

CHAMBLEE METHODIST KINDERGARTEN

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November 2023

Dear Parents,

As November approaches, we begin a very special season of thankfulness. We will incorporate into our daily plans and activities the feeling of gratitude for our families, homes, churches, friends, food, and school. The children will learn about why we celebrate Thanksgiving and may experience sharing in a couple of ways: some classes may have special Thanksgiving snacks which they will help prepare, and everyone will attend a special Chapel when they may bring food to share with the needy (more about that on the next page). In addition, you will soon receive information about your individual conference with your child's teacher so that you may learn more about how your child spends his/her time while at school. On behalf of our staff, we pray that you will have an enjoyable and meaningful Thanksgiving season with your families and friends. We are thankful for you and your children and for God's many blessings among our CMK family.

With Gratitude, Mellie

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, November 1 – 9:15, Sanctuary, Chapel (bring canned goods)

Tuesday, November 7 – No School (Election Day)

November 6, 9– Speech and Language screening (permission form needed)

Sunday, November 12 – Preschool at Church, 10:00am service, come say Hi to Mrs. O'Keefe

Thursday, November 16 – 9:15, Sanctuary, Chapel (bring canned goods)

November 20 - 24 – School Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov. 27 and 29 –Occupational Therapy screening (permission form needed)

Wednesday, November 29 – 9:15, Sanctuary, Chapel (bring a toy, game or puzzle to donate)

Saturday, December 2 – CFUMC Breakfast with Santa; Fellowship Hall, reservations required

Sunday, December 3 – CFUMC Live Nativity; 6:30 pm outside near the activity center

Thursday, December 7– 9:15, Sanctuary, Chapel, Chapel (bring a toy, game or puzzle to donate)

Thursday, December 7 – Noon closing for staff luncheon (no lunch bunch, Kindergarten out at NOON)

Wednesday, December 13 – last day of school before Christmas vacation (noon closing including Kindergarten, no lunch bunch or enrichment classes)

Thursday, December 14 – Staff meeting for CMK staff

Wednesday, January 3 – School opens

NOVEMBER and DECEMBER CHAPEL SERVICES: A TIME TO REMEMBER OTHERS

November

For many years, CMK has partnered with Chamblee First UMC's food drive that provides families in our community with a Thanksgiving Food Basket including fruits, vegetables, and a wide variety of canned and dried food items. These families are identified with the assistance of our local school counselors and social workers. Below are suggested items that can be sent in to help with the food drive. You can drop off food during morning carpool or bring food to one of our chapel services on November 3rd or 16th.

items for collection:

- 16 oz bags of dried beans (red beans, black beans, lentils, etc.)
- 16oz bags of rice
- 24 oz cans or plastic jars of tomato sauce, marinara, canned tomatoes
- 1lb box/bag dried pasta or noodles
- 6 or 8 packs of fruit cups (peaches, pears, mandarin oranges, etc)
- 12 oz cans of meats (tuna, salmon, chicken, etc.)
- 15 oz. cans vegetables (corn, green beans, carrots, sweet potatoes, etc.)
- cereal (oatmeal packets, boxed cold, individual box pack)
- small pop top cans pasta meals (spaghetti-o's or ravioli)
- 28 oz plastic bottle peanut butter or 30 oz plastic bottle of jelly
- 16 oz. boxes of mac and cheese or 8 ct individual box of microwavable cups
- box of cracker packs or granola bars
- Hygiene items such as toothpaste, shampoo, body soap, deodorant, etc

December

Our December Chapels will be a time when we partner with Cross Cultural Ministries of Chamblee to provide toys and games to children in the afterschool program (Kindergarten – grade 5.) During our two December chapels we will be collecting new, unwrapped toys and games to be donated. CMK has partnered with this agency for many years and we know that our donated items are going to families in need. More details about this project will be in the December newsletter.

