

Preschool News: A Focus on Hearts

-Ruth Baas, Director

An important pre-reading skill for preschool children is the recognition of shapes. At Orland Park Christian Preschool, we focus on one shape in each of the nine months throughout the school year. If you were to take a walk down the preschool hall on a Sunday morning, you would see a large sign that hangs on the wall year-round titled "Fun With Shapes."

Young children need hands-on learning experiences and lots of repetition. That is why the teachers in preschool plan an art activity of some kind each month that highlights the shape of the month. For example, the month of December featured a star-printed Christmas tree! The month of January featured snowmen made out of small, medium, and large rectangles!

During the month of February, we have focused on the heart shape and patterning with different colors of hearts. The art work in our hall displays includes a very l-o-n-g Love Bug made out of a pattern of red hearts and pink hearts by the children in the T/Th class on one side, and individual Love Bugs with tri-colored patterns made by the children in the M/W/F class. (See photos.)

The most important part of our heart shape lessons in February, however, focused on the meaning of the heart shape more than on its appearance. What a privilege it was to teach the young children about love – especially God's love for them. We read books and did activities that stressed the love of God for us, His children. Sharing the gospel

message of Jesus' love for each child, especially as He gave his life on the cross to pay for our sins, was truly a highlight for each teacher. Each child learned that he/she is very special to God by receiving a crown printed with the words "Jesus Loves Me".



"Fun With Shapes" display on the wall



Extra l-o-n-g "love bug" made by the T/Th class



"God loves you, my friend!"

Another important lesson about love is that because we have God's love in our hearts, we can share that love with our friends. Each child took a paper heart and brought it to a friend, saying the words, "God loves you, friend."

What fantastic, important lessons to learn at this young age. Praise God for the freedom and the opportunity to teach about God's love every day at Orland Park Christian Preschool!

SUCCESSFUL REGISTRATION! We are happy to report that the annual preschool open houses that were held at the end of January with the opportunity to register for Fall 2017 classes were a success! Both the three- and four-year-old classes are about 2/3 full at this time. In fact, we have more students registered by mid-February this year than we have ever had in the last 10 years. With six months to go before the new school year, we are in a good place to welcome new families to our school as they inquire over the spring and summer months. Praise God with us that He is working in and through Orland Park Christian Preschool, a ministry of Orland Park Christian Reformed Church, to plant seeds of faith and

learning in many children and their families. Thank you very much for your prayers for and your support of this ministry.