

# PARENTS' POST

The Early Learning Program of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian

November 2018

## From the Director

Before we can even get our Halloween costumes gathered, glued, and finalized, it seems the stores are all already displaying tinsel and lights for Christmas! Does this bring you joyful anticipation, or does it cause you stress and anxiety? Perhaps it numbs you a bit and dulls the season as it draws out the anticipation far too long? Or what about sadness? Does the season cause you to feel sad at times as it brings back memories of loved ones that are absent from your table this year?

No matter how you answer the questions one thing is guaranteed for every parent. The holiday season is busy, full of emotion, and will surely offer us all a variety of opportunities to be distracted.

So what is The purpose of Thanksgiving? If you're not intentional about teaching this to your children, our media and advertisement filled world will surely confuse your children by teaching that it is about having a perfectly baked pie and the best turkey recipe. Or even worse, we may be teaching our children that it is about finding the best sales to fulfill your Christmas list.

At ELP we strive to focus on Jesus and teach our children about GIVING to others and about having a THANKFUL heart. Our hope is that our children will not only learn about Jesus, but will also model to everyone who Jesus really is and why we celebrate all that He gives us!

Have a blessed Thanksgiving season!

Cindy

## Mark Your Calendar

### Mom's Days:

Nov. 5 (Cooking)

Nov. 12: (Wreaths)

Dec. 3: Advent by Rita

### Pre K Vision & Hearing Screening

November 28

### Big Picnic

November 13, 14, 15

**Holiday, No School: 11/19-23**

### Motor Movements Days:

11/6, 11/7, 11/9

11/27, 11/28, 11/30

### December 5

Night Tree 6:00 PM

## Being A Christian Is Like Being A Pumpkin

**God picks you from the patch and brings you in (John 15:16)**

**Then washes all the dirt off you (2 Cor 5:17)**

**He opens you up and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc. (Rom 6:6)**

**Then He carves you a new smiley face (Psalms 71:23)**

**And He puts His light inside you to shine for all the world (Matthew 5:16)**

## Book Fair— THANK YOU!

Thank you to all parents who joined us in our Book Fair this year. Your time as a volunteer and the donated books were greatly appreciated! The teachers and children have all loved reading all those new classroom books!

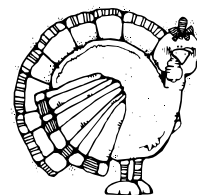


## Ordering Photos

Proof sheets and online ordering info are coming soon. You should receive this proof sheet in backpacks prior to Thanksgiving break and photos will be back in time for Christmas!

And can we just say....you are going to LOVE these!!!! Your children are adorable!

Give thanks to  
the Lord  
for He is Good  
Psalm 136:1



**No School November 19-23  
Enjoy your Family!**

## GIVE Your Child The Gift Of GIVING!

Kid's Meals is a non-profit that delivers free meals to the homes of Houston's hungriest preschoolers. Currently, they deliver about 5,000 lunches per day in the Houston area. We at ELP, would love to provide nonperishable items, to help serve Montgomery County's hungriest preschoolers. Ms. Melinda will be incorporating this loving act of service into The Big Picnic chapel lesson.

### Items needed:

Juice Boxes

Snack sized Raisins/Craisins

Snack sized packaged crackers

Granola/Fruit Bars

Fruit cups/applesauce

Donations can be brought in anytime through The Big Picnic week



### Betsy's Open House Sugar Cookies Recipe

#### Cream together:

1 C Sugar

1 C butter, softened

Add to that and mix:

3 oz cream cheese, softened

1 egg yolk

1/2 t. almond extract

1/2 t. vanilla extract

Whisk Together then add to mix:

2 3/4 C Flour

1/2 t. salt

Chill 1 hour or overnight

Roll out on a floured surface into 3/8" thickness.

Cut and bake at 375 degrees for 7-10 minutes

Don't let them brown

Makes about 3-4 dozen large sugar cookies

#### Icing:

Sift 4 cups powdered sugar

Add 1/2 t almond extract to icing, divide sugar into the number of bowls you need. Add food coloring to sugar; slowly add water until you have a spreadable consistency.



