



# Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool

## Home + School Connection Preschool Newsletter

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## Stay in Touch with the Preschool

GSLP offers several ways for families and teachers to communicate. The easiest way to send a note to your child's teachers is via the school email addresses, [office@gslp-gaithersburg.org](mailto:office@gslp-gaithersburg.org) or [gspreschool@outlook.com](mailto:gspreschool@outlook.com). Teachers will read and respond to your message as soon as possible.

GSLP also sends out a weekly email newsletter with information on upcoming events and deadlines, reminders on school policies, and more. If you are not yet receiving these messages and would like to, please email us or stop by the Preschool Office.

If you prefer not to email, you can use the clear plastic message bins mounted outside classrooms. Paper, envelopes, and pens are available there for you to write teachers a note. Leave messages in the bin or hand them directly to your teacher.

Teachers provide monthly calendars with information on class events and curriculum. You can also keep up with events through the preschool website at [gslp-gaithersburg.org](http://gslp-gaithersburg.org). Scroll down the home page to find recent announcements and a list of coming events. You'll also find links to important info, our schoolwide Google Calendar with events for the whole year, and electronic copies of this newsletter.

GSLP also uses social media to keep you up to date with important announcements, such as emergency closings. Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/gslp.gaithersburg](https://www.facebook.com/gslp.gaithersburg) or on Twitter @GSLP\_Gburg. Please note that we take children's safety very seriously at GSLP, so our school websites and social media do not feature photos of children's faces.

And as always, you can contact us by phone at 301-963-1955. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Apples and Pumpkins

GSLP students welcome fall by enjoying two iconic seasonal fruits: apples and pumpkins!

Classes participate in a variety of apple and pumpkin activities during October. Classes enjoy special cooking projects and may dress in fall colors.

Children learn that apples come from trees and pumpkins grow on vines. For kids — many of whom have never acquired pumpkins or apples from any place but a grocery store — this can be big news!

Students select a pumpkin to decorate from our playground pumpkin patch. Each class cuts open a pumpkin to see its seeds. Classes may also planting the seeds or examine the pumpkin with hand lenses.



GSLP is a mission of  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
[www.goserve.net](http://www.goserve.net)



## Stay Safe in GSLP's Parking Lot

1. Drive slowly and carefully when entering and exiting the parking lot. Young children can dart out unexpectedly from between cars.
2. Be sure to hold the hands of all children in your care when walking in the parking lot. It's easier for drivers to see adults than small kids.
3. *Never leave other kids in the car when coming into school!* Add other class parents to your authorized pick-up list for days when you need to stay in the car. If an extra hand is unavailable, call the office (301-963-1955) if you need someone to walk a child out to your vehicle.
4. Never let a child stand outside the car while you buckle or unbuckle another. Have kids wait inside the car while you handle safety seats.
5. Pay close attention to children when chatting in front of the school. Kids can quickly wander into traffic while a care provider is distracted.

***Fun Fact:** Pumpkins aren't all orange. Pumpkins can be white, green, red, and even blue! Get some paper crayons and see what crazy pumpkin colors you and your child can imagine.*

## Resource Roundup

### GSLP Lending Library

The preschool knows families are always looking for books to read aloud or parenting resources, so we maintain a lending library just inside the office door.

The library offers books for both parents and children. We have audiobooks and picture books for young children, as well as issue-specific resources for parents, such as books on dealing with food allergies and a bag of resources to help children deal with grieving the loss of loved ones.

Please return materials to the library when finished.

## Preschool Policy Pop Quiz

1. **What should my child bring to school?**  
A. Tote bag                      B. Backpack                      C. Suitcase

**Answer: A.** Every student receives a GSLP tote bag upon enrollment. Tote bags are used to carry home monthly calendars, school notices, and student work. Be sure to check it every day! Backpacks are difficult for students to pack independently, so please leave them at home. Write your child's name on the big white block to make the bag easy for teachers to identify. We encourage you to decorate the tote bag with your child to make it easy for them to recognize, too.

