

CCUMC Parent Newsletter



November 2022

Thanksgiving Feast—Nov 21 & 22

Our classes will be celebrating Thanksgiving on Monday, November 21 and Tuesday, November 22 with a feast in each classroom. Each class will have the chance to sample the ever-traditional Thanksgiving offerings of turkey, muffins, cheese cubes and dried cranberries. And like the original Thanksgiving Feast—wink, wink—it will be concluded with the eating of cookies. The important thing that they may learn is that the meal is a time to celebrate and be thankful with their (preschool) fam

Thanksgiving Chapel Nov 21 & 22

The Thanksgiving season provides us with a wonderful opportunity to teach our children and remind ourselves about the blessings that we enjoy that can be shared with others. This year at Thanksgiving the CCUMCP family will again join together to donate new pajamas for area children. This program is nationwide but serves local communities. This means that every pair of pajamas donated will find its way to a child in our area. We are asking the children to bring those new pajamas or nightgowns to school by November 21. Classes will gather in the Sanctuary for the communal service. We ask children to wear their favorite pair of pajamas to school the day that they have chapel (see schedule in Upcoming Events)



Talk to your child about this effort and involve your child in the process. Make sure to bring in all pajamas and nightgowns by Monday, November 21. Thank you so much for your help in this important effort.

Upcoming Events

- November 2: Open House 9:30am
- November 8: **NO SCHOOL** (Election Day)
- November 9: Owls & Cardinals-Field Trip to Audubon
- November 10: Open House 9:30am
- November 15: Advisory Council meeting 6:30pm Wesley Room
- November 16: Eagles—Field Trip to Audubon
- November 17-18: **NO SCHOOL** (Teacher training)
- November 21: Chapel 10am All pre-K & 3's classes, Buntings, Starlings & Thanksgiving Feast
- November 22: Chapel 10am Chickadees, Wrens, Sparrows
- November 23-25: **NO SCHOOL** (Thanksgiving)



Thanksgiving & Preschoolers

Celebrating Thanksgiving with preschoolers can be tricky. The story that I was told as a young child depicting smiling pilgrims and Native Americans becoming best friends is, not entirely accurate. However, preschoolers are too young to be given the details of the relationship which devolved into something that included violence. So, what to do?

Use part of the story in which the Wampanoag tribe helps the pilgrims learn how to farm more effectively following their first winter when they almost starved to death. The natural reaction of the pilgrims would be one of gratitude. In other words, focus on gratitude and thankfulness as the origin of Thanksgiving.

Teach about the Wampanoag tribe both as a historical tribe and as a flourishing modern tribe. Native Americans don't want to be relegated to the past.

Talk about the foods associated with Thanksgiving and where they have their origins. Corn, for example, was gifted to the pilgrims by the Native Americans.

When reading books to your preschoolers about the historical Thanksgiving, the best would have to be *One Little, Two Little, Three Little Pilgrims* by B. G. Hennessy (Lynne Cravath, Illustrator) The colorful, but cartoonish drawings depict a very rich world of abundance in which the Pilgrims and Native Americans existed in the New World. The author has consulted a good amount of source material and lists many of those sources which you might enlist for your older children.

A second, less worth book, more appropriate for pre-K students, is *Squanto and the First Thanksgiving** by Teresa Celsi (Pam Ford Johnson, Illustrator). Written in 1989 the book refers to Native Americans as Indians so you will have to change that language and is overly simplified. I only recommend it because it provides some specific examples of the assistance of the Native Americans that was crucial to the eventual success of the Pilgrims in keeping themselves fed and the ways in which Native American medicine also helped to heal the illnesses suffered by the Pilgrims.

*The YouTube reading linked here uses the term "Indians" rather than correcting that usage to "Native Americans."



Handwriting practice

Kindergarten Round Up & Letters of Recommendation

CCUMC will be hosting our Kindergarten Roundup event, open to all parents in the preschool and surrounding community, on December 9 at 9:30am. Unique to CCUMC, this morning long event has admissions experts from many of the area private schools as well as representatives from Rosemary Hills, our primary public feeder school, to speak with parents about the programs that they have for kindergarten and beyond. This helps parents to determine which schools to explore further.

I invite parents of pre-K students to begin discussions with their child's teacher and with me about their child's placement the following year especially if you have questions concerning your child's readiness for kindergarten.

Applications for private schools are generally due in January though application deadlines vary widely and may depend upon whether you are applying for the first time or with a sibling of a currently registered student.

In most cases parents should expect to solicit at least one letter of recommendation in support of an application. **We ask that you provide sufficient lead time to your child's teacher when requesting those letters. Please provide self-addressed stamped envelopes if the letters need to be mailed or a clear reference to an online address if that is the appropriate way to submit letters of recommendation. We must have a signed release from a parent to provide letters of recommendation. A release statement is most often found on the application itself, but, if not, please provide permission**

Curriculum Corner

Mastering Cutting

As an assistant in a 2 year old class years ago I joked about the amount of cutting that was necessary for my job—I was constantly cutting out letters and shapes for art projects—and how delighted my preschool teacher would be to know that I was using what she taught me. While it is true that I perfected my scissor skills in kindergarten, children are now expected to enter kindergarten having mastered the art of cutting. This means that children need to work with scissors throughout their preschool years beginning at the age of two.

