



The Neighborhood Learning Center



The Director's Corner Marcie Peterson, Director

Traditions bring deeper meaning to the holidays and keep Christ the true center of Christmas!

Traditions are powerful and can bring families closer together. By nature, traditions take time and commitment. Experiencing traditions together helps loved ones make new memories while also remembering the past. Traditions remind us to slow the busy cycle of life long enough to reconnect and build bonds.

But the ones who are most affected by traditions are children. Children love rituals! They find security and solace in something that gives a sense of belonging and comfort.

Kids find rituals fascinating in every aspect of life. This is especially true during the holidays when traditions

give them a picture not only of family bonding but also of the importance of Christ—the celebration of His majesty.

Whatever traditions you and your family fulfill or create this year, remember to relax and have fun. Rest assured that your children will remember the memories you make together more than any toy they may receive. And the lessons you teach them about giving back will last a lifetime!



Merry Christmas!

Ms. Marcie

Thank you!

As we finish our month of thanks we are in awe over the support and generosity from you – our families at the NLC. In this fourth year working in partnership with St. Andrew we followed the traditions of filling stockings for The Holiday Coalition and collecting food for Interfaith Relief. One hundred stockings were filled to the brim; a box of items that would not fit in the stockings were taken to the Women's Shelter in Leesburg; and 479 pounds of food were delivered to Interfaith Relief!

Many of you were also generous with your time and attended NLC Sunday on the 22nd where the children were able to share their unique gifts of song and praise. Thank you again for allowing your children to give of themselves so that others may enjoy their delightful blessings.

December Highlights

December 1: Bring a stuffed animal for hibernation

December 2: Advent Workshop at 4pm at SAPC—all families welcome! Chili Cookoff at 6:15pm

December 4: Gingerbread Cookie Day

December 17: Christmas Program at 4:30pm

December 19: Parent's Night Out

December 21: Movie Day—wear PJs!

December 24: NLC CLOSING AT 2PM

December 25: NLC CLOSED—Merry Christmas!

January 1: NLC CLOSED—HAPPY NEW YEAR!



This Month at School...

- * This month at school we will begin our study of winter weather and how it affects the animals. Our favorite Jan Brett book The Mitten will come to life as the children provide their animals a warm place to stay.
- * The second week of December the children will travel with their passports to a different country in each classroom. Be sure to ask what far off land they visited and what they learned about Christmas while traveling around the world!
- * Mark your calendar on the 17th at 4:30 for the Christmas Program. Our music teacher, Ms. Prestipino, is teaching the children songs so they can sing the Christmas story to you. Traditions and symbols of Christmas as well as the true meaning of the season will also be shared in each classroom.
- * As we wind down the month we will share a PJ, pop corn and warm chocolate milk day together and watch Christmas specials.
- * On the 24th we will close at 2pm – but not before wishing Jesus a happy birthday with a cake!

Snow Days Approaching!

The winter season is now upon us!

All NLC families and Staff members will be notified via email and text message regarding NLC closings and delays due to weather. For parents/guardians, these messages will be sent to the cell phone and email address noted in our database for “Guardian 1”. Please ensure we have the correct information on record!

Keep in mind, **our closings and delays follow the Federal Government, NOT Loudoun County Public Schools.**

You are also able to access the following website to determine the closing & delay status of the Federal Government:
www.opm.gov/status



This Month at St. Andrew...

December 2 — Advent Workshop and Chili Cook-off—Join us for lots of free fun as we make Advent wreaths to adorn our homes, craft ornaments we will sell to raise money for Heifer International, and enjoy a fun chili cook-off competition! Crafting commences at 4pm and the Chili Cook-off starts at 6:15pm; a brief worship service and caroling will conclude the festivities.

December 13— Lessons & Carols—A worship service full of music and Scripture.

Christmas Eve — Family friendly service at 5pm; Traditional worship at 8pm

NOTE: Child care is available at all worship services for the littlest ones. For children age preschool and up, Sunday School is provided during Sunday worship services—your child starts the service sitting with you, will leave for Sunday School and then will return to you before the service concludes. The first Sunday of every month is Family First Sunday, when children remain in the service and their joyful noises are welcomed!

Friendly Reminders:

Parent Handbook: If you have not yet returned your acknowledgement form for the new Parent Handbook please do so as soon as possible. If you need another copy of the form please pick one up at the front desk. Hard copies of the Handbook are also available at the desk, or please ask an administrative staff member and we will be happy to send you another soft copy. Thank you!

