

CROSSROADS EARLY LEARNING CENTER

NEWSLETTER

January, 2012

Welcome back! Hope your holidays were filled with joy and peace and that you all had a wonderful holiday season!

Thank you so much for your kindness and thoughtfulness to myself and the staff. Your generosity and gifts were heartfelt and truly appreciated by all of us. May God grant you blessings throughout the New Year!

Each year holds positive and negative experiences and challenges that we all must go through and grow from to be successful in life. At the start of each New Year, we have hopes and dreams that this year will hold wonderful things for us. One of the things that people tend to do for the New Year is to make resolutions. But, many times, we give up on them as quickly as we make them. The problem is that we never go to the next step to figure out how to achieve these resolutions.

Of course we know that each year can't be perfect. So it may be realistic to set goals on how to accomplish these tasks we set for ourselves. We first have to figure out the best strategies and steps to achieve these goals. When there are setbacks, and you know that it is inevitable that there will be, brush yourself off the best you can. Perhaps you need to redefine those goals, break them down in smaller pieces or make adjustments on how to deal with those setbacks. Embrace those challenges as best you can. Have faith in the Lord. He will guide you, but you also must be an active participant in your life.

Our resolution at the center is to provide a positive and fun learning environment so that we can broaden their experiences and knowledge. We will try our best to achieve this. Our strategies will be the continuing training and ongoing communication with staff. This will be based on DYFS regulations, input from you as parents, and the needs of the children and staff. The teachers will, in turn, provide the best lessoning planning from the curriculum Crossroads provides to them. This curriculum takes into consideration, the developmental needs of each age level, as well as, the different learning styles of the children. We won't always be perfect. But, we will be committed and continually try to make it better by readjusting ourselves to meet these goals!

To a New Year filled with hope and the fulfillment of dreams!

Miss Vivian



INFANT ROOM

Miss Nelsy/Miss Daniela/Miss Elsy

Miss Awatef/Miss Katelynn

“Frosty the Snowman is a jolly, happy, soul”...

Welcome back! We hope you all had a safe and happy holiday! Hopefully, it was filled with family and friends and warm wishes throughout!

Our Christmas party at Crossroads was lots of fun! A big thank you to all of those who remembered the teachers and gave us gifts. We truly appreciate your kindness and thoughtfulness!

Can you believe that we are starting a new year already? We can guarantee that our room will be full of surprise, busy with lot of fun things to do. We will be starting off the year with lots of sensory exploration, including fun with snow and snow projects!

Our classroom is going to be a winter wonderland...with snowmen, snowflakes and sleds. But, don't worry, the snow we make never makes driving difficult nor does it need to be shoveled! The children will begin to explore the concept of set wet/dry, hot/cold, melting, etc. as we play with the snow and do some ice cube painting. Oh, my! We can't forget to build a snowman! We will be reading books like “Polar Bear, Polar Bear” and learning songs like “Frosty, the Snowman” and finger plays such as “Five Little Snowflakes.”

Reminders:

1. Please bring in wipes when we reopen from Christmas break.
2. Please remember to dress your child in weather appropriate clothing (snowsuits (and boots when necessary), hats, mittens, scarves - labeling each piece).

Happy Birthday!

David Lormejuste	1/13
Thomas Loschiavo	1/15
William Logan	1/15

Congrats to our new Crawlers!

Dalton and Danica Nemeth

Congrats to our new Walkers!

William Logan
Thomas Lochiavo
Leanna Zoldi

Welcome to our School Family!

Calen Anderson
Taylor Champagne
Timothy Corcoran
Jake Pasieka



TODDLER/YOUNG TWO'S

Miss Crystal/Miss Trish

Miss Alyssa/Miss Jenn T

Welcome to 2012! I would like to thank all of our parents for your generosity and kindness that you have shown all of us. We really appreciate your gifts and thoughtfulness! Happy New Year to all of our wonderful families! The holidays are officially over and now it is time to get back into the swing of things.

