

First Presbyterian Weekday School Newsletter

Fall 2017

Dear Parents,

The Weekday School has had a fun fall start to the school year! The children are thriving as they enjoy their art projects, play with friends, and grow in so many ways each day. Our teachers constantly amaze me with their creativity, patience, and dedication to your children and our school. We are very blessed.

Family Pizza Night in September and Muffins with Mom in October were great family fun and a chance to get to know friends in the classroom better! Moms and Dads enjoyed meeting each other and just being together as a Weekday School family. November will brought the Three's Thanksgiving program and feast. Moving into the Christmas season, we anticipate LIVE NATIVITY on November 30th with all of Athens invited, as well as our Pre-K Christmas program and Cookie Swap! Thanks so much for your participation and support of the things we do to bring families together outside the classroom.

As we look forward to our **Registration for next year, beginning on January 11th**, we are excited about offering our EARLY FIVE's CLASS again. This is such a fabulous opportunity to give your child an extra year to mature should they need it. Mrs. Norton has a full Houghton Mifflin Kindergarten Curriculum and weaves that in beautifully with our exploring and art based Creative Curriculum. We've also enjoyed great success with our Pre-K/Early Pre-k Class this year, which combined some Three's and some Four's in our Three Day class. This seems to suit some family schedules better, and has been a great leader/learner experience for all under Mrs. Reid's and Mrs. Burks' care. Our youngest class in the Weekday School begins at just 3 months. Spread the news in the community, as I feel there are many this could serve well.

I ENCOURAGE ALL TO BE ON TOP OF REGISTRATION THIS YEAR, as we have VERY few spots available in the school right now. This means we have a BUMPER CROP of students who are with us and will register for next year. Registration begins at 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 11th. You may turn your registration form with \$150 registration fee at that time, or even BEFORE. On Thursday, January 19th, COMMUNITY REGISTRATION BEGINS. This means that your priority period as current students is over the day before. PLEASE register EARLY, as I cannot turn community students down or ask Mrs. Greene or the teachers to chase current student registrations down. It is my complete desire to serve our current students first, but I need your help with this!

Thank you for your continued support! Please know that I would love for you to come by to visit me at any time! We welcome input, praise, and ideas that can help our children and school thrive!

Blessings,
Elaine Johnson
Weekday School Director

News from the Classes

Infants:

Mrs. Fields/Mrs. Nichols/Mrs. Lee/Mrs. Fullington:

We are having so much fun in our infant room! Each day is a happy day with our Infants. We share many **smiles** and **giggles** during the day and each day is a new adventure! In our room we enjoy **tumbling** on our infant gym mat, **singing**, **clapping** hands, **reading** and playing with our **mirrored activity table**. We also enjoy playing in the indoor playroom. This year we have added buggy riding time. We love our new 6 seater buggy! It's a big hit! Snack time is always fun and by naptime everyone is ready for a rest!

Early Toddlers/Toddlers:

Ms. Lawrence/Ms. Carlton/Mrs. Grant/Ms. Ford:

These past few months have flown by for our Toddler classes. We have seen babies learn to walk and talk.

The toddlers love routine: playing, singing, books, and our daily walks through the building. Chapel, Spanish, Music, and of course, snack (!) are also important parts of our week.

We are very blessed to have these little people in our lives.

Early 2's:

Mrs. Lewis/Mrs. Clark (Lewis and Clark):

We've had a great start to the school year! We started off the school year getting to know each other and adjusting to being at school. This is some of the children's first school experience and they have all adjusted very well! In ART they've had fun using paint, glue and crayons in creating bears, pumpkins, apples, leaves and spider webs! Most recently we have done our farm animals are - stamping animals in the barn, BaBa Black Sheep and baby chicks with feathers and real chicken food. They love talking about the farm animals and the sounds they make. We also enjoyed doing some fun Fall & Thanksgiving Crafts. These kids love to DANCE! Some of their favorites have been "Wiggy Wiggy Wiggles" with shakers, "Funny Fat Frogs" and "Sammy". Circle time has been fun! We get to read stories, sing songs and do fingerplays. We've been talking about colors, counting, expressions (happy, sad, surprised, excited). It's so funny to see their facial expressions! We get a good giggle when we do this! Some of their favorite SONGS and FINGERPLAYS are "5 Little Monkeys teasing Mr. Alligator" "Five Little Ducks", "Little Turtle Who Lives in the Box", "Wheels on the Bus", "Old McDonald" and more! It has been fun watching the children adjusting to school and really starting to play with their new friends. We now have a total of 10 children on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and 8 children on Tuesday and Thursday, so they have met quite a few new friends! We are looking forward to Christmas and the fun crafts, songs and fingerplays that go along with the holidays. Thank you for being such awesome parents! We are very thankful for the healthy snacks and for the help with the parties! We are enjoying your sweet children and are so glad you are sharing them with us!!

