



# Home & School Connection

News for Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool Families | [gslp-gaithersburg.org](http://gslp-gaithersburg.org) | Sept. 2013

## Dates to Remember



### Chapels:

Tues., Sept. 17 at 11:30 (Classes 2, 6C, & 6L) and 2:30 (Classes 3 and 8)

Wed., Sept. 18 at 9:45 (Classes 4, 7A, 7C, & 9)

### Lunch Plus Enrichment:

Begins Mon., Sept. 30

### Back to School Night:

Mon., Sept. 23, 6:30-7:30 (Pre-K classes)

Tues., Sept. 24, 6:30-7:30 (Early Pre-K 2 and 3 classes)

### Staff Meeting:

Wed., Sept. 18

Classes 7A & 7P end at 12

Classes 8 and LPE do not meet

**GSLP will follow a regular schedule on Fri., Sept. 27 (MCPS early release day)**



## Inside this Issue



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## Class of the Month



Ms. Fischer's class is learning about homes. Check out what they love about their homes on **p. 4**, and enjoy photos of from their class throughout this issue!

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



## New Sources for Preschool Info



We are so excited to welcome everyone to the new school year here at Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool! Our staff has been working tirelessly to create engaging classroom environments and fascinating learning experiences for your children, and it's a true pleasure to finally share them all with you.



The preschool has added a few new ways to communicate with families this year. First, we have refreshed our web site at [gslp-gaithersburg.org](http://gslp-gaithersburg.org). The home page now features

recent announcements and a list of coming events as well as quick links to pages current families most frequently access. The site also showcases photos of our facility and class projects.

GSLP has also branched into social media to keep you abreast of news, events, and important announcements (such as emergency closings) from our school. You can follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/GSLP\\_Gburg](https://twitter.com/GSLP_Gburg) or on our Facebook Page at [facebook.com/gslp.gaithersburg](https://facebook.com/gslp.gaithersburg).

Please note that we take children's safety very seriously at GSLP, and none of our web sites will feature photos of your children's faces.

As always, you can continue to contact the preschool staff at our school email address, [gslp91@hotmail.com](mailto:gslp91@hotmail.com), or by phone at 301-963-1955. Please provide the office with your email address if you wish to receive announcements and communications from teachers by email.



A cozy spot for stretching out makes it more enjoyable to browse through picture books. The PM Pre-K room, which is shared with the Five-Day Pre-K, features a large, comfy library area.

## Good to Know!

### Insider Information for GSLP Families

#### How to Communicate With Your Teachers

GSLP offers several ways for families and teachers to communicate. The easiest way to send a note to your child's teachers is to email them using the school email address, [gslp91@hotmail.com](mailto:gslp91@hotmail.com). Teachers will read and respond to your message as soon as practical.

If you prefer not to email, you can use the clear plastic message bins mounted outside each classroom. Paper, envelopes, and pens are available in the bins for you to write a note to a teacher. Leave messages right in the bin.



#### Have Fun and Stay Safe on the Playground

Kids love the GSLP playground! Families are welcome to use the playground before and after school as long as there are no classes needing it for outdoor time. (If a class does arrive for its playtime, please exit immediately. Kids love the playground but hate to wait!)

We ask that you enforce the GSLP playground rules while you are on the playground with your children. The rules are listed in the Parent Handbook. Consistency helps kids remember the rules during school and keeps everyone safe.

Please remember that preschool staff can't monitor your children outside of school time. Keep the playground open for families by supervising your children and respecting the rules.



#### Lending Library Offers Books and More

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

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

Please return the materials to the library when you are finished.



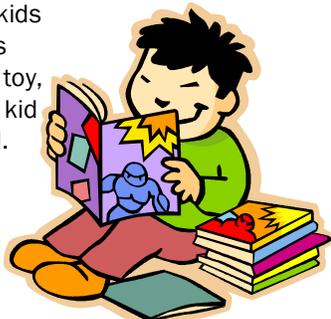
## Book Nook!

*Fill a Bucket: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Young Children*, by Carol McCloud and Katherine Martin, is a book many GSLP teachers read aloud to show children the importance of being kind to their classmates.

