



# PRESCHOOL NEWS



ST STEPHEN PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

DECEMBER 2018

## DECEMBER

### DATES TO REMEMBER

#### LAST DAYS OF FIRST SEMESTER

**December 13 & 14 - Christmas Parties**

**No Kid's Club - School ends at NOON**

**Dec 15, 2017 - Jan 6, 2018**

**Christmas Vacation - Happy New Year!!**

**December 24 - St. Stephen Church**

**Christmas Eve Service 7:00 p.m.**

**January 7, 2018 - School Resumes ☐**

**Jan.9 - "Two of Us" Winter Session Begins**

**Jan.21 - Dr. MLK Jr. Day (No School)**

~~~~~

## Note from the Director's Desk

Dear Parents,

Thank you, to all the families that helped to make our Thanksgiving Celebrations a success. We also thank you for your supporting our pie fundraiser. We raised \$100 that will go towards new yard toys!

As you begin your holiday shopping, you may want to consider continuing to help us earn by purchasing a [Bob's Big Boy Gift Certificate](#) as a stocking stuffer!! (YUM!) And don't forget to keep using [SHOPPEROO](#) for all of your holiday receipts. (so fast and easy!)

I personally want to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season. It is a true joy and pleasure getting to work with you and your children, and our remarkable staff. I am grateful every day for our St. Stephen community and all that you bring to us. May all your wishes come true and each of you find that 2019 brings you all health, happiness, and love!

Ms. Tracey

## Christmas Concert & Parties !!



You are invited to the Church Chapel at **11:00am on Thursday, Dec. 13 & Friday, Dec. 14** to join in a Christmas Gathering. During this time your children will sing Holiday songs. **They have been practicing for weeks and are excited to share what they have learned with you.**

Our Music teacher Ms. Suzan Horrocks will be here to accompany them on the piano, making this a truly special event. Following our performance, you are welcome back to the classroom for refreshments. And - before leaving for Winter Break - we will end our day with a visit from a Very Special Guest. (The children do not need to dress up, as they will be participating in regular school activities the beginning of the day.)

\*\*\*\*\*

## *More Thanks! & Ways to Help . . .*

**Sincere thanks to the preschool family who recently left the fantastic comments on Google!** What a lovely, unexpected, early holiday gift. While our history of being held in such high regard in our community has spread solely by word of mouth over the years, we are aware that more and more parents use internet resources as they search for preschools. **With all the changes to early childhood programs that are happening right now, it is essential that we maintain and increase our enrollment.** Please continue to spread the word about St. Stephen! We would like to offer a Free Kids Club day to any family that reviews us on google or yelp or can help us with improving our preschool website.

**ALSO:** We have some volunteer opportunities available - helping in the classrooms, as substitutes, and with some upcoming special projects. If you have any time/interest, please stop in the preschool office and speak with Tracey. Thank You!

## Preschool Blog

### Help Your Preschooler Gain Self-Control

When asked about school readiness skills, many teachers say children who succeed in kindergarten know when and how to control their impulses. They can follow through when a task is difficult and listen to directions for a few minutes. These skills are linked to self-control. Children can develop them at preschool and at home. Here are a few ways families can help children learn self-control.

**Change the rules of a game to make it an opposite game.** For example, instead of playing the familiar version of Simon Says, play Simon Doesn't Say. Explain the new rule in words and actions: "Do the opposite of what Simon asks you to do. If Simon Says 'Touch your head,' you should touch your toes." Be sure to demonstrate how this works. Keep directions simple. Take turns being Simon.

**Finish what you are doing, then respond to requests for attention.** For example, if you are on the phone and your child asks for something (and it's not an emergency), let her know you need to take time to complete your conversation. This is a good way to let your child practice waiting for a short time.

**Do activities together that require following directions.** For example, put together a model, play follow the leader, or cook or bake: "I'm going to read the recipe aloud. Listen carefully so we will both know what to do. I'll read them again as we do each step."

**Help children understand how long they will have to wait for something and suggest activities to do while they wait.** Say to your child, "Grammy and Grampy are coming over before dinner. Would you like to draw some pictures to give them?" or "As soon as I put your sister to bed, I will read you some stories. You can choose three books for us to read together."

**Work with your child to complete a puzzle that has a few more pieces than he or she is used to.** Set up the puzzle in a place where you can work on it for several days, if needed. Celebrate together when one of you puts the last piece in place.

**Plant some easy-to-grow marigold seeds in a pot or in a garden.** Check together every day until the plants pop up. Over time, watch the plant grow leaves and flowers.

<http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development/help-your-preschooler-gain-self-Control>

