



Our Kids Club program visited Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve for their first bus trip in two years!

## St. James Lutheran Church Early Learning Center

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**July 2021**

### Reminder:

Center Closed,  
Monday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021:

**CENTER CLOSED**, in honor of  
Independence Day!

Dear Friends & Family,

As I reflected on our newsletter from last year, what a difference a year has made! Last year we were navigating the new mandates, directives and guidance of the CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health. This year, I do believe we have mastered them all! I would like to thank everyone for helping us be successful in rebuilding our program and supporting us as we became more comfortable with the new normal.

We have become so successful, our school – age, Kids Club, program had their first bus field trip since 2019! We have become so successful, as we look at our projected enrollment in the fall, there are only six openings in the whole building! We have become so successful, our staff turnover during Covid 19 was only three part – time staff! We have become so successful; we might increase the enrollment in the infant room so we can provide care for more families. We have

become so successful; we are finally operating in the black again!

So, while other programs have struggled to build enrollment, retain, and recruit staff and rebuild their fiscal balance, we have regained ground. Thank the staff, church and Early Learning Governance Committee. It is through the hard work, commitment and support of many that enables St. James to continue to thrive, even in the most difficult of times!

So, even though a lot of the changes we had to make to remain open this past year remain unchanged for our program, I feel like we have conquered a lot and continue to learn and grow together!

Fondly,

*Suzee Sulist*



### Mask Mandates in ECE Remain Unchanged

I think some people became a little excited when Governor Wolf announced on May 30, 2021, that the mask order would be lifted no later than June 28, 2021. This announcement was directly followed by an announcement by OCDEL that everything remains the same for licensed facilities.

As a result, we will continue to wear masks in the facility as required. When the state directs us that they can be removed, I will consult directly with the church, Covid19 task force, committee and inform you of any changes that they advise. Until then, please continue to wear a mask in the building so we can be a role model for the children.



Adams County 4-H will be visiting Kids Club this summer and introducing them to their program. This past week they did sheep bingo and learned more about lambs

## Moving onto our everyday business in Early Learning....

It is difficult to believe that I am already beginning to work on the Fall 2021 enrollment, but the telephone inquiries have already started. If my projections are correct, we will have six full time openings, none of which are for children under the age of three. Any family who has reduced their hours for the summer must submit in writing their request for full time enrollment for the fall by Friday, August 6, 2021.

Our summer program officially ends on August 20, 2021. Therefore, if you reduced your hours, full time will not be available to you until Monday, August 23, 2021. Unfortunately, we may not be able to increase your hours before that even if you had requested them. In the past, our enrollments have dropped down over the summer. That is not the case this year! Our enrollments are holding strong!

Waitlist Priorities:

- 1) Current child enrollment – If your child is currently enrolled part time, they will be given priority to return to full time first, beginning the week of August 23, 2021.
- 2) Current family with younger children enrolled who has an older child that they may wish to return for before and/or after school beginning the week of August 23, 2021.
- 3) Past families with completed applications for the wait list on file in the child care office.
- 4) Other community enrollment.

However, as we all know, sometimes changes happen that are unexpected. Please remember that ALL schedule changes require at least a **two** – week written notice so that schedule changes can be made, and financial agreements sent to the billing office in a timely manner. If you know a change will be happening, the sooner you let us know, the better, especially with the high projections for the fall. The sooner we know, the sooner we can begin to enroll other children and families in need of service.



## Laundry

Beginning Friday, July 2, 2021, the center will no longer do the nap laundry. You will need to take the nap laundry home each Friday, launder it over the week – end and bring them back each Monday.

### Welcome Ms. Salena Green to the Infant Room:

We would like to introduce & welcome Ms. Salena to our infant classroom!! She started with us June 1, 2021. Ms. Salena is a mom of 7 wonderful children. She has her Associates degree in Business management and has started her BA in child psychology. Ms. Salena has worked in many different fields. Her love for children has led her to the field of Early Childhood. She is excited about joining our St. James family and getting to know all of you.

### Welcome Ms. Jessica Alwine

We are excited to welcome Jessica Alwine to the staff as our floater, so everyone will see her beginning June 28, 2021. Jessica is the mother of two beautiful children, former PK teacher and director of Zwinligi Christian School and partner of Creekside Farm and Market. She brings a wealth of experience and training. Jessica has her BS in Education and Masters in Curriculum and Instruction. We are excited to have her join the staff!

### Best Wishes Miss Erika Garcia – Amaya on your new adventures!

Miss Erika gave her notice of resignation on June 2, 2021, from her floater position. She is planning to pursue education in the fall and wanted time to prepare for this new endeavor. In her words, “My beautiful friends and families, this is not good – bye, but more of a see you next time letter. I appreciated and thanked you all for this opportunity and allowing me to be part of these amazing little beings life. Thank you for all the smiles, love, and laughter. I wish you all the best and brightest future and a safe and happy life. Much love, Miss Erika.”