## The Big Picnic

Our Annual Big Picnic is scheduled for **Tues, Wed, Thurs. Nov. 13, 14, 16 on your child's chapel day at 11 AM or 12:30 for our PM classes.** The Big Picnic is ELP's untraditional Thanksgiving Feast. Our children here at ELP are so young that celebrating the first Thanksgiving with Pilgrims and Indians does not make much sense to them. We want to emphasize the concepts of sharing and thankfulness during this season, so we have chosen a Bible story to illustrate God's abundant love for all of his people. We will be telling the story of how a little boy shared his lunch of fish and bread with Jesus and fed 5000 people. The children will enjoy a picnic snack of fish sticks and bread.

**Please have your children bring an adult shirt, and a towel or scarf for his/her head to wear to the picnic.** We will dress like they did 2000 years ago! :)

Parents are invited to attend and help serve. Please feel free to dress the part yourself.





## BLESS FRIDAY® CHANGING THE WAY WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Celebrate Bless Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, with a day of service! This year we have a few different ways for you to serve:

- ♦ Annual Fall Clean-up of WCPC Campus
- ♦ Decorate Bags for Kids' Meals & Meals on Wheels (MOW)
- ♦ Assemble Bags for Kids' Meal & MOW
- ♦ Deliver Breakfast Bags to MOW Clients\*\*

**\*\*If you and/or your family would like to deliver Breakfast Bags to MOW clients, you need to sign up by Friday, Nov. 16th so there is time to prep for deliveries.**

Campus Clean-up will start at 8 am. Please meet in the narthex of Fellowship Hall. Making Bags for Kids' Meals & MOW starts at 9 am in Fellowship Hall. If you only plan to deliver Breakfast Bags to MOW Clients, please come to Fellowship Hall by 10 am.

Sign-up in the courtyard on Sundays beginning November 4th. If you have questions, about the campus clean-up please contact Bill Bray at [bill.bray@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bill.bray@sbcglobal.net) or 832-702-6227. If you have questions about making and/or delivering bags, please contact Michele Stelter at [mstelter@wcpc-tx.org](mailto:mstelter@wcpc-tx.org).

## A QUOTE TO REMEMBER

"Speak to Children as if they are the wisest, kindest, most beautiful and magical humans on Earth.....for what they BELIEVE is what they will BECOME."

-a quote shared by an ELP teacher during AM devotional time .

## Can We Pray For You?

Did you know that ELP teachers pray everyday at 8:50 AM for your children? We are honored and consider it the best way to start our day! We have blank prayer cards in the office. Please grab one and return it with a written prayer anytime! Feel free to be anonymous or very specific. We would love to lift up your prayers! Or—please simply share a kind word of gratitude to the teachers, or even a special uplifting note/quote.

## A Note from All Ears:

All Ears! is participating in The Woodlands Charity Challenge for The Woodlands Marathon. The students and families will participate in the 2K Family Fun Run Walk on February 23. We would love to have ELP families on our team! If you are interested in participating in the event or helping raise funds for All Ears!, please contact Glenda Malana at [gmalana.15@gmail.com](mailto:gmalana.15@gmail.com). Our fundraising page is <https://my.reason2race.com/cause/all earscenter/TheWoodlandsMarathon2019>. The top fundraisers receive additional donations from the Charity Challenge. If you are already participating in the marathon on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, please consider choosing to run in support of All Ears! Thank you!



## Our Special Teachers make Special Events "The Best Day Ever!"

We have 3 amazing teachers who work together all year as a committee to create the monthly special events: Kristi Zerangue, Breanne Ward, and Lindsey Roberts. These teachers work hours shopping, prepping, and cleaning up each month. We thank you!

Last month we had an amazing, fun filled Fall Festival! We jogged around our rainy days some, but the memories we shared together on those days will last a lifetime!

Please take a moment to give these three special teachers an extra hug of gratitude!