2. **What are acceptable playground behaviors?**  
A. Going down the slide                      B. Climbing up the slide  
C. Climbing on the roof                      D. Climbing ladders one at a time

**Answer: A and D.** Please enforce the playground rules as listed in the Parent Handbook before and after school. These rules are designed to keep children safe as they play, and children remember them better if they are enforced both during and outside of school hours. Also, a responsible adult *on the playground, not in a car*, must monitor your child at all times. Finally, if a GSLP class comes out for its scheduled playground time, please exit the playground immediately.

3. **Should my child wear a costume to school on Halloween?**  
A. The scarier, the better!                      B. Save it for Trunk or Treat

**Answer: B.** GSLP does not celebrate Halloween during school hours. Children arriving in costume will not be admitted to class.





## Music Makes Learning Fun!

Songs and finger plays (rhymes with hand movements) are a fun and interactive way for kids to learn many concepts and skills. They can cover learning domains from literacy and social studies to math and science.

The rhythmic music and speech used in songs and finger plays are great tools for increasing phonological awareness. This important pre-reading skill involves a child learning to discriminate and manipulate the sounds of language. A child who cannot hear the difference between hug and bug will find it difficult to learn to read those words.

Children take pleasure in learning about colors and counting, safety rules and healthy foods, and more from songs and finger plays at GSLP. Even adults can attest to how much easier it can be to remember tricky concepts when they're set to a catchy tune!

Singing with your child at home or in the car on the way to school is a great way to increase a child's phonological awareness and musical ability. Play high-quality albums in a variety of styles for your child to expand their musical horizons. We recommend the following artists:

**Traditional Songs:** Hap Palmer, Laurie Berkner Band, Nancy Cassidy, Wee Sing, Raffi

**Rock and Pop:** 123 Andrés, Red Grammer, Greg and Steve, They Might Be Giants, Yo Gabba Gabba!

**Mellow Folk Music:** Peter and Ellen Allard, Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

**Classical:** Try any classical album to challenge the mind.

And don't forget – sing along with your child! If you show your love and enthusiasm for music and learning, your child will follow suit.

## Conferences FAQ

### When are fall conferences?

Fall conferences run from October 23 to Nov. 1. Check your child's class calendar.

### What will we discuss?

Teachers will discuss your child's social-emotional development and your child's adjustment to school. Teachers will share observations and may have suggestions for at-home activities.

### When will teachers discuss academic progress?

Winter conferences will focus on progress across all curriculum domains. Teachers will distribute progress reports and provide photos and work samples to review at that time.

### Why meet so early in the year?

Conferences provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to exchange information about children's activities, personalities, and needs. Establishing an ongoing exchange of information can make a significant difference in the progress a child makes.

### How do I sign up for a time?

Sign-up sheets are posted on class bulletin boards.

### Are other times available?

Parents are expected to make time to attend a conference during the posted conference hours.

### What will my child be doing?

Assistant teachers will lead classes with a substitute teacher. Younger children may attend with you.

## Try It At Home!

### GSLP's Favorite Cooked Playdough Recipe

- 3 cups flour
- 1 1/2 cups salt
- 3 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 3 cups water, mixed with food coloring (gel colors work best) or liquid watercolor
- 1 tbsp. cream of tartar
- Scented extract (such as vanilla), optional
- Glitter, optional

Mix all ingredients except scent. Cook on medium-high heat, stirring, until dough starts to come together and pull away from pan. Don't overcook it or it will be crumbly! Add scent or glitter, if desired. Knead until uniform.

### Marble Painting

- Tempera paint, thinned with water as necessary
- Bowl and spoon
- Large marbles, golf balls, or other small balls
- Paper
- Shoebox or other open-top box with sides only a few inches tall

Add paint to a bowl. Drop in two or three marbles, using the spoon to coat them in paint. Place paper (cut to fit) in the shoebox. Spoon the marbles onto the paper. Roll the box back and forth to paint!

## Child Find Provides Early Intervention

Early intervention for children who have special learning needs is extremely important in providing children with the best chance for a positive future and successful school career. The county has long recognized this need and has created a free county screening program to help parents identify young children who can benefit from some extra help.

Child Find is a department of the Montgomery County Public Schools. Its purpose is to screen and identify children with developmental delays that may affect their performance when they enter kindergarten. Once identified, children receive free corrective services from the county. The county also provides a similar screening program called Infants and Toddlers for children under 34 months old.

