



TIDBITS

*First Presbyterian Church Weekday School
January 2012*



Message From The Director

What a joy to observe your children in their classrooms, playing and working so hard, laughing and conversing in their simple way, tackling the activities set before them by their teachers who are caring for them with so much enthusiasm and love! They are learning so much about themselves and how capable they are as they move through a school day.

During the first six years of life, children develop a self-identity, as well as their ideas and attitudes about others. They begin to understand that they are like other people in many ways and begin to recognize differences. Between the ages of 2 and 5, children become aware of differences in gender, race, ethnicity, and physical abilities of others. They also learn, from their family and from society, about the positive attitudes and the negative biases attached to these four aspects of identity. Children's learning experiences in their early years can help them to form a strong, positive image of themselves and can also help them grow up to respect and interact comfortably with people who are different from them.

Children often notice differences in others when they are in a group setting in preschool. Each child in the class has different physical characteristics. Each child has a different family background and their own interests, ideas, and preferences in how they play. Children learn at a young age to respect and accept these differences as they play and interact with their classmates.

Adults play a significant role in helping children recognize and respect differences without developing discomfort, fear, or prejudice. They should be prepared to answer children's questions about themselves and others and not ignore their questions, change the subject, sidestep the issue, or admonish the child for noticing differences. Their questions should be answered in a matter-of-fact and brief manner.

During the ages of 3 - 6, children begin to recognize the differences in boys and girls. The active, rough and tumble play of boys (which is often their way of relating and socializing) is noticed by many of the girls, some of whom want to join in, and others who prefer to avoid this kind of play. Boys use louder voices, need more space to play, and create games that involve running. Girls function well in smaller spaces and tend to congregate in groups. While girls tend to engage in less aggressive ways in their play, they often tend to engage in more verbal aggression with their peers. Girls typically enjoy art and writing activities at a younger age than do boys, as boys need more active learning experiences.

While these differences in traits are typical, they are not seen across the board with all boys and girls. However, the children do seem to notice these differences in gender and begin to make preferences with whom they interact based on these differences. It is important for teachers and parents to acknowledge these gender differences and help children understand that it is normal and good for boys and girls to be different. Adults can help children better interpret behaviors of their classmates when they understand and also appreciate these differences which are part of God's wonderful plan. It is helpful for teachers and parents to understand gender differences to be able to accommodate their needs both at home and at school and to celebrate these differences so that each child's self-image is positive and strong.

At the Weekday School, we offer a diverse environment for the children to experience. We have books, puzzles, dolls, toys, and posters which reflect our diverse society. We show men and women of all ethnic backgrounds doing a variety of jobs in the community as well as the home. We encourage both boys and girls to play in all of the centers - blocks are not just for boys and the housekeeping center is not just for girls. During classroom activities and on the playground, boys and girls are encouraged to play with each other. In our older classes, children learn about cultural differences with many of our units. Our uptown setting offers opportunities for children to be exposed to a diverse community as we walk to Discovery Place, stroll in the big red strollers, and play on the playgrounds in this busy, bustling city.

Parents and teachers have the awesome responsibility of helping children develop positive attitudes in our complex, diverse society and must prepare their children to meet the challenges and appreciate the benefits that a diverse society brings. This process should begin during a child's early years and is one of our goals at the Weekday School.

~ Janis

Announcements & Reminders



First Presbyterian Church Weekday School

Nurturing children in the
heart of Charlotte

"spread the word" to your friends and neighbors that the WDS always has room for new families in our program each year. Encourage them to apply!

Link your VIC card to our school number 3417 if you have not already done so. Send your VIC card number to Janis, and she will link it for you. Every link helps our school raise more funds for your children. Thank you!

Mark Your Calendar: Parents of the 3s, 4s, and TK classes need to mark a very important date on their calendar as your children will be presenting a spectacular music program for the parents. You do not want to miss this program as it is one of the highlights of the school year and a "big deal" for your children. After each program, there will be a luncheon for parents and children in the Fellowship Hall. Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

*4s and TK: April 13, 11:30 AM in the Sanctuary
3s: April 27, 11:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall*



The Weekday School Advisory Committee: The new Chair of this committee for 2012 is Whit Mulford, father of Wilson, Mac, and Hobs. The new Session representative for the Committee is Chip Wasson, father of Anna Bridges, and long-time parent at the WDS. We express our deepest gratitude for the many contributions of Christina Caldwell and Ruth Ellen Gill as they complete their service on the Advisory Committee. We appreciate the commitment of the Advisory Committee to the school and the many hours they devote to making our school a strong community.

Uptown Fun, our very popular summer program, will be offered for rising 2s through rising Kindergarteners for the two weeks of **July 23 - 27** and **July 30 - August 3**. Registration applications for *Uptown Fun* will be sent to you in a few weeks. If you register by the deadline date on the application, all currently enrolled families can be assured that they will have a space in this summer program. So mark your calendars now and make the rest of your summer plans knowing that you can count on *Uptown Fun* for your children!

Parent Speaker Program: Invitations will be sent soon regarding an informative program for our parents. We hope you will be able to attend and benefit from this educational opportunity.

Any outerwear you want to donate? Our school keeps a supply of extra coats, sweaters, mittens and hats, as well as extra clothes, for our students for emergency purposes. We are in need of a few coats for our older children (4s and TK). Please send to us in carpool line if you have any donations. Thanks!

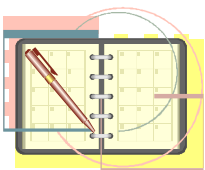


THANK YOU

To Wendy Kerle, Linda McCoy and Courtney Lapham for the Christmas goodies in December and to Christina Warlick, Kimmerly Fleischli, Michelle Hoffman and Megan Stickley for providing treats for our January staff meeting!

All of the WDS staff feels so appreciated by the kindness and generosity you expressed with Christmas gifts to us. We are also most grateful for those who remembered the school with a year-end charitable contribution in December.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity!



Mark Your Calendar:

February 4: Parent Party 7:00—9:00pm 2219 Richardson Drive
February 20,21: NO SCHOOL—President's Day/Winter Holiday