of all I am just excited that they are excited to learn and succeed. 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...

In November we will learn about all the colors of fall, 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 for upcoming events like Stone Soup and our Christmas sing-along. 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. On back-to-school night, we try and tell you how our day works, but I will be honest we always try and change things up depending on what works with each group of Lions. We already adjusted our classroom jobs to have them work better and be more useful and fun for all the kids. We are constantly talking about patterns, sorting, counting and we have added math equations to our circle time routine. For language arts, we work our way through the handwriting without tears letter order practicing initial letter sounds. Not all our Lions will understand everything right away, but the more they are exposed to something the less scary it becomes. We always try and reinforce that we can make mistakes, and we are looking for progress in our Lions not perfection. My favorite call and response in class is “the more we practice, THE BETTER WE GET!” As always, if you have any questions, please let us know.

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





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 our 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, 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. By November we will have learned the sounds and proper formation of the letters A, L, F, E, H, and T. When writing, we start every letter at the top (and there’s a song for that!). We begin with the easiest letters to form and work our way to the hardest ones. We have enjoyed playing the “What’s Missing?” game with objects that start with the letters 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, create 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).

In October we started Show and Tell every Wednesday. The children love this and it’s a great opportunity for them to learn to listen to their classmates, and they can expect the same respect when it is their turn to share. We encourage all the children to participate.

In our units so far, the children have enjoyed learning about Halloween, Fall, Apples, and Starting School. We have done many fun art projects geared to these units and read some wonderful books. In November, we will have a unit about giving thanks. We look forward to talking with the children about giving thanks for all the wonderful people, places and things in our lives.



The Penguin Class continued

Some upcoming events for the Penguins: Trunk or Treat, 10:00 am on Wednesday, October 28; Stone Soup, 11:45 am on Wed., Nov. 18; Thanksgiving break, Nov. 25-26, no preschool.

We are thankful for the many children in our care, along with their families!
Mrs. MacArthur and Mrs. Kockler



The Fish & Frog Classes



Hello from the Fish and Frog Classroom! We have had a wonderful first two months together! We are loving getting to know each of the children's unique personalities and watching them form connections with each other. They are all working so hard to learn our routines and procedures. We have been impressed by how well both classes have caught on to our schedule. We are proud of their hard work every day!

We began our school year with a couple of weeks focusing on helping our classes feel welcome in the classroom. It can be a lot to get used to new spaces and routines! We learned how to take care of our belongings each day, which job to choose, and all sorts of new songs! And that's just in the morning! Each day we are spending time learning about being in a classroom with friends. We practice sitting safely, staying in our own space, waiting our turn to speak so we can hear each other, and treating each other with respect and kindness.

One of the first things we learned about this year was "Mat Man." He is a simple person drawing with basic lines and curves that are the basis for writing letters. There is even a song that goes along with it (as with most things—you know we love our songs in preschool!). We have been learning our "frog-jump" letters so far and the children are doing a wonderful job learning how to recognize, write, and make the sounds of letters.

Our daily Center Time during September was full of fun! We had an ice cream shop in our dramatic play area and Magna-tiles were the hands-down favorite for block building. We made paper plate fishes and frogs in art and used tweezers to pick colorful frog counters out of grass. Our attention the last couple weeks of the month turned to our apple theme. We loved learning about the different varieties and parts of apples, as well as the apple life cycle. We had a dramatic play apple orchard, apple matching, and made some beautiful apple art—a handprint tree and a marble-painted apple. The children loved shaking marbles and paint in a box to paint their apples! The results were beautiful. A highlight was tasting apples, and we discovered whether green, red, or yellow apples were the most liked in each class. We celebrated the end of our theme by talking about different things you can make with apples, and taste-testing apple crisp and apple juice.

We welcomed the season of Fall and the month of October with another theme—Fall on the Farm! We learned about farm animals and fall harvests. Our dramatic play area became a chicken coop and pig pen and the children gathered eggs and took great care of our pig! Much pretend play happened in our block center as well, with a toy barn and animals, barn building blocks, and beanie baby farm animals. We read many books about farm animals and both classes especially loved the silly book "Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type." The children made darling art, including a happy scarecrow and a ripe ear of corn made from buttons. Additionally, our playdough center was always busy with children making pumpkin and acorn cutouts. Some of our friends even made eggs!

We are incredibly excited for the rest of October, where we'll have fun with all things Halloween. Our dramatic play area will feature a "Cauldron Creation" station, where the children mix up ingredients and a little "magic" in a cauldron. We'll enjoy (mildly) spooky art, books, and songs.

The Fish & Frog Classes continued

We'll close out the month with our preschool Trunk-or-Treat. It is a preschool-favorite event each year, with the teachers and children wearing their Halloween costumes, and a creative and cute trick-or-treat in the back parking lot! As fall marches on, we will continue to enjoy celebrating all the joys of the season, with themes focusing on Leaves and Thanksgiving in November. We'll have indoor leaf raking and a Thanksgiving pie-making station in our dramatic play. We will even sneak in some dinosaur fun, to go along with our annual month of "Dinovember" in Discovery class. We love that this month brings us the opportunity to talk about things we are grateful for in our art, stories, and rug time discussions. We hope you'll join us for our annual Stone Soup event in mid-November, when we make a pot of vegetable soup to share as a preschool community!