Obviously, using scissors is a skill that one utilizes for the whole of life, so it is important to learn, but the skills honed while mastering cutting are also helpful in other areas. According to OT Kimberly Wiggins in [Scissor Savvy—Part I](#), utilizing scissors

1. builds up the tiny muscles in one's hand that are necessary for handwriting, painting, using eating implements or just pulling up one's pants,
2. enhances hand-eye coordination necessary for sports or eating with utensils, for example,
3. and utilizes bilateral coordination which is using both halves of your body at the same time. Bilateral coordination is used frequently. For example, whenever you zip up a jacket (you hold one part of the jacket with one side while pulling upwards with the other half), or walk.

The best scissors to use are child-safe scissors with the rounded edges. These scissors provide stability for developing hand muscles. Before the lesson begins, outline some rules of safety. Explain that scissors can cut and should be used carefully with an adult's supervision. Instead of outlining what they can't cut exclusively be sure to mention what they can cut. For example, "We never cut other people or animals. We use scissors to cut playdough, paper and fabric."

After the rules have been set forth, begin by showing them their thumb and demonstrating that when they want to cut their thumbs should face the sky. This will help children learn how to orient their hands in the scissors. Demonstrate for them how the thumb goes into one hole and the next two fingers go into the other hole. Help them open and close their fingers.

In another article Kimberly Wiggins mentions that learning to cut progresses in stages. At 2 yrs. of age children should be able to snip at the end of a piece of paper. (Note that this leaves out cutting through the paper completely and moving forward as one cuts.) Children move from snipping to cutting through paper to cutting straight lines, circles and then squares in the next 2 years of their development.

Like any other skill, cutting precisely takes practice. While they do get to practice at school, it is important that they have plenty of practice at home too so give them the opportunity. While you are preparing supper sit them at the kitchen table with some old newspaper or magazines and have them snip or cut at will.

If your child is having a great deal of difficulty, her hands may not be strong enough. Help her build her hand muscles by using tongs to pick up small objects or by manipulating playdough. These are fun activities that won't feel like work to her but will build up her hand strength each time that they are done.

Great Educational Toys (as recommended by teachers)

2's: Playdough

An oldie, but a goodie. This toy develops those fine motor muscles that assist with writing, cutting and manipulating small objects and encourages creativity.

3's: Magnifying Glass

This low-tech gadget assists children in the discovery of the natural world and enables them to build their powers of observation. Encouraging them to describe what they see will also build their vocabulary.

Pre-K: [Playstix](#)

This toy encourages open-ended creative building and can be used to practice sorting, classification and spatial awareness. Plus, it is very popular with pre-K students.

Illness Policy

You may have noticed that we have seen an unusual amount of illness this fall at school consistent with the nationwide trend. While it is easy in some cases to know when not to send your child, in other cases it is unclear.

1. In all cases of cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of smell/taste, congestion, we will need a negative COVID test—antigen is fine—before a child returns to school.
2. A child needs to be vomit free and fever free, without any medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
3. A wet cough, even with a negative COVID test, is grounds for staying home until cleared by a doctor or until the cough improves.
4. Green hued mucus from a runny nose indicates infection and needs clearance from a doctor.
5. Follow pediatrician recommendations for staying out of school following strep throat, hand, foot & mouth, RSV, or other common communicable illnesses.

Other than these hard and fast rules, we ask parents to use their discretion keeping in mind the health of the other members of the class. Any absence of 3 or more days needs a doctor's note or parent's note, email is fine, to let us know why your child was absent and to indicate that the child is cleared to return.

Reminder: ASQ Developmental Screenings Due on December 17

Parents,
Remember to complete your child's State required screening. It only takes 15 minutes to complete. Go to the [CCUMC ASQ landing page](#) to begin.



The Sparrows doing fine motor work



Buntings making cloud dough





Spider Construction

November Book Corner

[The Greatest Table](#) (start at minute 1:39) by Michael Rosen celebrates that each time we eat we are connected to the entirety of humanity and that there is always room for one more. It alludes to sustainable farming practices and care for the earth.

[Before We Eat: From Farm to Table](#) by Pat Brisson. As we prepare for Thanksgiving this book reminds us of all the people we must thank in order for us to be able to prepare that Thanksgiving meal. This book seems especially resonant as we have been reminded, during COVID, of how each person plays a part in making our daily lives function well.

[Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message](#) by Chief Jake Swamp. Written by a contemporary Mohawk Chief, this book is a celebration for the gifts provided by the earth.

[Thanksgiving Is For Giving Thanks](#) by Margaret Sutherland. This book reminds us all of the heart of the holiday which is giving thanks for our many blessings. The simple pictures and streamlined text are wonderful even for our youngest children.

[Cranberry Thanksgiving](#) by Wende Devlin. This book was one I remember from my childhood. Set in Maine, it is the story of a grandmother and her grandchild celebrating Thanksgiving with a dinner featuring her grandmother's special cranberry bread. The child is told to invite someone to dinner who is poor or lonely. A story about acceptance, generosity and love. The book includes the recipe for the special cranberry bread and I remember making it with my mom after reading the book.

* Links are to YouTube readings of each book

THANKFUL

BY GATHERED AGAIN

I am thankful for my family
I am thankful for my friends
I am thankful for Thanksgiving
I hope it never ends!

I am thankful for this turkey
and the fun we share today
I am thankful to be thankful
In the thank-fullest way!

weareteachers.com



The Owls enjoying music with Ms Maribeth