January will hopefully bring us some snow – which will be a good visual sign that winter is here. The snow/winter will lead to some good discussions of clothing that we need to wear to protect us from the cold. The snow will provide opportunity for lots of sensory and visual discussion – the coldness of it, how it falls from the sky in flakes which collect and make layers of snow. Some snow is fluffy and some is wet. Sometimes we can make soft-fluffy snow balls and sometimes very hard and solid. We can walk and make wet footprints where it looks like ice or soft footprints. We can make snow angels and snowmen! We can bring snow into our classroom, play with it and watch it melt! What fun!

The Nursery Rhyme for the month of January is the “Three Little Kittens” – they have lost their mittens. We will find their mittens and do a matching activity – finding pair of matching colors. This ties in nicely with our discussion of what we wear when it is cold.

We are working on the triangle and will try to find as many in our environment as possible. We will also be focusing on the sense of smell.

During Jesus Time, we will be discussing how God gave us our families. We will also talk about respect and how we need to use our manners. We will practice by saying “please” and “thank you” at appropriate times. Wild animals will be discussed and where they live. Also, community helpers – the different jobs they perform. Where we may see them and

how they provide us with things we need or help us.

Reminders:

Please

1. Remember to dress your child appropriately for the outdoors. We try to go outside every day, weather permitting.
2. Label everything that your child wears or brings into the center. Thank you in advance.
3. Check your child's mailbox daily. Some of you have been forgetting and missing notes about what your child needs throughout the week.

Happy Birthday!

Annamarie Malak 1/23



OLDER TWO'S/YOUNG PRESCHOOL

Miss Noelle/Miss Maria

Miss Farrah/Miss Jenn M.

Welcome to 2012! We hope that everyone enjoyed their Holidays and time spent with family and friends!

There is always so much to do in our classroom. We will be focusing on the rectangle and finding rectangles in different objects in our environment and our walks. We will be doing the same thing with the color white. I will be bringing in different spices and other things to enhance the concept of "smell" for the month of January. Will also learn the nursery rhyme, "Three Little Kittens."

Our projects and themes will revolve around the New Year, Martin Luther King, Jr. winter, community helpers, wild animals and their habitats.

Curtis, our friend, is going to help us with our Character Word "respect." He has been visiting his friend's homes and learning how to use his manners, honoring differences in each other and being courteous. Thanks to everyone's help, he will continue to learn and grow with our class.

We are going to keep celebrating Jesus' birth with discussions about family. What makes a family, how we grow together in love and faith and the ways that families are different.

We would also like to thank you for your gifts and thinking of us during this busy season. Also, for making our Christmas party such a success. Your children had a wonderful time!

It was fantastic to see all of the smiling faces at our Christmas Chapel Celebration. We hope that you enjoyed our singing, as much as we enjoyed singing for you!

Please be sure to check out our snowmen. They will surely make you smile and make **your hearts melt.**

Reminders:

1. Please send in your snowman and a 4 X 6 picture of your child if you haven't already done so.
1. Please remember to dress your children for the winter weather: mittens and hats are our friends during this chilly season. Don't forget to label everything.

Thank you for all of your help and support. Stay warm and God Bless!

Happy Birthday!

Gavin Barboski 1/4



OLDER PRESCHOOL

Miss Sue/Miss Kathy

Miss Amanda/Miss Jana

Happy New Year! I hope this newsletter finds everyone happy, rested and ready to begin a new year. The teachers of our Preschool class and I would like to thank all of our children and parents for the lovely gifts and contributions to our Christmas party! Your thoughtfulness and generosity at this busy time of year is truly appreciated!

The month of January will have us focusing on the rectangle, the color white and the sense of smell. As winter rears its chilly head, we will read some wonderful books, including "The Mitten and the Hat" and learn an old time favorite "The Three Little Kitten's" (and we know what they lost).

We will be talking about animals in the wild and their habitats and community helpers. There will be much discussion about how different

people work in different jobs, providing a service to all of us that live in the neighborhood.