The book explains that everyone has an invisible bucket that is filled or emptied by how we act and by how others treat us. When our bucket is full, we feel happy, and when it's empty, we feel sad. We can fill our buckets and other people's buckets through kind actions and words.

Teachers often enhance the reading experience by incorporating a real bucket and some pompom "warm fuzzies" to fill it. This sort of simple, concrete explanation helps young children understand abstract concepts.

Once GSLP introduced this book, we soon saw that many kids "got it." For example, two kids were having fun picking up toys together. One grabbed the last toy, making the other sad. The first kid then gave the toy to other child. When his teacher praised him, he said, "I was filling his bucket." Just hearing that fills our buckets, too!



# ♪ Name That Tune! ♪

## Kids Love – and Learn From! – Songs and Fingerplays

Songs and fingerplays (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 – not to mention art and music!

The rhythmic music and speech used in songs and fingerplays 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 fingerplays 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. If you are looking for quality albums for children, we recommend the following artists:

For...	Try...
Traditional children's songs	Hap Palmer, The Laurie Berkner Band, "Wee Sing"
Children's rock and pop	Red Grammer, Greg and Steve, They Might Be Giants, "Yo Gabba Gabba!"
Children's folk and mellow music	Peter and Ellen Allard, Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer
Classical	Try any classical album. Classical provides great variety and challenges 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.

The children in afternoon pre-K were asked to draw a picture showing their first day of school for their journals. Kids drew pictures showing themselves at school, playtime in the sandbox, letters like they see all around the classroom, the colors they are learning about in math, and whatever else happened to be on their minds that day. They all enjoyed the experience of using new and different crayons to create pictures and designs on the page.



## Playgroups and Parent Networks

Your children will make many new friends this month. We encourage families to chat in the hall and arrange play dates outside of school.

Past parents have arranged morning "coffee times" during school hours to get acquainted and start building their own networks. Create a sign-up sheet and ask your child's teacher to post it on the class bulletin board.

Once you get to know other class parents, consider giving each other permission to pick up your children. That way, if you are running late and can't reach school by pick-up time, you'll avoid a late fee. It pays to have friends!

## Building Children's Independence

As parents, one of the most important lessons you'll impart now that your child is starting school is how to be independent.

Kids must learn to take care of their own belongings. When your child enters the classroom, let them carry their own coat and tote. Have your child remove and put on their own coat and shoes at home to build their confidence. (Please label coats and mittens!)

Dress kids in clothing that's easy to remove to help with bathroom independence. Choose easily washable clothes – eager artists often wear as much paint as they put on the easel!

Look for ways to give children responsibilities at home. Children also need to learn to play independently without parental guidance. Parents are often surprised at just what their children really can do by themselves!

## Chapel FAQ



Question of the Month:

# What do you love about home?

The children in Ms. Fischer's and Mrs. Girimonte's afternoon pre-K class are learning about homes and families during this first month of school. They are reading books about homes and what people do there, such as *Is It Time?* (about bedtime routines) and *A Clean House for Mole and Mouse* (about two friends tidying up). They are also playing house in the dramatic play center.

We asked them to tell us something they liked about their home, and here's a few of their responses:

"The basement and my room. 'Cause it's full of my toys. Our house is almost full like Toys 'R' Us!"

"My mommy."

"It's big. Bigger!"

"My mom gave me some Lightning McQueen cars."

"I get a bunny!"

"My mama!"

"Cat. I really like my cat!"

"I like its painting and coloring. Red with white, but I wanted pink before. But I like it its own way!"

"I like all of it!"

What do you love about your home?

### Make GSLP's Favorite Play Dough at Home!

3 cups flour  
 1 1/2 cups salt  
 3 tbsp. vegetable oil  
 3 cups water, mixed with food coloring (gel colors work best)  
 1 tbsp. cream of tartar  
 Scented extract (such as vanilla), 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 if desired. Knead until uniform.



### Who leads chapels at GSLP?

Our children's chapels are led by preschool staff or by pastors from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

### When are chapels held? How long are do they last?

Chapels are usually held twice a month in the church sanctuary upstairs. Some classes will hold chapel in their classrooms at the beginning of the year. Chapels last for 15 to 20 minutes.

