

Child Care Chatter

109 York St.; Gettysburg, PA 17325 (717) -334-7171 childcare@stjamesgettysburg.org

September 2017

**Reminder: The center is closed...
Monday, September 4, 2017 in honor of Labor Day**

Dear Friends and Families,

August has been so busy – I had no idea if I was coming or going! School starts on August 22nd, and we will send a total of 41 children off to 3 different schools! Children are already bubbling up with excitement and have reported shopping for new school clothes, shoes, supplies and back packs. While the first day of school can be exciting for some, for others, they may become a little nervous about leaving the comfort of their second home at St. James. We will be there at the beginning and end of the day to provide them with whatever support they may need and listen as they tell us all about the events of their first day of school.

With the start of a new school year, it is also the time that we transition many of the children to a new classroom. If your child turned four on or before September 1st, they will be moving to PreK or if your child turned three by September 1st, they will be moving to Preschool. Infants and toddlers have more gentle transitions that are based on space availability and development. If your infant or toddler is moving, the teachers will talk with you directly to prepare you for these changes. As our transitions to new classrooms begin, please remember, that even as grown-ups, we all face challenges differently and so do the children as they adjust to their new teachers and classrooms. Some will be excited and others may shed some tears. However, your child approaches this change, we will be there to support, love and nurture them all along the way.

Transitions will begin on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 and continue through the first week of September. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your child's teacher or myself.

Excited to start the new school year as we learn and grow together,

Suzan

***Mark Your Calendar for our Fall Open House/
Tuesday evening, October 10, 2017 5:00 p.m.
beginning with Taco Tuesday!
We will provide the taco meet and tortilla chips – you
bring the fixings.***

Staffing Challenges

Over the past year, we have been experiencing a higher turnover than in past years. Our normal was under 10%, but has jumped to 17% this past year as we have lost four full time teachers and one part time staff. The challenge has become greater with the low unemployment rate in Adams County (3.5%) which is great for the economy, but making the job of finding qualified staff even more difficult. Over the past month, I thought I had secured two highly qualified different candidates for the PreKindergarten room, only for them to accept other positions. As I continue to search for a lead teacher in that room, we will continue to support Miss Kim in various ways. Since school is starting, both Miss Melanie and Mr. Fred are now available for much of the day and will be assisting Miss Kim as the search continues. Fred will remain in PreK throughout the school year, however Melanie will move elsewhere when a new teacher is found.

Additionally, based on the enrollment in the toddler rooms, we will be downsizing the number of children in that classroom and opening it up to give them a larger environment. Now, we will not be replacing the lead teacher in the "older" toddler room. Instead, the classroom will be referred to as the Toddler Room with children aged approximately 16 months until about 34 months. Miss Kathy, Miss Rachel and Miss Steph will remain in the toddler room with the addition of Miss Megan. I am excited about this change and looking forward to seeing the new, improved toddler room blossoms and grows in a larger space.

Finally, one thing that I can assure you of is the process of hiring new staff is not something I take lightly. Your children have become my children and I only want the best for each one of them. I will continue to interview, check references and review resumes until not just a qualified candidate can be found that but one that can match the qualities of our current staff who are all loving, dedicated and nurturing. As I continue the process, I promise to keep you informed as soon as a decision is finalized.

Staff 2017 – 18 St. James Lutheran Church Child Care

Infants: Miss Kim, Miss Angela and Miss Ciin

Email: infants@stjamesgettysburg.org

Toddlers: Miss Steph, Miss Kathy, Miss Megan and Miss Rachel email:

yt@stjamesgettysburg.org

Preschool: Miss Amy, Miss Tianna, Miss Montana and Miss Katie

Email: ps@stjamesgettysburg.org

PreKindergarten: Miss Kim, Mr. Fred and Miss Melanie.

Email: pk@stjamesgettysburg.org

Kids Club: Miss Melanie, Mr. Fred, Miss Amie and Miss Kylee

Email: kc@stjamesgettysburg.org

Floater and Kitchen Assistant: Sylvia "Tender" Martin

Director: Suzan L. Seibel – Willard

Email: childcare@stjamesgettysburg.org

Assistant Director: Melanie Soliday

Email: kc@stjamesgettysburg.org

Office Manager (Child Care Tuition): Katy Clowney

kclowney@stjamesgettysburg.org

Child Care Governance Chair: Barbara Vossler (can be contacted through the church office)

New Teachers:

Miss Katie is a St. James Child Care Center graduate whose mother used to work here will begin in September. She is a graduate of Fairfield High School and is attending HACC. She will be majoring in either education or social work. Please join me in welcoming her back to the St. James Lutheran Child Care family!

Saying Good – bye for now....

We were blessed over the summer to have the help of college students Hannah Gardner, Delanee Rasmussen, Jessica Reindollar and Hope Tosten to fill in and help in various classrooms throughout the day. Here are some notes from some of them as they say good bye for now as they return to school to start their new year.

Dear Parents,

As many of you know, I am a senior in college and with this I will be leaving St. James later this month. My official last day will be August 23, 2017. I will be student teaching, making it impossible for me to continue working here for the fall. I have enjoyed working with each of your children and getting to know them as individuals. I am truly going to miss each one when I leave, and will return to visit when possible.

With my opportunity to student teach in Camp Hill, there is a possibility that I could be hired right out of student teaching. If this is the case, I will not be returning in December. But if I'm not given this opportunity, I will be coming back (if a position is available).

Sincerely,
Ms. Jessica

Dear Families,

The school year is approaching for some of your children and for me as well. I will be returning this Fall to Millersville University to complete my Sophomore year. I wanted to inform you and your child that my last day for the summer will be August 23rd. Though I am sad for this day to come, I am excited to return next summer and during breaks.

Thank you for sharing your children with me this summer. They have each touched my heart in a very special way. I pray that the children starting Kindergarten in the fall enjoy and succeed in their new journey, as I know they will, and I am eager to return to the friends staying in Pre-K.

Thank you for the incredible opportunity to work with your dear children!

Miss Delanee

Introducing Scholastic Reading Club!

Encouraging reading is one of the most important things we can do to help your child succeed. It can be tough finding the right books to keep them interested, which is why I am so excited that we will be participating in Scholastic Reading Club. Each month, your child will bring home Reading Club flyers. Together you can choose from books hand-selected by teachers and experts, and then order online or by returning your order form and payment to me. Every time you place an order your child's classroom will earn bonus points for free books and resources! To get us started I have selected a due date of September 16 for the first book order.

Here's how:

1. **REGISTER** at scholastic.com/readingclub
2. **ENTER** the Class Activation Code: **GWQVD**
3. **CHOOSE** from thousands of print titles, value packs, and Stora eBooks
4. **SUBMIT** the order to me by the due date listed on the website.

Happy Reading, Melanie