2's:

Mrs. Cummings/Ms. Allen:

What a great start to a fun 2 year old class! We quickly learned each other's names using our "Friend Book", while singing our "Hello" song to each new friend. We learned our class blessing quickly, which we sing daily before our snack. September began with an unexpected Hurricane, and then we were ready for fun "DOWN ON THE FARM" painting horses with straw, art with oatmeal, black and white cows, and our handprint chickens. Our "BEARS" unit was a great success making Corduroy while working very hard on our "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" books~we hope you liked them! Our Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear poem was a highlight of our day and we loved "Going on a Bear Hunt", finding him in his cave and running safely home. It was a special treat to bring our favorite stuffed animal to school for our teddy bear picnic as well. Painting with and making apples and leaves, our scarecrows and lots of pumpkin art took up most of October. November finds us surrounded by furry gray squirrels, red foxes and feathery owls, while enjoying singing "Gray Squirrel" and reading "Owl Babies" and "Squirrel's Busy Day". We've enjoyed "HEALTHY FOODS" week with fruits and veggies and learning how they give us energy to play and make us strong! A few friends even tried broccoli and cauliflower at snack. We are so thankful for our friends at school and our families. December will bring us closer to Jesus's birthday as we prepare our parent gifts and exciting Holiday art. Each day, we enjoy dancing to our favorite songs "Shake our Sillies Out" and "The FREEZE Song". Our highly anticipated visits from "Little Mouse" on Tuesdays and using our senses to guess what's in the "Surprise Sack" on Thursdays, as well as Chapel, Spanish and Music are some of our weekly highlights. Thank you so much for the healthy snacks that have been sent in this year~they are a real treat! Have a safe and happy Holiday!

Mrs. Miller/Ms. Redwine:

What an awesome year we have had so far! Our "Friend Book" and "Hello" song helped us to get to know all our friends. We talked early on about our classroom rules, like using gentle hands and kind words. We also began to learn our classroom routines. We start off our day with free play and art. During the first part of our day, we also have specials! On Mondays, we have chapel, Wednesdays, we get to sing and dance during music, and we finish up the week with Spanish on Fridays. Then after recess and snack time, we have circle time, where we read books and sing songs about what we're learning. We started off learning about life on the farm. We made muddy pigs, and we also used vegetables to help us paint. Then we started to learn about bears, which culminated in our Teddy Bear picnic outside - so much fun! The start of fall meant that we've gotten to talk about the changing of the seasons and learn some new fall songs. We learned about apple trees and have made some wonderful artwork showing all the different autumn colors. We will be discussing Thanksgiving and why we celebrate it. We have some old character favorites, Pete the Cat and Bear, to help us learn about it! In December, we will talk about the meaning of Christmas and the importance of kindness. We will also be doing some neat crafts, decorating our classroom tree, and generally getting excited (sorry, parents!) Thank you so much for all your support, from healthy snacks to open communication. We truly have a wonderful class and I can't wait to see where the new year takes us! Have a delightful Christmas season and a fantastic New Year!

Mrs. Beall/Ms. Redwine:

This school year is off to a great start in the Two Day Two's class! Singing the "Hello" song daily is helping us learn our friend's names. Some of the favorite themes have been Farm, Bears, Apples, Fall and Pumpkins. The children enjoyed singing Old McDonald and taking

turns placing farm animals on the felt board. The highlight of our "Bears" unit, was probably the Teddy Bear Picnic. Everyone was so excited to bring their teddy bears to school and enjoy a special snack. We also had fun reading Brown Bear, Brown Bear and singing Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Around. We ended September with our "Apple" unit and the kids enjoyed the songs and felt board activities so much, that I extended this unit into the first week of October. Their favorite song from this unit was, 5 Little Apples Hanging in a Tree.....teasing Mr. Slinky worm you can't catch me and of course taking turns taking the apples off the tree on the felt board. Our next theme was, Fall and one of the things that stands out to me, as one of their favorite activities, was our finger play, 2 Little Blackbirds. They would ask to do it over and over. The children also enjoyed singing Autumn Leaves are Falling Down and listening to the books, There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves and Clifford's First Autumn. Lastly, our most recent theme has been Pumpkins. The children had so much fun singing Pass the Pumpkin all around, as they pass the pumpkin to their friends and when the song ends, who ever has the pumpkin, holds it above their head. They made candy corn art and marbled pumpkins. We will spend November talking about Woodland Animals and Thanksgiving. We are thankful for all of God's Blessings and in December we look forward to celebrating his birth and the Christmas season. Tuesdays the children have fun in Spanish with Mrs. Pope and then on Thursdays they enjoy singing with Mrs. Grainger. Thank you again for sharing your precious children with us and we appreciate your help and support! Have a safe and blessed holiday season!