We will continue to build our character as we practice respect. This is a concept we have been learning about since September and will continue to reinforce.

Our new season, Winter, offers some frosty opportunities to learn more about the wonderful world God has given us. To this end,

PLEASE

1. Send your children appropriately dressed for outside play. It may be old, but, snow is fun!....snow pants, gloves, hats and boots...
2. **All labeled with your child's name please!**
3. Also, please make sure there is a weather appropriate change of clothes in your child's cubbie – just in case!

Happy Birthday!

Thomas Bulla 1/1

PREK

Miss Ann Marie/Miss Diane/Miss Monica
Happy New Year! A special note of thanks to our parents for all the Christmas gifts and “goodies” for the children and the teachers!
You really helped to make the holidays special for the children!

We have been very busy exploring several types of winter related activities. We will be conducting experiments using ice and snow, as well as, creating snow children, ice paintings, snowflakes, and much more! A class favorite has been our snowball counting game. We will also focus on animal habitats during the winter season.

As we grow together in faith in the New Year, we will thank God for the gift of family and friends. our nurturing characteristic for the month is respect (using manner, being courteous, honoring differences). Jesus taught

us to love one another and we must help our children to follow Jesus and his teachings!

We will continue the alphabet and using our word packets. The children really enjoy them!
We will be focusing on a lot of math concepts using our bear counters, etc.

We will be creating new colors by blending other colors together. The children love to see the transformation and their masterpieces on the easel. The expressions on the children's faces are delightful as they experiment with paint.

We will be celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday and reinforcing his “dream” for peace in the world. The children will learn that it starts here at school and how we can help promote Dr. King's dream.

Please

1. Make sure that you dress your child appropriately to go outside. We go outside everyday (weather permitting), even if it's for a quick walk around the building. Children need fresh air and physical activity on a daily basis. It helps keep them healthy and well.
2. Remember to label all of your child's belongings and place everything (including lunch boxes) on our side of the room in your child's cubbie. This helps reinforce the concept of responsibility that we are teaching the children in our classroom.

Thank you for your help! May God bless us all in the New Year with health, happiness and peacefulness!

Happy Birthday!

Ava Baez 1/4
Josephine Longo 1/19
Riley Huang 1/20



STAFF NEWS:

No news to report. Sometimes no news is actually good news.

JUST RAMBLING:

Thank God that the winter has been very mild thus far. I am sure that this weather will not last throughout the whole winter. **Just to be prepared and that you know our procedure:** We post any school closings, early dismissals, delayed openings on **FACEBOOK**. You will also get a call from your teacher, however, there are times that we do not have updated phone numbers, and can't get through. so I would encourage you to check out the **Crossroads Early Learning Center profile on FACEBOOK**, rather than relying on a phone call. There have been parents who have brought their children to school when we were closed.

THIS MONTH IN CHAPEL



Happy New Year! I hope you had a blessed Christmas. My prayer for all of you is that God will continue to bless you throughout the coming year. We are looking forward to enjoying some of those blessings with the children at Chapel. In January, we will share stories about Jesus growing up and beginning His work to save us.

The first Bible story in January is **The Presentation of Jesus**. Jesus was six weeks old. Following Jewish custom and Law Mary and Joseph brought Him to the Temple to be initiated into the faith.

The second story is **The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus**. Jesus had grown up and was beginning His adult ministry. He came on the scene to be baptized and all three members of the Trinity were there to affirm that Jesus was indeed the Son of God and Savior of the world.

The third story is **Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael**. They were the first of His disciples. Jesus had many disciples, but only twelve were called apostles. They learned about Jesus and passed the message on by writing it down so we could have it today. Now there are millions and millions of disciples.

The final story for January is **Jesus Calls Matthew**. Matthew did not have many friends. People did not like him. Nevertheless, Jesus called Matthew to follow him. Jesus forgave Matthew. After that, Matthew was a changed man. That is what Jesus does for people. He forgives us and changes us into new people who can follow Him.

