



## PreK 4s News

### October 2023

#### Happy Fall!

I hope you and your family have been enjoying the beginning of the school year and all the excitement relating to Preschool! This newsletter will give you a glimpse of a few of our school themes and activities.

#### Faith Focus

**God's Gifts to Us** is our faith focus for the month of October. The children will be learning chants, listening to stories, exploring items from nature and more. This is a beautiful time of the year to enjoy first hand by touching, observing and becoming more aware of the beauty God created in the world. In addition to noticing the changes in our world around us, the children will be introduced to the Bible in class. I am excited to show the different types of Bibles that are in our classroom. Idea: If your child doesn't have a picture Bible at home to look at – it would be a great Christmas gift.

"How God Made the World" is our Bible story focus for the month. The children will listen to various versions of the story of creation using our Bible Read Aloud, flannel story pieces, and other books. Plus, the children will learn a few creation chants, too.

In addition, the children have been learning age-appropriate prayers at the beginning and end of our day, as well as during snack time. The children are learning the words and actions to the sign of the cross, too. With regular practice at both home and school, the sign of the cross will become a natural part of your child's prayer ritual.

#### Sending Home Your Child's Work

Many times, there will be projects created at school that will be sent home, but it perhaps is not the project of the day. Often the project is still drying or proudly displayed for all to see. In addition, items do get saved for the memory folder or to observe progress during the year.

#### Our Projects

Every time the children are involved in a project, they are spending valuable time enhancing important skills. Many times, the fine motor skills involve crayons, scissors, pencils, paint brushes and some out of the ordinary tools. Other skills may be listening to directions, following a step-by-step process or trying something for the first time. Whatever the outcome—your children are so proud of themselves and that makes all of us happy!

#### Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is completed through the district you reside in and is currently mandatory for all children entering Kindergarten. Be sure to make an appointment for the screening earlier rather than waiting until your child is closer to the Kindergarten year. It is a very valuable tool for both teachers and families.

**The target age is 3.5.** If your child hasn't been screened yet—I am highly encouraging you to make the appointment now. The screening dates can sometimes be six weeks out. Thank you.

### **Monthly Faith Focus Sharing Day (aka- Show-n-Tell):**

Each month, as part of our Faith Focus theme, there will be a special day for your child to bring something from home to show-n-tell classmates a little bit about the item. Each child will be able to sit on my sharing stool when it is his/her turn to show what was brought to school.

Our first sharing day will be on **Monday, October 30**. The topic of conversation will be: bring one item to preschool from nature. If possible, it would be nice to keep the nature items to add to our science table for exploration. Encourage your child to become aware of the beauty God has given us as the trees are changing colors, leaves and pinecones are falling to the ground and bird nests can be seen as the trees become bare. Keep this in mind as you and your family go for walks on the beautiful days of Fall.

**\*\* Note:** I will have a crate near the classroom door for your child to place their sharing item inside when they enter the classroom. All sharing items will be returned to your child's backpack at the end of the day, except for this month as we are collecting items from nature to add to our science table.

**\*\*** Watch the monthly calendar for future Sharing Day themes and dates. Thank you, thank you.

### **Letter of the Week**

Our letter of the week is underway and going very well. The children have met all the zoo-phonics animals that go along with each letter. Ask your child if they can tell you a few of the animal names and sounds.

Each letter animal that is introduced has specific body movements to help the children learn the sound that corresponds with the letter. The movement, animal name and sound together in a chant assists children to get excited about letters, helps them recall a sound and it is loads of fun. The animal and sound are introduced first—and then the letter of the alphabet. The children are being fabulous letter detectives by finding something in our class letter box pertaining to the sound and letter of the week.

Now would be a great time to review the sounds and letters we have covered so far: H, F & A. It is wise to talk to your child about the letters we are learning each week. Daily review allows for strong recognition skills and it builds confidence in the children. It also shows your child that you have an interest in what is being taught at Preschool. Look at the monthly calendar for future letters.

### **Heggerty & Groves Activities**

The children will be introduced to rhyming, initial and ending sound exploring, alphabet knowledge and alliteration games alongside the zoo-phonics program. The earliest years of education are very important for children to be exposed to the sounds of our language. Our daily Heggerty & Groves activities will assist your child in being able to hear different sounds, be able to learn the letters of the alphabet and love to learn at Preschool.

### **Snacks**

It has been wonderful having healthy and nutritious snacks for the children. Please see the Suggested Snack list for ideas. It is appreciated when you send 2/4 food groups for snack, as we are a licensed Preschool and follow the MN Early Childhood requirements for this age group. 😊 Thank you for helping make snack time possible for all of the children.

### **Thank you**

Thank you for scheduling conferences with me. It was very rewarding and wonderful to spend time together.

## Woodland Forest/Forest Animals

The children just completed an outstanding unit on Forest. It was engaging, fun and lots of learning took place. The children learned which animals lived in the forest, which animals hibernated, migrated or which animals have to adapt to the frigid MN temps. One of our favorite stories was Night, Night Forest Friends by Annie Bach. I hope you were able to see the artwork in the lobby that went along with this beautiful story.