3's:

Mrs. Boerma/Mrs. Maxwell:

We have had a very smooth start to Three's. The students quickly became comfortable with new friends and the classroom routine. It has been a joy for us to meet and get to know your children. They entered the classroom door with a healthy understanding and respect for sharing, friendship, responsibility and rules and consequences. We have noticed that our classroom dog, Thinker, spends a lot of lonely time in his Doghouse! We started the year focusing on name, letter, numeral, shape and color recognition, sorting, and patterning. These are being presented in independent work centers called "Tubs". We continuously work on our fine and gross motor skills through work and play. Activities include learning proper grip when using crayons, markers, glue sticks and scissors, tracing letters and shapes and freely creating individual art pieces with varying media. Upper case letter recognition and formation is being introduced using Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) principles. We form the letters with clay and trace with crayon while verbalizing the steps. The students love the "frog jump, ribbit" prompter. Letter sounds are being introduced through a word board, manipulatives and the Zoophonics chants and motions. We are using HWT Mat Man to introduce, step-by-step, self-portrait drawing. It has been fun to observe the progress. Spatial awareness is practiced and improved through working puzzles and reproducing a sample picture by placing and gluing cut paper shapes in the noted space. Numeral recognition is progressing with the use of "Number Poems" recited as formation is observed. Our weekly units are based around the introduction of a letter. Some of the topics for the first half of the year include: magnetism, seasons, family, emotions, body parts, evaporation, universe, insects, spiders, ocean creatures, fire safety, nutrition, senses and gravity. It has been fun to see our classroom decked out in red, white and blue for our RWB days. We are working on learning the reason for and the number of stars and stripes on our flag - "Flag Facts". We have fun tuning in to Dr. Jean on our SmartBoard the last few minutes of our day. She helps us sing both the days of the week and months of the year and reproduce the sound of the letter she flashes in front of us. The favorite

of the class is definitely her - "Tooty Ta"! The time we get to spend with Miss Natalie (chapel), Mrs. Pope (Spanish) and Mrs. Granger (music) are special. Pizza Night and Muffins with Mom were both festive times for fellowship. We have a class of attentive listeners who love story time where we introduce different genres of children's literature. Your children are making Admiral McRaven, author of "Make Your Bed", quite proud! Mrs. Maxwell and I thoroughly enjoy working with and having fun with your children. They are our future scientists, doctors, teachers, artists . . . responsible members of society!

Pre-K/Early Pre-K

Mrs. Reid/Mrs. Burks:

We have been so busy here in Early and Older Pre-K class! The students have been working on fine motor skills and handwriting. One of our main goals is to have all the students writing their names. Many can already do this so they are starting on last and even middle names. We are doing lots of fun games with letter recognition and sounds. This is an important pre-reading skills. For those who are beginning to read we are working on sight words and cvc words (consonant vowel consonant). They are all so smart and wonderful! We have such a good time with our letter games! Every day we count to 100 as a class and many are beginning to do it without any help! Their art has been really amazing as well! The children are so inventive and we've really enjoyed watching them create seasonal masterpieces! We love watching their imaginations at work! Thank you so much for sharing your child with us. We love each and every one and are so thankful for such a wonderful group of students!

Pre-K/Early 5's:

Mrs. Norton/Ms. Wilson/Mrs. Nunan:

The First Presbyterian Weekday School Pre-K class was happy to welcome Ms. Jessie Wilson and to have Mrs. Robin Nunan return to assist in our classroom. We have enjoyed helping the children feel comfortable in Pre-K. First, we played games to become acquainted with each other and sang a favorite song, *Greet Your Neighbor* (Dr. Jean). The boys and girls have especially had fun singing our color songs each week. Sharing something they found at home for that color has been great oral language practice. The children love giving the class clues for their color item. Throughout the year we discuss the four seasons.

When fall arrived we learned about Johnny Appleseed, tasted apples, and made a graph of our favorite apple (red, yellow, or green). Our fall highlight was our field trip to Washington Farms Pumpkin Patch in Watkinville. We had fun together and learned all about the life cycle of the pumpkin. When Halloween arrived the children had a great time dressing up as their favorite storybook character. In Pre-K we enjoy our smartboard. The boys and girls are also learning so much in each of our specials classes: Spanish, Chapel, and Music. Our November themes have been the Pilgrims, Indians, the First Thanksgiving, and turkeys. We look forward to preparing for Christmas and our Christmas Program during Decemeber.

Looking Ahead:

- Pre K- Christmas Program - December 6th at 10:45 in the Sanctuary
- Christmas Break - Dec. 13- Jan. 2 - (Teachers report for in-service day - Jan. 2)
- Children return to School - January 3
- Registration Begins - January 11
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (School Closed) - January 15

- Grandparents' Day - Feb 14 and 15th**
- Usborne Book Fair - Feb. 12-16**
- Georgia Preschool Conference - March 2-3, No School March 2**
- Spring Break - March 12-16**