### What happens during chapels?

Children hear a Bible story or join in a discussion about a Biblical concept. They repeat a simple prayer recited by the chapel leader and sing several Christian songs and fingerplays.

### How are chapel lessons chosen?

Chapel lessons relate to what children are learning about in the classroom. During September, we study families, and so this month's chapel focuses on the Prodigal Son. Later in the year, when the children study safety, they will hear the story of the Good Samaritan.

### What do children learn about?

Chapels provide the children with opportunities to learn more about Jesus and his love for each one of them. They also learn that the sanctuary is a special place that helps us to focus on God and that it should be treated with respect.

### How do children participate in chapel lessons?

The children are active chapel participants in a variety of ways: They help to act out stories, sing songs, and answer questions.

### Can families participate?

Families are always invited to join us for chapel time!

### Are there holiday chapels?

GSLP holds special Christmas and Easter Family Chapels. The children perform special songs they have learned. In addition, they participate in a nativity pageant during the Christmas Family Chapel. Families are strongly encouraged to attend.



Ms. Fischer's class used pastels to create bright drawings on black paper to use in making placemats for their daily snack. Kids drew fireworks, stars, rainbows, and more!

## Learn at Home with Educational Toys

Parents frequently ask preschool staff where they can purchase quality educational toys like those we use in our classrooms. While we certainly recommend looking at home first for educational materials (loose buttons work just as well as multicolored bears for sorting!), we are happy to share the sources we use to purchase school materials.

**Lakeshore Learning** ([lakeshorelearning.com](http://lakeshorelearning.com)): Lakeshore has an incredible variety of learning tools and toys. It's a favorite source for materials to teach literacy, math, and more. You can order online or visit their stores in Alexandria, Va., or Towson, Md.

**Nasco** ([enasco.com](http://enasco.com)): Another great source for educational materials, especially for science.

**Constructive Playthings** ([cptoy.com](http://cptoy.com)): This company has good building sets and many interesting toys for twos and threes.

**Discount School Supply** ([discountschoolsupply.com](http://discountschoolsupply.com)): We purchase most of our art materials from this source. Try the liquid watercolors!

**Scholastic** ([scholastic.com](http://scholastic.com)): This company has lots of learning tools and toys in addition to their huge selection of books. Watch your child's tote bag for Scholastic Book Clubs order forms, which offer discounted books for young kids.

## "Another Mud Painting?" What *Not* to Worry About

The first few weeks of school can be a nerve-wracking time. If it isn't tough enough sending your babies off on their own, perhaps for the first time, your children may show some perplexing behaviors. Reassure yourself with this list what *not* to worry about, adapted from "The Well-Centered Child" and provided by a preschool parent: **Don't worry if...**

...your child brings home sheet after sheet of paper completely covered with greenish-brown paint. It's one of the earliest stages of painting. To kids, it's an accomplishment to cover the entire sheet. They also like to paint one color over another, resulting in a murky brown. It may not look like much, but it takes a terrific amount of concentration to do.

...your child doesn't bring home any art work. There are so many interesting things to do at school and they're every bit as worthwhile. You just can't hang them on the refrigerator.

...claims she isn't going to be invited to someone's birthday party. Birthday parties are standard preschool bargaining chips as in, "If you don't give me a turn on the swing right now, I won't invite you to my birthday party." Rest assured that such threats have nothing to do with actual parties.

...is unusually obnoxious at home. Kids make a real effort to behave well at school the first few weeks. At home, where they feel safe, they let it all out. Their company manners will

wear off as soon as they feel comfortable at school — and they won't need to bring those pent-up feelings home to you.