Our staff cannot diagnose learning delays in children but will inform parents if their child appears to struggle in particular areas. If staff members feel that a screening would be beneficial, they will arrange a parent conference. There, they will provide parents with specific information regarding areas of concern.

If a screening is recommended, we strongly suggest that you call Child Find 24-hour intake line at 301-947-6080 as soon as possible to arrange an appointment. It can take up to two months to get a screening appointment.

Child Find usually only takes children with significant delays, and there are many children who would benefit from services but do not meet the requirements established by Child Find. Your pediatrician can recommend private occupational and speech therapists, and treatment is sometimes covered by insurance.

To learn more about Child Find, Infants and Toddlers, and other free services available, please visit the Special Education section of the Montgomery County Public Schools website ([www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/special-education/programs-services/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/special-education/programs-services/)), or call to talk with a specialist:

**Child Find (English): 240-740-2170**

**Email: [ChildFind@mcpsmd.org](mailto:ChildFind@mcpsmd.org)**

**Infants and Toddlers: 240-777-3997**

## The Judy Center Helps Kids in Need

GSLP is a partner of the Montgomery County Judy Center. Its Gaithersburg location, not far from us on West Deer Park Road, serves children age birth to five who will attend Summit Hall Elementary School and Washington Grove Elementary School. The Judy Center helps give low-income, at-risk children a boost toward school readiness through learning activities for children and parent education.

GSLP helps our local Judy Center by providing several full-tuition scholarships to the children it serves. We also periodically seek donations of clothing, shoes, books, toys, and more to distribute to the Judy Center community. **In October and November, our focus is on collecting coats and boots.**

Our friends at the Judy Center help us, too, by supporting our school as we work to meet accreditation and Maryland EXCELS standards.



# Fall and Friendship Stories Fill Our Book Nook

By Lori Forcey, GSLP Pre-Kindergarten Teacher

We're talking about friendship and fall at GSLP in October. Can't get to your local library? The GSLP lending library is always open! You can find it just inside the door of Mrs. Coxson's office.

*Peanut Butter and Cupcake* by Terry Border: This sweet story of friendship follows new kid Peanut Butter as he looks for a playmate with the promise, "I'll make you chuckle deep down in your belly, And we'll go together like Peanut Butter and...." Peanut Butter encounters several different snacks as he makes his way through town on his paper clip legs with his soccer ball. The text, with its foodie puns, will have both kids and adults chuckling deep down in their bellies.

*Rufus Goes To School* by Kim Griswell: Rufus the pig

wants to go to school, but Principal Lipid says, "No pigs allowed." What does Rufus need to do to change the principal's mind? Adorable illustrations and an ending that left our pre-K students wondering — was it all just a dream?

*The Runaway Pumpkin* by Kevin Lewis: "Round and 'round, across the ground, makin' a thumpin' bumpin' sound, came that thumpety bumpety thumpin' bumpin' round and roll-y RUNAWAY PUMPKIN!" This perennial October favorite follows the chaos that erupts as Buck and Billy Baxter and their little sister, Lil, chase an enormous runaway pumpkin down a hill on Halloween. The colorful text is filled with rhymes, new vocabulary words, and delicious ideas for just what to do with a pumpkin that big (once you catch it).

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*"Oh, when the leaves fall off the trees, we know that it must be autumn!"*

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## Assessment and Progress Reports

GSLP teachers constantly observe children while they are in the classroom, taking notes on the things children say and do throughout the day. These observations are then compared to learning expectations for each grade level to help teachers assess student performance. Teachers use the assessments to create lesson plans suited to the needs of their classes and individual students and to inform parents about student progress.

The system GSLP uses for threes and pre-K is called the Early Learning Assessment. This tool, created by the Maryland State Department of Education, aligns with curriculum standards and helps staff monitor students' progress toward kindergarten readiness.

The Early Learning Assessment breaks skills down, showing the steps children take along the way toward mastery.

In addition to using the ELA system to inform their instruction, GSLP's teachers will use the data they collect with this tool to provide parents with different progress reports in the winter and spring.