It is a blessing to hear and share these stories about forgiveness and changed people who follow Jesus. That is why Chapel is a special time of blessing for us at Crossroads. I hope that you all will continue to enjoy those same blessings at home and in your places of worship.

God Bless,
Pastor Smith



FROM THE DCE

Caitlin May Dinger

January 8th BREAKFAST WITH THE BIBLE: The Disciples

Join us for a fun morning in the Bible Discovery Zone with **kids and parents**. **We will meet Jesus' special friends - the Disciples - and learn about our Bible theme for the month. Breakfast will be provided, just bring the kids!**

Prayer is the ongoing, lifelong conversation with God, who created us in His image and sends us out to serve in His name. Jesus invites us to bring anything and everything to Him in prayer. When we cannot find the right words, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will pray for us, with sighs too deep for words.

So how do we tap into this lifeline? Many of us feel ill-equipped to model a robust life of prayer or to teach our children to pray. Here are some ideas from the book *Heart Ignite*, by Lyle Griner and Diane Monroe:

Telephone Prayer

For a child or youth who feels self-conscious about praying out loud, hand them a cell phone or handset and invite them to imagine that they are talking to God, who is always there and listening.

Map Prayer

Spread out a map (local, state, United States, or world), give each person three Cheerios, and ask all to place their cereal circles on a place where there is a person, event, or place for which they'd like to pray. Do it!

Birthday Candle Prayer

At a birthday (or baptism birthday) gathering, give each person an unlit candle. Carry the cake around the table, asking each guest to place their candle in the cake, naming one thing about the birthday person for which they thank God. Then, light the candles and sing.

Hand prayer

Pray your left hand: thumb, for those closest to your heart; index finger, for those who have pointed the way to Jesus; middle finger, for those in authority; ring finger, for the weakest among us; little finger, for the little ones.

Christmas Card Prayer

Keep your photo Christmas cards this year and take a moment to pray for one of these people each week.

Siren prayer

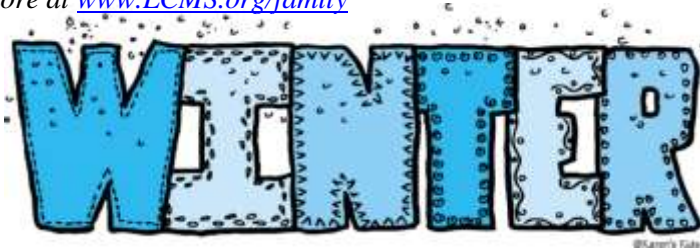
When you hear a siren or pull over for a squad car, an ambulance, or a fire truck, pray aloud for the person(s) that is hurt, scared, sick, or in trouble.

Bandage Prayer

Provide a band aid for each person. Name one person who is experiencing pain, who needs a prayer for God's healing. (Children will be very concrete and name a physical "owie"; adults can expand that with those who experience other pain and fear and loss.)

Pray at the table before eating, at the bedside of a child, in the car, before someone leaves for the day, on a walk, wherever you are, all of the time! God bless you richly as you bring everything to Him in prayer.

Adapted from "Teach Us To Pray" by Marilyn Sharpe for the LCMS Family Ministry "Home Base" Newsletter. Find out more at www.LCMS.org/family



PARENT'S CORNER

Eight Sleep Tips for Every Child

The following ideas are of value to almost any sleeper, of any age. These tips can bring improvement not only in your child's sleep, but also in her daytime mood and last, but not least – improvement in your own sleep and outlook as well.

#1 Maintain a consistent bedtime and awaking time:

Your Child's biological clock has a strong influence on her wakefulness and sleepiness. When you establish a set time for bedtime and wake up time, you "set" your child's clock so that it functions smoothly.

Aim for an early bedtime. Young children respond best with a bedtime between 6:30 and 7:30 P.M. Most children will sleep *better* and *longer* when they go to bed early.