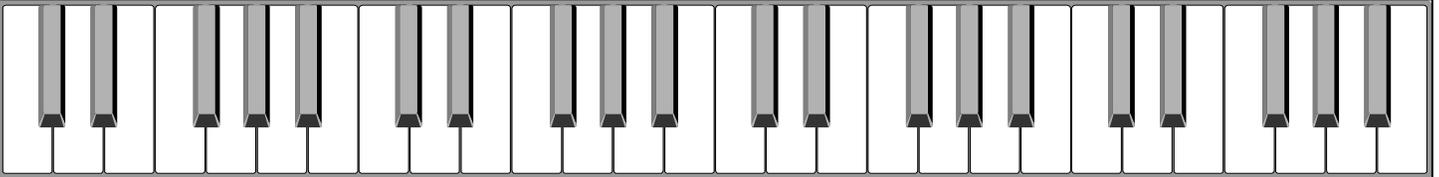
...won't tell you about what he did at school. Some kids like to keep home and school separate. Others find it confusing to summarize a day's events. Try asking about specifics.

...can't name any of the other kids in her class. There's so much that's new and so many kids. Teachers will help the children learn each other's names soon.

...comes home in "school" pants because his got wet. Lots of young children are reluctant to use unfamiliar bathrooms and decide to wait until they get home to go. With time, the school's facilities will make the list of Approved Bathrooms.

...acts wild and races around the minute you come to pick her up. Some kids wonder who's in charge when both parent and teacher are present. Acting up is one way to find out.

...your child says she isn't ever going back to school. Around the second month, reality sets in. It dawns on your child that you actually expect her to go to school every week. Even kids who love school sometimes raise objections. Remain matter-of-fact and confident as you send her off. Remind yourself that you aren't the only parent whose child has come down with the "please-let-me-stay-home-today blues."



## September Songs and Fingerplays for Parents

### A Ram Sam Sam

A ram sam sam, a ram sam sam  
 Guli guli guli guli guli ram sam sam  
 A raff-i, a raff-i,  
 Guli guli guli guli guli ram sam sam

### The More We Get Together

*Sung to the tune: "Did You Ever See A Lassie?"*

The more we get together, together, together,  
 The more we get together, we'll be God's family.  
 For your friends are my friends  
 And my friends are your friends,  
 The more we get together, we'll be God's family.

vs. 2: The more we play together

vs. 3: The more we pray together

### This is the Way

This is the way we dress for school,  
 Dress for school, dress for school,  
 This is the way we dress for school  
 So early in the morning.

vs. 2: This is the way we comb our hair

vs. 3: This is the way we brush our teeth

vs. 4: This is way we eat our breakfast

vs. 5: This is the way we put on our seatbelt

### Let's Clap

Let's clap, let's clap together,  
 Let's clap, let's clap together,  
 Let's clap, let's clap together,  
 Now everybody praise the Lord.

vs. 2: Let's stamp

*Create additional verses as desired.*

### God Made

God made my mommy and God has made me.  
 God has made each part of my family.

vs. 2: God made my daddy

vs. 3: God made my sister

vs. 4: God made my brother

vs. 5: God made my grandma

vs. 6: God made my grandpa

*Create additional verses by adding other relatives.*

### Rejoice in the Lord!

Rejoice in the Lord always,  
 And again, I say, rejoice! *(repeat)*  
 Rejoice, rejoice,  
 And again, I say, rejoice! *(repeat)*  
*Try singing this song as a round!*

### We Are A Family

*Chorus:* We are a family, God's family,  
 We are a family, we are one,  
 We are a family, God's family,  
 We are a family, we are one.

Hey, mother, hey, father,

Part of the family,

Hey, teacher, hey, pastor,

You're part, too!

Hey, friend, and hey, neighbor,

Part of the family,

Hey, everybody means me and you!

### Just the Right Size

I'm not as big as a giant,  
 I'm not as big as a tree,  
 I'm not as big as an elephant,  
 I'm just the right size for me.

I take big steps like a giant,

I stand up tall like a tree,

I shake my head like an elephant,

I'm just the right size for me.

God's love is bigger than giants,

God's love is bigger than trees,

God's love is bigger than elephants,

It's just the right size for me!

### If You're Happy and You Know It

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands, *(repeat)*

If you're happy and you know it,

Then your face will surely show it,

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

vs. 2: If you're happy and you know it, stamp your feet

vs. 3: If you're happy and you know it, shout Amen!

vs. 4: If you're happy and you know it, do all three - clap, clap, stamp, stamp, Amen!