The winter progress report will show whether students are on track to meet this year's learning goals. Students may receive marks of **E**, for skills at a beginning level (i.e., *emerging proficiency*); **A**, for skills on track to reach proficiency at the end of the year (i.e., *approaching proficiency*); or **P**, for grade-level skills already mastered (i.e., *proficient*). **A typical student should have mostly A marks, possibly mixed with some E or P marks.**

GSLP also will provide parents with goals to work toward over the second half of the school year so that students' progress continues. The spring progress report should feature mostly *P* marks.





# October Songs and Finger Plays

## One Little Scarecrow

One little scarecrow hopping up and down,  
Hopping up and down, hopping up and down,  
One little scarecrow hopping up and down,  
For this is Harvest time!

**vs. 2:** Two little autumn leaves floating through the air

**vs. 3:** Three little pumpkins walking in a row

**vs. 4:** Four little gray squirrels chasing up the tree

**vs. 5:** Five little children jumping in the leaves

## Gray Squirrel

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail,  
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail,  
Wrinkle up your funny nose, crack a nut between your toes,  
Gray squirrel, gray squirrel, swish your bushy tail.

## The Floppy, Floppy Scarecrow

The floppy, floppy scarecrow  
Guards his field all day.  
He waves his floppy, floppy arms  
(*elbows, knees, etc.*)  
To scare the crows away.

## Ten Little Pumpkins

One little, two little, three little pumpkins,  
Four little, five little, six little pumpkins.  
Seven little, eight little, nine little pumpkins,  
Ten little pumpkins in the pumpkin patch.

## My Hands and Feet

My hands and feet can serve the Lord,  
(3x)  
All of me can serve the Lord.  
My mouth and ears can serve the Lord,  
(3x)  
All of me can serve the Lord.

## 1, 2, 3, Jesus Loves Me

1, 2, 3, Jesus loves me,  
1, 2, Jesus loves you.  
2, 3, 4, who could love you more?  
More than anybody's ever loved you before.  
5, 6, 7, on my way to heaven,  
8, 9, He's so divine,  
8, 9, 10, we're at the end,  
We don't have time to sing it again.  
(*or, "let's start over and sing it again."*)

## Oh, When the Leaves Fall Off the Trees

*Tune: When the Saints Go Marching In*  
Oh, when the leaves fall off the trees,  
Oh, when the leaves fall off the trees,  
We know that it must be autumn,  
When the leaves fall off the trees.  
**vs. 2:** Red, yellow, brown,  
Red, yellow, brown,  
Red, yellow, brown and orange, too,  
We know that it must be autumn,  
When we see those colors true.

## Apples and Bananas

I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas.  
I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas.  
**vs. 2:** I like to et, et, et epples and benenes  
I like to et, et, et epples and benenes  
(*Keep substituting different vowel sounds in this silly song!*)

## I'm a Nut

I'm a little acorn round,  
Sitting on the cold, cold ground  
Everybody stomps on me,  
That is why I'm cracked, you see,  
I'm a nut! \*\* I'm a nut! \*\*  
I'm a nut! \*\* I'm a nut! \*\*

## Johnny Appleseed Prayer

Oh, the Lord's been good to me,  
And so I thank the Lord,  
For giving me the things I need,  
The sun and the rain and the apple seeds,  
The Lord's been good to me,  
Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen!

## Did You Ever See a Pumpkin?

Did you ever see a pumpkin, a pumpkin, a pumpkin,  
Did you ever see a pumpkin with no face at all?  
With no eyes and no nose and no mouth and no teeth?  
Did you ever see a pumpkin with no face at all?  
**vs. 2:** So I made a jack-o'-lantern, jack-o'-lantern,  
jack-o'-lantern,  
So I made a jack-o'-lantern with a big smiling face,  
With big eyes and big nose and big mouth and big teeth,  
So I made a jack-o'-lantern with a big smiling face.

## The Floppy, Floppy Scarecrow

The floppy, floppy scarecrow  
(*scarecrow arms*)  
Guards his field all day. (*shade eyes, look around*)  
He waves his floppy, floppy arms (*flop arms around*)  
To scare the crows away. (*throw arms up*)

