

Preschool December 2008

NEWSLETTER

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me..."
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The Best Gift of All

As we begin our December unit at preschool, "Baby Jesus, My Savior is Born," we know the children initially are very excited about what presents they hope to receive and we hear some comments about Santa. Christmas is such an exciting time for children, but at LCC Preschool we hope to balance the commercial side of the holiday with a lesson of what Christmas is really all about. We will focus on the gift of Jesus Christ. Unlike the popular song about "you'd better be good..." we did nothing to earn this precious gift, it was given freely to the whole world. With our Christmas Pageant the children sing songs and recite poems that recall the miracle of Jesus' birth. I hope your home will be filled with your child's voice singing these Christmas songs and reminding everyone who hears to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas...His birth!

Preschool Christmas Pageants

The children will be sharing the message of Jesus' birth with family and friends at the Christmas Pageant on Sun., Dec. 7. Because we want the whole family to be able to attend (grandparents, too), we must divide our pageant into two groups. Please note the time for your child's class below. The children will sit with their families until their class is called up to sing. After singing, the children will again sit with their families. The children will put on their "costumes" (headpieces) when they come up front to sing.

2:00 Pageant:

Blue Lambs, Brown Bears, Golden Bears, Green Frogs, Golden Lions

4:00 Pageant:

All Duckling Classes, Yellow Lambs, Blue Dolphins, Green Lambs

Following the pageant, everyone is invited to the Social Hall for Christmas cookies and punch. Please sign up at the Parent Table if you could bring a dozen store bought cookies to share. Cookies may be dropped off in the Social Hall before the pageant. Thank

you!

Green Days

Join the fun by wearing something green on Thurs., Dec. 4, or Friday, Dec. 5, to school. We will be exploring the color green through a variety of media –snacks, art, stories, etc.!

“Happy Birthday, Jesus” Parties

Just to make sure we don't miss the reason for the season, our Christmas parties on the last days of classes before the Christmas break (Thurs., Dec. 18, & Fri., Dec. 19) are called “Happy Birthday, Jesus” parties. As with all birthday parties, please bring a gift for the guest of honor, Jesus. We ask that each child bring a wrapped gift for a needy child. Please mark the outside of the package with the suggested age and gender for the recipient. The toys will be offered to Jesus during chapel, and then taken to an outreach program to be distributed to needy children.

Advent Chains

Each family will receive an Advent chain to help prepare for a Christ-centered Christmas celebration. Starting on Nov. 30, take one ring off the chain and do the suggested activity. We hope this will be a blessing to your family.

Kindergarten Readiness Screenings

Chancy & Bruce Educational Resources will provide a developmental screening for all who choose to participate on Mon., Jan. 12, or Tues., Jan. 13. This developmental screening is an excellent tool to help determine a child's readiness for kindergarten in the fall. Also, if your child will be attending Aliso Viejo Christian School, this will be a required part of the enrollment process. The cost for the screening is \$45. Chancy and Bruce will provide a follow-up Parent Workshop to explain the screening and give you the results on Thurs., Jan. 29, at 7:00pm. The forms will be sent home soon and should be returned before the Christmas break.

Two Opportunities to Christmas Carol

The preschool's P.S.E.O. Outreach Committee has organized a Christmas Caroling event on Fri., Dec. 12, at 12:30pm. We will meet in the lobby of the Senior Center in Laguna Hills. The children will sing songs and pass out Christmas cards they've made in preschool. Look for more information in your Parent files.

Lutheran Church of the Cross would like to invite the preschool families to join in the LCC homebound caroling event. We will be caroling on Sun., Dec. 21, from 3-5:30pm. We will meet in the Social Hall and divide into groups that will sing and deliver cookies to 4-5 homebound members of our church. The young children bring them such joy; please join us if you are able!

Parents' Page

A Top 10 List for Keeping Christ in Christmas!

1. **Take time daily for personal and family devotions.** Try using an Advent wreath or Advent chain – we'll be sending one home in your files.
2. **Take time for worship.** No part of your celebration should be so important that you don't have time to worship Christ this season and especially on His birthday.
3. **Emphasize gifts of love and service over material gifts.** Involve the whole family in volunteering or reaching out to the less fortunate.
4. **Tell, read, and retell the Christmas story.** Read together some of the beautiful children's versions of the Christmas story. Check out the L.C.C. library or go to Sonshine to find some great books about Jesus' birth.
5. **Make Christ the central focus of your home and decorations.** Set out an unbreakable crèche for your children to manipulate and use to retell the story.
6. **Have a birthday party for Jesus.** Young children love birthdays and will relate to Jesus' birth and the celebration of His birthday. Bake a cake and let them blow out the candles for Him.
7. **Don't forget to give a gift to the honored guest at His own party.** Help your child(ren) to decide on a gift to give Jesus that they think He would like, i.e. making a card for a sick friend, giving a toy to children who don't have any, etc.
8. **Pray each day as a family for the people whose Christmas cards you receive.** Taking the time to remember each person or family in prayer will teach your child(ren) and you the importance of praying for others.
9. **Don't sweat the little things.** Remember that your goal should be to honor Jesus Christ in your celebration of His birth and then some of the details you're sweating will pale in importance.
10. **Have a J.O.Y.-filled Christmas!** True joy comes only as we put our lives and priorities in the right order at Christmas and throughout the year – **J**.esus **O**.thers **Y**.ourself!

Related Concepts of Time to Things Your Child Knows

Phrases such as "in 20 minutes" or "the day after tomorrow" won't mean much to most preschoolers. Your child may be well into elementary school before grasping these "time words." But you can help translate them into things he/she can understand:

- **Put time words in context.** Don't just say, "We'll go to the store tomorrow." Expand with, "Tomorrow will be after it gets dark and you go to sleep. When you wake up, it will be tomorrow."
- ***Use the Clock.** Your child doesn't need to be able to tell time to benefit from the clock. Show him/her where the numbers can be viewed. Say, "We'll be ready for dinner when this number changes to five."
- **Count the days until a special day (like Christmas)** using a chain. We have provided one for you to use throughout the season of Advent (4 weeks before Christmas). This is a Christ-centered, fun way to visualize how many days until Christmas. Please see the Advent chain in your parent files.

Build Your Child's Vocabulary

Some parents avoid using words they think their child can't understand. But young children are captivated by the sounds of long and complex words. They want to use the "big" words adults use. So go ahead. Make some difficult words part of your regular conversation. Don't just say the weather is cold. Say it's "frigid." Tell your child she's "delightful." Your child's vocabulary will grow. And he'll take great pride in blurting out, "That's scrumptious!"