Winter Weather: Children need outdoor time all year round. Unless it is below freezing or raining, we will continue to take the children outside for fresh air and exercise.

- * Please send your children to school with warm coats, hats and gloves.
- * Label everything with their names!
- * Please check their cubbies and switch out their extra clothes with appropriate winter clothing.

Thank you!

The Pastor's Corner

The whole congregation was thrilled to see the vitality of the NLC with the fantastic turnout of NLC families and staff on NLC Sunday. Both Pastor Jessica and I know the busy, steady traffic that comes in and out during the week, but our congregation members are here primarily on Sunday mornings. Now they know first-hand how wonderful your children are and what a dedicated staff we have. Thanks to all who made NLC Sunday such a successful event!

As Pastor, I'm committed to continue to make our connection a mutual blessing. During December, I hope to do so in a few different ways.

First, let me reiterate our invitation for you all to have fun at the Advent Workshop and Chili Cook-off.

I've had my own opportunity to make an Advent Wreath at previous workshops. Since I lack artistic talent, it is a thrill for me to actually make something that looks nice and can work as a Christmas decoration at home. The kids are that much more delighted as they make wreaths ready to take home for the dining room table.

At the Chili Cook-off I've tried for years to gain the glory of winning a prize. Alas, the competition is fierce (and all for a paper crown (labeled "Chili King" or "Chili Queen"). Chili makers and chili eaters are all equally welcome. The Advent Workshop starts at 4. The Chili Cook-off is at 6:15. You are invited!

Second, let me tell you about this month's chapels.

Our Godly Play curriculum has a wonderful four week presentation of the Christmas story. What a delight to

introduce the stories of the foretelling prophet Isaiah, the Shepherds, the Magi and Joseph and Mary as the weeks unfold.

Third, let me tell you about the family service on Christmas Eve.

A few years ago, Pastor Jessica and I figured out that it was better to welcome the children's voices instead of trying to talk over them. We have made our 5:00pm family service a participatory drama. Kids are a part of every aspect of the service. At times it can get raucous! As we close with everyone holding a candle while singing "Silent Night," we find a moment of wonder and awe. Please know that you are welcome (and that there is a nursery!).

Finally, let me invite you and your family to my home for our Open House/Christmas Party on December 20th anytime after 4:00 pm.

My wife, Bonnie, and I live in the Courts of St. Francis which is the neighborhood behind the Purcellville Library. Every other year we have a Christmas Open House inviting neighbors, church members, my wife's teacher colleagues, friends and friends of our children. The past two parties we have surpassed our goal of having more than 100 drop by. There are games in the basement below and children are very much invited. Our address is 122 Amalfi Court in Purcellville. Your presence would be the best gift we could ever receive.

Merry Christmas to you all,

Pastor Dave Milam



Staff Spotlight

Hello, my name is Ms. Susan - this is my first year at the NLC and I just love it! I work with the infants in the Butterfly Tree and just adore them so much. I am a mother of four children and grandmother of three. I was born in Woodbury, NJ and have lived in different parts of VA since 1990. I moved to Purcellville two years ago from Stafford County and just love this area, it is so beautiful! In my free time I enjoy gardening, reading, holidays, swimming and spending time with family. I also love being near water and going to the beach as much as possible. Working with children of all ages has always been my passion, watching them grow and engage in learning and developing skills is such a great experience. I am currently taking courses in Early Childhood Development and pursuing my certification and possibly Associates in the near future. I am honored to be working with your children and find it a joy rather than a job.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Hibernation		1 Bring stuffed animal for hibernation	2 Advent Workshop Movement with Ms Prestipino	3 "The Mitten" Music with Ms Prestipino	4 Chapel Yoga Gingerbread Cookie Day	5
6 Traditions Around the World	7	8	9 Movement with Ms Prestipino	10 Music with Ms Prestipino	11 Chapel Yoga	12
13 Symbols of Christmas	14	15	16 Movement with Ms Prestipino	17 NLC Christmas Program 4:30pm Music with Ms Prestipino	18 Chapel Yoga	19 Parents' Night Out 5-9pm
20 Meaning of Christmas	21 <i>Christmas Movie Day - Wear your PJs</i>	22 MAKE CHRISTMAS WREATHS FOR BIRDS	23 Movement with Ms Prestipino	24 NLC closes at 2 pm "Happy Birthday Jesus!" Parties Christmas Eve Services 5 & 8 pm	25 Happy Birthday Jesus!!	26
27 Making Goals New Year	28	29	30 Movement with Ms Prestipino	31 Music with Ms Prestipino		

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NLC Sunday

