



St. Clare's Preschool

The Buzz from Ms. Sue, Preschool Director

February 2018

December Happenings at the Preschool

The wonderful thing about December in a Christian Preschool is that we can talk to the children about the nativity, and tell the story of Jesus' birth. Ms. Tracy spends every weekly Chapel time telling the story in a beautiful age appropriate way, and we have child proof nativity scenes in the classrooms that the children can play with.

In addition we there is our Christmas Program on the evening of December 9. All 72 children, and 325 watching grown ups gather in the Church at 6:30 for a 50 minute concert. The 2 year-olds start with Jingle Bells, and being two anything can happen. This year we only needed 3 mommies to join us to help with stage fright. Then our 3's come to the front and sing 4 songs. Finally, our big kids (4-5 year-olds) perform Dancing Christmas Tree, Oh, What a Special Night, Little Drummer Boy and Come on Ring Those Bells.

The families all bring something to share at our pot luck buffet, and the children get to spend some time with Santa, those that want to anyway. Below enjoy two photos, one family who have the whole Santa photo thing sorted out, and one little girl who is still not certain about the whole Santa thing!

Another lovely event in December is the reading of the Polar Express, accompanied by hot chocolate, and of course a silver bell. I haven't even mentioned all the class parties, the gift making, and gift giving. It's just a fun month for everyone at Preschool.



Upcoming Events

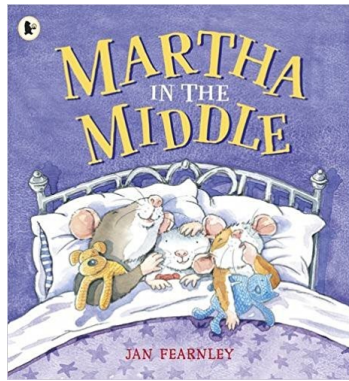
- ◆ Chapel on Wednesdays.
- ◆ Soccer Session 2 starts on Wednesday 1/24/2018
- ◆ School closed February 12 for Teacher Work Day, and February 19 for Presidents' Day
- ◆ February 14 Valentine's Day celebrations
- ◆ Super Science for PreK classes 2/15/18 & 2/22/18
- ◆ January 29 to February 9 is enrollment for 2018-2019 school year for current students and their siblings.
- ◆ Enrollment Day for families new to the school is February 27, 2018



Jokes of the Month

Q. How do you know when the moon has had enough to eat?
A. When it is a full moon!

Q. Where do cows go on Saturday night?
A. To the mooooooooooovies!



Book Review Martha in the Middle

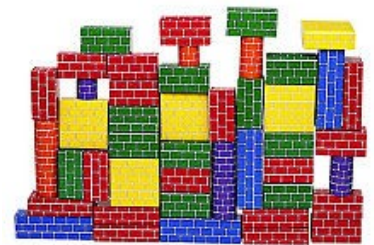
Author-illustrator Jan Fearnley's "Martha in the Middle" is the perfect book for middle children. The charming story centers around young Martha, a mouse who feels she is constantly being sandwiched between older sis, Clara, and younger brother Ben. She gets so sick of being in the middle that she decides to 'run away', until a chance encounter with a wise frog makes her look at her position with a fresh perspective.

The text is simple and perfect for reading aloud and the full-color illustrations convey all the frustrations Martha faces as a middle child with a perfect blend of wit and humor. This is definitely a must-read for those with a child in the middle, but also for all preschoolers who like a well-told story.

The Learning Power of Block Play

You will notice that every room in the Preschool has blocks, and an area for block play. The reason is simple, block play is a great way for young children to learn. As they construct, create, and represent their world in blocks they grow in each area of development (social/emotional, cognitive, language, and physical). Block play is what we educators call "open ended". This means there is no right way, or pattern to follow. Open ended play generally fosters the creativity of young children.

In the two year old room we have bigger blocks, that are made of cardboard. Easier for little hands to build with, they are lighter, and if a child happens to throw one (just to see what it feels like to throw) then no friends will be hurt. The picture to the right shows you the Panda class blocks.



Once the children move into the 3-4 year old classrooms they are more interested in playing with the classic wooden unit blocks. They love to build roads and make piles of blocks, and finally to make bridges.

Once the kids move into the 4-5 year old room we see much more complex structures being built, with lots of added "do-withs" (as Caroline Pratt called them, she is the educator credited with the introduction of unit blocks in the early 1900's).

Do-withs are people, horses, balls, just about anything that can be added to blocks to extend the play from blocks alone. The picture to the left shows you a complex structure enhanced with do-withs.

When children ask you to admire their building work, rather than a compliment like "good job" ask them to explain to you what they have built, and how they built it.