\*\*\*\*\*



# Happy Holidays

It is hard to believe the Holiday Season is here. In the hectic days ahead remember to take the time to enjoy the sights and the sounds of the season.

Our staff wishes you and your family a happy, safe and joyous Holiday Season.

Love,

Ms. Ana, Ms. Betsie, Ms. Carla,  
Ms. Christine, Ms. Jeanie, Ms. Maria,  
Ms. Selene, Ms. Vickie



## Mommy & Me

Our young students who have not yet reached their 2 and a half year birthday are the perfect age to participate in a program we like to call "Two of Us"... better known to some as Mommy & Me. In fact, this class is open to any student between 18 and 30 months and any accompanying adult - Mom, dad, grandparent, or other caregiver! The program will begin Wednesday, January 9, 2018, under the wonderful leadership of our Ms. Betsie. Class starts at 9:15 am and runs until 11:15 am for 10 weeks.

Our staff is selected for their experience and training in the field of Early Childhood Education and Child Development, as well as their warmth and sensitivity to the needs of young children and their care givers. Topics covered include: setting limits, nutrition, sibling rivalry, developing positive self-esteem, toilet learning, sharing, and much more. It is a great "stepping-stone" program to our traditional preschool. If you are interested in the class or know someone who may be, we would love to have you join us! Brochures are in the Office.



## Winter Holidays 2018 - 2019 (chronological order)

### HANUKKAH

Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah, a holiday honoring the Maccabees' victory over King Antiochus, who forbade Jews to practice their religion. For eight nights, Hanukkah is celebrated with prayer, the lighting of the menorah, and food. A Hanukkah menorah has nine candles, a candle for every night, plus a helper candle. Children play games, sing songs, and exchange gifts. Potato pancakes, known as latkes in Yiddish, are traditionally associated with Hanukkah and are served with applesauce and sour cream. The dates of Hanukkah change because this holiday follows the lunar cycle. In 2018, Hanukkah starts the evening of December 2 and ends on December 10.

### WINTER SOLSTICE

The Winter Solstice occurs on either December 20, 21, 22, or 23 in the Northern Hemisphere, where it is the shortest day of the year. People all over the world participate with festivals and celebrations. Long ago, people celebrated by lighting bonfires and candles to coax back the sun.

### CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas in the [United States](#) brings together many customs from other countries and cultures. Around the world, family members help to decorate the tree and home with bright lights, wreaths, candles, holly, mistletoe, and ornaments. On Christmas Eve, many people go to church. Also on Christmas Eve, Santa comes from the North Pole in a sleigh to deliver gifts. In [Hawaii](#), it is said he arrives by boat; in [Australia](#), the jolly man arrives on water skis; and in [Ghana](#), he comes out of the jungle.

### KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is celebrated December 26 through January 1. It is a holiday to commemorate African heritage, during which participants gather with family and friends to exchange gifts and to light a series of black, red, and green candles. These candles symbolize the seven basic values of African American family life: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

New Year's Day is January 1, the first day of the year in the Gregorian calendar. Fireworks are often set off at midnight to celebrate the new year. Commonly served in the southern part of the United States, black-eyed peas are thought to bring luck and prosperity for the new year, greens (usually collards) to bring wealth, and pork to symbolize moving forward.

### THREE KINGS DAY

At the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas comes a day called the Epiphany, or Three Kings Day. This holiday is celebrated as the day the three wise men first saw baby Jesus and brought him gifts. On this day in Spain, many children get their Christmas presents. In Puerto Rico, before children go to sleep on January 5, they leave a box with hay under their beds so the kings will leave good presents. In France, a delicious "kings' cake" known as *la galette des rois* is baked. Bakers hide a coin, jewel, or little toy inside it.

### CHINESE NEW YEAR

The Chinese New Year is the most important of the traditional Chinese holidays. It falls on different dates each year, between January 21 and February 20. Visits to friends and family take place during this celebration. The color gold is said to bring wealth, and the color red is considered especially lucky. The New Year's Eve dinner is very large and includes fish, noodles, and dumplings.