It is our true pleasure to be your child's teachers, and we look forward to many more months of learning together! We are grateful for the blessing of getting to know your children and your families, and we thank you for the support you give us. We hope you all enjoy the coziness and fun that this season brings.

Kristin Stites and Lisa Winand





The Puppy & Kitten Classes



Hello parents! We have had a wonderful start to the year with our Puppies and Kittens! We have loved getting to know each of their unique personalities over the last two months and look forward to watching them continue to learn and grow. We're happy for this opportunity to share with you some of the details from our days in class! Both classes have done an amazing job getting used to our classroom and learning our routines. They have already perfected our Morning Meeting process and are so efficient at moving through their jobs that we already have extra time for bonus stories, games, or songs each day!

In September, we began our year with our "Welcome to Preschool" and "All About Me" themes and had a thorough exploration of the many aspects of "Apples" to help us get comfortable and settle into the flow of preschool. We slowly worked in all our routines and special classes. We have spent time each day practicing sitting in a safe way, knowing when it's our turn to talk, raising hands when we need something, using walking feet, keeping safe bodies and personal space while in line, and taking turns. We learned songs to help us remember what our bodies do when we walk down the hall and songs to go with our daily morning meeting. We imagine you are probably hearing snippets of the songs at home! Each day we spend time talking together and getting to know each other while we are eating our snack. We have been loving chatting about Halloween and the changes we notice outside now that it is fall, especially all the beautiful, colorful leaves!

We are really enjoying this fall weather and spending time on the playground and in the outdoor kitchen! Most of our friends especially look forward to this time of the day! We are also diving into some of our favorite units of the year—"Pumpkins" and "Halloween". A highlight for both classes has been our dramatic play center, where we created a Pumpkin Patch for planting and picking pumpkins, as well as a Pumpkin Market where we took turns picking out and buying pumpkins from each other. Currently, we have a Magic Potion Making/Cauldron Creation Station, where we have three little witches and/or wizards at a time mixing some very creative potions! A favorite this year seems to be a potion that makes you fly! They are having so much fun with it. We learned a new song called "Five Little Pumpkins," which talks about pumpkins showing different emotions on their faces. It's hard not to laugh when we all pretend to have grumpy faces! We will round out the month with another yearly favorite, our Trunk or Treat. It is so fun to see the children in their costumes parading around the darling decorated trunks to get some goodies in their bags. What a great way to end October!

Coming up in November, we will begin the month with a theme on the season of fall, including leaves, acorns, forest animals, and fall fruits and vegetables. All the things that make fall so fun! Our dramatic play center will even include a mini leaf-raking station! We love fall art projects, especially when we can include nature items we will collect on nature walks! We hope to take many this season. Our class artwork throughout the year will focus heavily on the exploration of materials, the sensory experiences involved, and the process of making something as opposed to making "perfect" end products.



The Puppy & Kitten Classes continued



Our goal with art is to offer a variety of materials and methods for creating, and by focusing on the process over the end product, we are helping each child develop their creativity, self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and independence. Practically speaking, we are not directly telling your children where to place things, like eyes, for example, so the end results are all unique and the result of your child's own hard work!

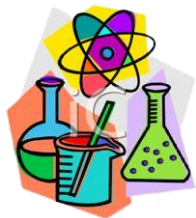
As the end of fall approaches, we will get into our themes of Thanksgiving and gratitude. We of course will include plenty of turkeys in art, song and otherwise! Before we separate for the Thanksgiving holiday, we will enjoy a special event based on the book "Stone Soup." Each child in our class will bring in an assigned ingredient for a vegetable soup and we will mix it all together with the rest of the school for a delicious soup. One special family guest will be invited to attend Stone Soup with your child so we can enjoy a cup of soup together.

We are so grateful for each and every one of you! Thank you for all you do to support us and your children. We are so honored to be a part of their lives!

We hope you enjoy this beautiful fall!

Holly Welty and Aline Steele,
Puppy and Kitten Teachers





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. 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 transferred sand from beakers graduated cylinders using funnels and they ground colored cereal using a mortar and pestle into a fine powder. We read *Mix it Up!* and everyone reviewed their color knowledge using colored overlays. We learned more in-depth color terminology including: shades, tints, and complementary colors.