## Reducing Holiday Stress

As the traditional holiday season approaches, family stress begins to build. Parties, shopping, family commitments, activities, presentations, and anticipation all take their toll on adults. What happens to children at this time of year? Often adults can use words to express their over stimulation, while children resort to the most basic level: their body language. Whining, crying, hitting, sibling rivalry, lack of cooperation can peak as the holidays come closer. Parents can take action before the season swings into gear. With family plans, thoughtful consideration in the forefront, holiday stress can be reduced and family time can become more relaxed and productive. Some ideas worth trying include:

1. Delay talking about the approaching holiday until a few days before it will occur. The concept of time is quite abstract and beyond the cognitive abilities of most preschoolers. Waiting is very hard for most children and almost impossible for some. Make it easy on yourself and your children by choosing to save anticipation for the very last moment!
2. Let your child know clearly that gifts are NOT rewards for good behavior. Gifts are given because someone loves you and cares about you. Children can become very worried that their behavior will never be "good enough". Your LOVE is your greatest gift to your child.
3. Be sensitive to your personal reactions to the busy holiday season. Children sense their parent's every mood. Your personal stress can be communicated to your child without saying anything!
4. Your child may ask specific and often value-laden questions about holiday time. Take time to answer each question thoughtfully. "Is Santa real?" "What is Jesus' birthday?"
5. Provide opportunities for your child to relax. A pile of soft pillows, a quilt over a card table, a sleeping bag may give your child a safe refuge from too much stimulation. Books and quiet music on a tape player are additional modes of relaxation.
6. Paper and drawing material can offer a means of expressing a child's feelings. Asking your child to draw how he/she is feeling can be therapeutic.
7. Aggressive and over stimulated children can find relief in a warm bath tub. Bubbles, soap crayons, and containers for pouring assist in stress reduction. Adults may find they need these outlets too. Having children bathe before dinner can turn conflict into fun!
8. An outdoor easel on the deck, in the yard, hooked to the fence, or located on the driveway can give an overly-stressed child a creative release. Mix tempera paint with liquid dish detergent for easier clean-up.
9. Dough or clay offers a way to air frustrations. A simple recipe for homemade play dough follows. Cookie cutters and round blocks are all that is needed for uninterrupted play. In our climate, try this outdoors!
10. Limit sugary foods. Many children become more active or aggressive when high sugar levels are present in their bodies. This can be a challenge to parents at holiday time. Sugar is best offered in small amounts and on infrequent occasions. Alternatives include fresh fruit. Texas is famous for wonderful citrus products.
11. Set aside time for family. Even in the busy holiday season, take one night each week for an at-home family time. Concentrate on each other. Sing, play special music, read meaningful stories, play family games, hug, kiss and tell each other, "I love you". Time and love always work wonders!



## A Note From Your ELP Board

As part of the ELP Board, there is a named subcommittee member who serves as the Parent Liaison. This subcommittee member is here for you to help represent you, the parent, and serve as a communicator. Should you have any questions or concerns that you would like to be brought to the Board's attention, please contact board member: Rebecca Krug at [elpboard@gmail.com](mailto:elpboard@gmail.com).



We hope you will join us as we make this very intentional effort to ENJOY the holiday season and keep Jesus in the center of it ALL!

You are invited for a coffee and cookies on Monday, Dec. 3 at 9:15. This special Mom's event is hosted by our former Director, Rita Van Sickle. She will be presenting family Advent activities and traditions you can start with your family. Bring a friend! Childcare is provided, so please RSVP in the office.



It's that time of year when we need jackets in the morning, but shed them in the afternoon. Please put your child's name on his/her jacket so we can get them back to you. Lost and found collections have started, stop by the office to make a claim.

## The Night Tree

CLEAR your family's busy calendar on the evening of December 5 at 6 PM because we have a FUN FAMILY Christmas tradition happening here in ELP's backyard!

We will have a bedtime story in our PJ's around our lit up Christmas trees. This is picnic style outside and in the dark. So fun! We serve a bedtime snack of cookies and hot coco and we listen to the story *The Night Tree* by: Eve Bunting.

In our classes, the children will be making our forest night time creatures a snack too! Our edible ornaments will be hung this evening on our Christmas trees and we might even sing some traditional Christmas carols too! Please plan to come and bring the whole family!



## Need a Tax Break?

**As apart of WCPC, ELP is a non profit 501c3 organization . Please consider us if you're looking to make end of year donations!**

**ELP could benefit greatly from additional funds to provide more staffing and development resources for our children with special needs. Funds would also be helpful for all of our teacher training and educational programs.**