A few Forest themed highlights:

- \*Science table: reflections with a large mirror, items from nature with magnifying glasses.
- \*Main sensory bin: straw, raffia, fake green grass, tweezers and fall hidden treasures.
- \*Dramatic Play: Pet Shop (ties in nicely with our God Created the World theme—including animals)
- \*Light Table: window nature frames, transparent bears, colorful odd-shaped blocks.
- \*Classroom Library: regular and big books relating to our theme.
- \*Block Areas: wooden blocks and forest animals  
duplos, bears, and off-brand magna-tiles
- \*Mini Activities: forest animal sorting, play dough and forest cookie cutters, forest puzzles & number games, writing forest animals names on white boards, rabbit fine motor game with tweezers/carrots, bear pattern cards, and much more.

I sent home a Cave project on Wednesday along with a suggested letter (in folders) on how to use the Cave at home to support preschool readiness concepts. The children absolutely loved their cave and the number activity we did at school to support counting and number awareness. Thank you for all you are doing to support your child at both preschool and home.

## Fall is Fantastic

This week brings us the theme of Fall. Our Repeated Read Aloud book is titled The Leaves on the Trees by Thom Wiley. Wonderful literature and theme based poems, fingerplays and rhymes are always part of our days together. The children will observe the changes in the weather and nature outside. We will use marbles and paint to create a colorful fall leaf, and dot paint a leaf and learn how water changes the paint colors. Look for a wonderful Fall skittles experiment to come home in folders.

A Fall number book has been started with our PreK4s class. Each week this Fall, numbers 1-6 will be highlighted, and a rhyme will be taught to help with memorization. The children will learn how to count from 1-6 in Spanish, too.

Our room is filled with opportunities to explore many different learning concepts—being an engineer with building blocks, exploring objects at the science area, grooming animals at our Pet Shop in dramatic play, being creative at the easel, improving fine motor skills with tweezers and objects, playing at the light table is always a hit, stopping for a moment to read a story in the Classroom library or say a quiet prayer at our Jesus table. Loads of learning and fun!



## After the MEA break-- God Created Everything: PUMPKINS!

In addition to learning about the days of creation—the children will also be exploring with one of God's creations—PUMPKINS! A sure favorite for all! The children will learn vocabulary, predict the weight, circumference, and height of our class pumpkin. There will be opportunities to discover the inside of the pumpkin, too. We will learn a few chants and discover the life cycle of the pumpkin with our Repeated Read Aloud book titled Pumpkin, Pumpkin by Jeanne Titherington and other books. Be sure to ask your preschooler how a pumpkin grows by the end of our unit.

For more pumpkin pleasure, the children will pound toy nails in a paper pumpkin, match jack-o-faces, explore play dough with pumpkin cookie cutters and paint a pumpkin bag. Our STEM challenge--- how to build the fence for the Five Little Pumpkins rhyme will certainly be a hit. All of these activities support learning, direction following and assist in fine motor skills by using various materials. By having multiple experiences, it allows for the children to feel successful and pleased with all they do.



## Halloween Fun

The PreK4s will be enjoying a simple and fun celebration in the classroom on **Friday, October 27**. The first part of the morning will consist of a costume fashion show, story, snack, chant, and parade in the Classroom. The second part of our class will be crafts, games, and activities. It is going to be so much fun.

## Halloween Fun Details

Please have your child wear a simple costume to Preschool on October 27. Costumes should promote sweetness in an age-appropriate way. The costume should allow your child to use the bathroom independently without too much trouble. In addition, please leave any accessories at home to avoid anything from getting broken or forgotten at school. This day is not meant to promote Halloween, but rather a day for little ones to use their imaginations and simply to have fun! No treats please. **It is going to be a BOO-TIFUL day!**

## Donations to Preschool:

Donations help us so much. Twice during the year, you will receive a Signup Genius wish list of items that are helpful to have in the Classroom. This is completely optional for you to participate in and whatever you can help us with is appreciated so much.

You should have received an email recently from our Home & School reps including the Signup Genius link inviting you to consider donating odds-n-ends to our Preschool. All the items listed on the donation list will be used with the children sometime during the school year. Thank you ahead of time for your generous donations. They really do make a difference.

## Notes

\*MEA break: **no school** on Thursday, October 19 or Friday, October 20. Enjoy a long weekend!

\*See the monthly calendar for letters of the week, days off, color days, etc.

\*Please label all coats, mittens, hats, etc. Please label sweatshirts and sweaters, too. It truly helps us.

\*Please be sure your child leaves home with a warm coat as the temps are getting lower. It can be quite windy and chilly at the park.

\*Try to have your preschooler use the bathroom before leaving home each morning.

\*Please have an extra bag (clear Ziploc works well) of clothes in your child's bag.



Enjoy the spectacular season of Fall—