#2 Encourage regular daily naps:

Daily naps are important. An energetic child can find it difficult to go through the day without a rest break. A nap-less child will often wake up cheerful and become progressively fussier or hyper-alert as the day goes on. Also, the length and quality of naps affects night sleep – good naps equal better night sleep.

#3 Set your child's biological clock:

Take advantage of your child's biology so that he's actually *tired* when bedtime arrives. Darkness causes an increase in the release of the body's sleep hormone – the biological "stop" button. You can align your child's sleepiness with bedtime by dimming the lights during the hour before bedtime. Exposing your child to morning light is pushing the "go" button in her brain – one that says, "Time to wake up and be active." So keep your morning bright!

#4 Develop a consistent bedtime routine:

Routines create security. A consistent, peaceful bedtime routine allows your child to transition from the motion of the day to the tranquil state of sleep.

An organized routine helps you coordinate the specifics: bath, pajamas, tooth-brushing. It helps you to function on auto-pilot at the time when you are most tired and least creative.

#5 Create a cozy sleep environment:

Where your child sleeps can be a key to quality sleep. Make certain the mattress is comfortable, the blankets are warm, the room temperature is right, pajamas are comfy, and the bedroom is welcoming.

#6 Provide the right nutrition:

Food can affect energy level and sleepiness. Carbohydrates can have a calming effect on the body, while foods high in protein or sugar generate alertness, particularly when eaten alone. A few ideas for pre-bed snacks are: whole wheat toast and cheese, bagel and peanut butter, oatmeal with bananas, or yogurt and low-sugar granola.

Vitamin deficiencies due to unhealthy food choices can affect a child's sleep. Provide your child with a daily assortment of healthy foods.

#7 Help your child to be healthy and fit:

Many children don't get enough daily physical activity. Too much TV watching and a lack of activity prevents good sleep. Children who get ample daily exercise fall asleep more quickly, sleep better, stay asleep longer, and wake up feeling refreshed.

Avoid activity in the hour before bedtime though, since exercise is stimulating – they'll be jumping on the bed instead of sleeping in it!

#8 Teach your child how to relax.

Many children get in bed but aren't sure what to do when they get there! It can help to follow a soothing pre-bed routine that creates sleepiness. A good pre-bed ritual is story time. A child who is listening to a parent read a book or tell a tale will tend to lie still and listen. This quiet stillness allows him to become sleepy.

Work with these eight ideas and you'll see improvements in your child's sleep, and yours too.

This article is reprinted with permission: The No-Cry Sleep Solution: Eight Sleep Tips for Every Child by Elizabeth Pantley. (McGraw-Hill, 2002). For similar articles go to Elizabeth@pantley.co

May All Your Days Be Bright ...

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Ideas for Teaching Respect at Home

One of the most important challenges parents face is to help our children develop strong characters based on good values. At Crossroads, during the month of January, we will be reinforcing the character trait "RESPECT". To reinforce our curriculum, these are the main points about respect that parents could help their child understand:

People who are respectful:

- Treat others the way they would like to be treated.
- Are polite and courteous.
- Treat all people well, even though they may look, act, or believe differently.
- Solve disagreements by peaceful means.



A few simple ideas of implementation:

1. **Model using respectful language.** Remember the words we use, the intonation, and the volume all combine to show respect or disrespect. Also remember body language.
2. **Choose one area within respect to focus on for a set period of time.** For example, you might start "please" and "thank you." Encourage everyone in the family to try to improve. As your child gets older, you may want to tackle more difficult concepts, such as "not interrupting others."
3. **Create a family penny jar.** When a person forgets to use respectful language, he or she needs to put a penny in the jar. For younger children, it may mean **no name-calling** or replacing "gimme" with "may I please have." For teenagers or adults, it could be used to **discourage swearing or rude comments.**
4. **Look for characters who follow the Golden Rule:** In the stories you read or the programs you watch look for characters who follow the Golden Rule and ones who do not. **Discuss the characters' actions and the resulting feelings of others around them.**
5. **Take time to help your child develop a respect for life.** Visit an elderly family member or neighbor. Go on nature walks. Plant a garden. Watch baby animals at a farm or zoo. **Guide your child in understanding that life is precious and should not be destroyed.**

Excerpts taken from Brighter Visions Publications

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Hazards of Toy Balloons and other Objects

I thought this information would be fitting, since we celebrate children's birthdays almost daily at our school and I know that you are having birthday parties for them at home or at facilities.

