

Preschool News

CHRISTMAS AT PRESCHOOL

-Ruth Baas, Preschool Director

There is a special joy connected to teaching at Orland Park Christian Preschool during the Christmas season! The children come back to school after Thanksgiving Break all excited to get ready for Christmas. In their homes, they have already put up their Christmas trees and they are talking about Christmas cookies, Santa's visit, and of course, the presents they hope he brings.

What a joy it is to introduce the children to the best Christmas gift of all—Jesus! We tell Bible stories, read Christmas books, sing Christmas songs, make Christmas crafts, and dramatize the true story to focus on the real meaning of the season.

We were able to enjoy performing a Christmas program for our parents, grandparents, and friends on December 20 in our new sanctuary. We sang the Christmas songs we learned and shared the Bible story of Christmas. The children dramatized their love for Jesus by placing hearts in his manger

bed. We learned so much about God's love for us and how important it is for us to love God too. One of the poems the children shared during the program gave them the opportunity to express their love. The children said:

"Who loves Baby Jesus? His mother loved Him, Joseph loved Him. The shepherds loved Him, The wise men loved Him, And I love Him! Do you love Him too?"

It is our prayer that each child's heart is opened to the love of Jesus as they learn about the true meaning of Christmas. It is encouraging to speak with parents of former preschoolers who tell us that even after their children have



The children love making the Christmas Bible stories their own during play time.

grown and moved on to other schools, the Christmas lessons they learned in preschool have stayed with them. We are grateful to God for the work of His Spirit in the lives of our children.

Thanks to our church members for supporting us with your gifts and prayers so that we have the opportunity to share the important message of God's love at Christmas and always!

PRESCHOOL FOOD AND TOY DRIVE

The children at Orland Park Christian Preschool are learning that it is a blessing to be able to share with others! During the month of December, the children and their families responded generously to the opportunity to donate food and toys for the needy here in Orland Park.

We talked with the children about the fact that in our homes, we have toys to play with and enough food



Food donations from preschool families for the OPCRC Food Pantry ministry.

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to eat every day. However, there are people who live around us that don't have enough food to eat each day. Preschoolers and their families responded by generously bringing non-perishable food to school to give to the food pantry at Orland Church. Each child helped to carry a few items of food from our preschool hall to the food pantry down by the church office. Mrs. Sheila was there to welcome us, say thank you, and show us where the food would be kept until people came to pick it up on Wednesday afternoons.

The families of our children also donated toys through our preschool to the Orland Township Holiday Toy Drive. The toys will be shared with families who need assistance in order to give their children Christmas presents. We thank God for the opportunity to share with others and to teach the importance of giving.



Many families gave generously to the food pantry.



Preschool children deliver their gifts of food.

"NEW SPACE" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

There are a few things that have been relocated or changed in the new space. As you may have noticed, the information center is now located in the inner lobby just outside the sanctuary. You can stop by to sign up for volunteer opportunities (look for electronic sign-ups to be coming soon!) or to pick up a *Today* devotional book or an *Outlook* newsletter. There are seating areas available in both lobbies where you can hang out and talk after services.

For those with hearing difficulties, listening packs are now available at the information center. If you need to hear the worship services more clearly, you can pick up your own listening pack. If you have hearing aids, there is a device you will wear around your neck that will connect to your hearing aids. There also is the option of headphones if you don't have compatible hearing aids.



The media center is now located in the outer lobby next to the main doors. This is where you may pick up or request a copy of a CD or DVD of the service. The mailboxes are accessible again in the outer lobby. Public WiFi is also now available inside the church.

The nurseries also have gotten quite a facelift. In the new nursery suite, we now have nurseries for infants, crawlers, and toddlers. On Sundays, parents can stop at the kiosk to check in their child to the appropriate nursery. A family lounge and private feeding rooms are located across from the nurseries for parents to utilize during the service.

We give all glory to God for providing so faithfully during this project. We rejoice that we can celebrate because of what He has done and continues to do in the life and ministry of Orland Park Christian Reformed Church.