Upcoming School year 2024-2025 Information Sessions and School Tours

Please help us spread the word about our wonderful school and some great opportunities coming up to visit our school and learn more about our programs and teachers. See below for details about these opportunities:

1. Thursday, November 9 - Open House and school tours during the school day
2. December date TBD - Open House and school tours during the school day
3. Sunday, January 21- Afternoon open house and tour (no students present this day)

NEWS ABOUT MUSIC FROM MRS. WEAVER

I really love this stretch of our musical year. I've gotten to know your kids, recognize their smiles and favorite songs. We have been doing songs about my favorite fruit, Apples. We've done Counting songs, Apple Picking rhymes, and the old classic "I Like to Eat Apples and Bananas" which is a great way to sing out our vowel sounds. We also sang Farm songs to tie into many of the 2s and 3s classes' farm units. We celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by doing some counting in Spanish, learning words like *la manzana*, *amigo* and *gracias*. We've done movement activities to songs from the Disney movie *Encanto* and had a music class in the garden where we smelled gardenia blooms and listened to Cuban jazz classic *Dos Gardenias*. We have practiced our song *Shukuru* as well as *Amigos de Cristo*. As we move into the fall we will hopefully have a few more outdoor music classes as we sing about leaves changing and falling. Halloween seasonal activities have been in full swing with pumpkin shakers, skeleton dances and of course The Itsy-Bitsy Spider.

Thank you for continuing to engage your children in music at home! Their faces light up when they hear a familiar song. Here are some lyrics to Songs we sing at school:

Good Morning Lord

Good morning Lord, this is your day,
I am your child, show me the way (x2)
A A Amen, A A Amen (x2)

All Night, All Day

All night, all day, angels watching over me
my Lord
All night, all day, angels watching over me

Shukuru*

*A "Thank You" Song in Swahili and Spanish
Shukuru, Shukuru Yesu (x4)
Gracias, Gracias Jesus (4)

FEEDBACK FROM THE PARENT SURVEY 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

Thank you to those of you who responded to the parent survey at the end of last school year which gives parents an opportunity to rate CMK in several areas, including quality of care, instruction, classroom activities, communication, playground, and enrichment opportunities. Highlighted below are our strengths and areas where we are planning to improve. Also, below are answers to some of the questions that came up on the survey. If you would like further conversation about any of your own specific remarks or suggestions, please feel free to contact Mellie.

Strengths

Many of the survey comments included encouraging words of praise. Parents described the staff as "warm, joyful, loving, and nurturing" and noted how the teachers are respectful and kind to the children, pay attention to the children needs; know the names of children "not just in their own classroom" and appreciate each child for who they are! Many parents commented on the small class sizes, the play-based curriculum and the experience of the staff to deliver age appropriate activities. Many parents like the sense of community at CMK, the extra programs like chapel, music, and movement, and how excited their child is to come to school. Many parents mentioned that their children are more confident and independent while learning a lot of self-help skills. We are pleased that 100% of the responses indicated that the children enjoyed coming to school, felt the activities were age appropriate and parents feel welcome when they visit. The overall quality of the programming and curriculum received a 98% approval rating. We especially appreciate knowing that 100% of those who replied would recommend CMK to friends and neighbors. We are so grateful for these positive and encouraging comments. Your support of our program is highly valued and very much appreciated; please know that we do not take it for granted.

Questions and Concerns

These concerns are the ones mentioned several times. If your concern is not included in the list below, please feel free to ask about your own remarks.

Can the school have longer hours?

Since our school is not licensed for daycare we are limited in what we can do and how long children can be in our care. Therefore the teachers work hard to make sure our school day is very structured and most children are so engaged and focused during the school morning that we find they do better with a 3 hour day. Having a "lunch bunch" hour option has benefitted those children who are ready to stay longer than the 3 hour day. Providing the lunch bunch bundle (a discounted lunch bunch package to PreK students) has allowed our PreK students the option of staying until 1:00 everyday which was a request from the parent survey.

Can the playgrounds be improved?

The survey showed that 76% of the responders think the playgrounds are excellent. We know that the playground was an area in which our families wanted to see improvement. We are working to enhance the outdoor play spaces and as you may have noticed are committed to using fundraising profits to enhance these spaces. The church is in support of this goal so we hope to have plans in place soon.

Can you improve communication from school to home?

With many different classrooms meeting on different days of the week it is difficult to standardize communication, however we have partnered with *Our School Hangout* software and APP which all teachers should be using to communicate with families. As teachers and administrators become more familiar and comfortable with this platform we are hopeful it will improvement communication. Always know that you can reach out to your child's teacher for a conversation or conference. Please be mindful to NOT try to communicate with your child's teacher until after the school day when she is no longer supervising children. Questions sent to teachers should be responded to within 24 hours.

May we pay tuition electronically? This question has been asked many times over the years. Our School Hangout does allow for electronic payment which we are so happy to be able to provide to families now.

Thank you all again for your responses to the 2022-2023 school year end of year survey. Your opinions and feedback do make a difference! Please feel free to share your thoughts with us any time during the school year.