One of the most natural ways of decorating for a child's party is with balloons. They are festive, colorful and they are decorations that you can actually play with. They cling onto things when rubbed onto your clothing, you can play volley ball with them, or you can sit on them to pop them. They really make a really good popping sound! Even grandparents bring them home for their grandchildren when they have been to an adult party. Children just naturally gravitate to them.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, balloons account for 43% of the approximately 15 childhood deaths related to children's products. That means that balloons are the number 1 cause of choking in children not related to food.

Crawlers or young toddlers like to pick up small things from the floor. They also tend to be very oral and put things into their mouths. If a piece of deflated balloon is found, it would be very easy for them to choke. Probably because of the material balloons are made of, these pieces of balloon are very difficult to retrieve out of children's mouths, even with typical Heimlich maneuvers and other such procedures.

Children also like to bite inflated balloons. They like that squeaking sound it makes as their teeth rub against the inflated skin of the balloon. Their teeth can pop the balloon into pieces, which can then be picked up and swallowed.

Children have choked trying to blow up a balloon. They have sucked deflated balloons into their mouths while trying to inflate them.

Older children also like to chew on things. It not unusual to see a 9 year old or older child chew on a drinking straw. It is also common for them to chew on deflated balloons, if they were accessible. In fact, it has been documented that a 9 year old boy was, in fact, chewing on a deflated balloon. A friend told a joke, the boy laughed and threw his head back and wound up choking on the balloon. The Heimlich maneuver was not successful and he was rushed to the hospital. A tracheotomy was performed and he then had respiratory arrest and cardiac arrest. He was declared brain dead 48 hours later. What a sad and unnecessary way to die! How sad for his family!

Prevention:

1. The easiest thing is to not use balloons; however, you cannot always control the environment, especially if you are outside of your home.
2. Adults should always blow up balloons and then supervise children playing with them.
3. If a balloon has popped make sure that careful attention is made to gather up all the pieces and dispose of them.
4. Inform older children of the hazards associated with chewing or sucking on balloons.
5. Crossroads is taking this seriously and does not use balloons at the center.

Other Choking Hazards:

Food objects such as hot dogs, candies, nuts and grapes pose a great threat of choking.

1. If you do give hotdogs to a young child, it must be cut up in very small pieces and it is best to peel the skin off the dogs. Never give a young child a whole hot dog to eat.
2. Hard candies should not be given to young children.
3. Nor should nuts. Many of them are just the right size to get lodged in their throat.
4. Grapes should be halved and it is safer to peel off the skins.



Special Events

January	2 nd	Welcome Back!
	3 rd	Perihelion Day, the Earth is the closest to the Sun
	4 th	Chapel
	5 th	Gymnastics
	6 th	The Epiphany
	7 th	Merry Christmas to our Orthodox families!
	9 th	National Static Electricity Day
	10 th	Chapel
	11 th	International Thank You Day Amelia Earhart, 1st woman to fly solo from Hawaii to California in 1935
	12 th	Gymnastics - New Session
	13 th	Humanitarian Day
	16 th	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - WE ARE OPEN
	17 th	Ben Franklin's Birthday
	18 th	Chapel
	19 th	National Popcorn Day
	20 th	No Tattling Day
	23 rd	Chinese New Year Begins
	24 th	Chapel
	25 th	Disney's 101 Dalmatians Day
	26 th	Playdoh Day
	27 th	Puzzle Day
	30 th	Franklin D. Roosevelt
	31 st	Use Kind Words Day