October was action-packed as students explored three topics: pumpkins, spiders and snakes! We kicked off the month with all things pumpkin: their varieties, 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. I introduced different types of pumpkins and gourds to show how many variations existed in nature. 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. We were generously supplied with a colossal sunflower and the students practiced extracting seeds using tweezers from it as well. I am saving the seeds for students to plant in the back lot next spring. 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 couple of weeks we will increase the spookiness factor by studying spiders and snakes. Powering a remote-controlled tarantula all around the school's hallway will surely make their arachnophobia disappear! The students will differentiate spiders from insects by learning that they have eight legs instead of six. They will be exposed to terminology such as arachnid, cephalothorax, spinnerets, venomous, carnivore, cobweb and the spider life cycle. In addition, a remote-control powered snake will be added to the mix the last week of the month. Students will learn that snakes are cold-blooded reptiles and they can swallow their food whole and smell with their tongues and can't blink because they don't have eyelids! I look forward to embracing the Halloween spirit by dressing up as Ms. Frizzle this year and I can't wait to see all the spectacular student costumes.

The Discovery Room continued

November will be extra exciting since it will be time for our month-long celebration called "Dinovember!" I will begin the unit explaining that Dinosaur means "terrible lizard." We will review important dinosaur related terms including herbivore, carnivore, predator, prey, oviparous, extinct, paleontologist, fossil, and reptile. The classes complete a fact or fiction identification sheet to demonstrate cumulative knowledge. We sort dinosaurs into herbivore and carnivore categories using a Venn diagram. It always surprises me how students in the past 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 learn that the purpose of spikes, plates, and fancy spines existed to protect themselves against predators. During the latter part of the month, we will focus on individual dinosaurs including the Iguanodon, Ankylosaurus, Triceratops, T-rex, Velociraptor, Apatosaurus and Stegosaurus. Students will complete individual chitchat sheets within their science journals by filling in missing words after listening to in depth articles discussing each dinosaur. Usually, an exceptionally popular activity is playing in Dino Land, where students recreate dinosaur habitats through dioramas using wood pieces, rocks, figurines, and fake plants. Students will transform into paleontologists with brushes and sifting tools in hand to excavate dinosaur skeletons and fossils from sand at the digging bin. Students will create their own fossils using molds and magic sand. Another popular station tends to be disassembling and reassembling a T-Rex and Triceratops using a battery-operated 'power drill.' Students will learn to match dinosaur figurines to their names and even just dinosaur Toob skulls to identify them. We will watch 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 are going to take over the entire Discovery Room. They will be in the digging bin, on the light table, and in each of the building buckets. A special dinosaur named "Trixie" always makes an appearance at the end of the month. The dinosaur unit concludes 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!

Yours in Discovery,

Mrs. Karolina Smith



Music



Happy Autumn!

We are rocking and rolling (and singing and dancing and wiggling) in music class. We started our year with songs and games to get to know one another better. I'm enjoying getting to see each class's dynamic. Their guesses about what may be in the mystery box let me know a lot; they show me which classes are more shy, which have especially creative guesses, who likes to copy what their friends are saying, and who has a different monster truck to guess each day!

Some of our themes have been apples, finding the beat, farm animals, fall, and nocturnal animals. Regardless of the music theme, we often close our time together with a song that ties to the current chapel story. We've used rhythm sticks, puppets, and scarves so far. Looking forward, more instruments and props like parachutes will be introduced, and we will have a season of pumpkin songs and poems before it's time to celebrate Dino-vember!

Your lovely little musicians are a delight as they fill the music & movement room with lots of joyful noise.

Katie Campbell



Chapel News



It is a special treat to see your children both in chapel and in music. I tell them that music is a time for silly, wiggly bodies, but that we bring our calm bodies into chapel. Each class has had about 4 or 5 chapel classes, but they are doing so well with the routines and transitions that help their little bodies be settled while they listen. We use Godly Play, a Montessori-inspired curriculum that makes space for lots of wondering questions and hands-on play. The wondering questions right now are “I wonder what was your favorite part of the story? I wonder if any part of this story was about you? I wonder if there is any part of this story we can take out and still have all the story we need?”

Each story takes two classes - one for telling the story and wondering together, and another for recapping the story and playing with a variety of related toys, books, coloring and games. We began by learning about the Holy Family, and then the Creation. We’ve also had the joy of celebrating a good handful of birthdays already this year! Now we are exploring Noah’s Ark, and we will move onto the Exodus and 10 commandments before we start moving more into Christmas stories. As we move through the year, I continue to enjoy your children, their questions, and all the ways they find to play with the materials and connect to different stories.

Katie Campbell

Church News



Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant service (all children are invited to participate in the pageant)

8:30 p.m. Christmas Prelude/Carols

9 p.m. Holy Eucharist II Service

Christmas Day

11:00 a.m. Christmas morning service





Trunk or Treat

October 28

Puppy, Fish & Penguin classes 10 a.m.

October 30

Kitten, Frog & Lion classes 10 a.m.

Stone Soup

November 18

Puppy, Fish & Penguin classes 11:45 a.m.

November 19

Kitten, Frog & Lion classes 11:45 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!!

Christmas Program

Tentative Dates

December 16

Puppy, Fish & Penguin classes 11:45 a.m.

December 17

Kitten, Frog & Lion classes 11:45 a.m.

Dates will be confirmed December 1st

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