

# FUMPS

## FIRST UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL

# January Newsletter

2023



Happy New Year to you & your family!!!

Welcome Back! I hope everyone had a joyful Christmas & a fun New Year's.

A New Year.... A brand new year stretches out before each one of us all clean and shining bright. What will come? What choices will we make? New babies? New homes? New opportunities? New adventures? Yes, it's all out there waiting for us, but for the most part we can't see it until it is right before us. Some choices we will make swiftly. Some choices we will agonize over. Yes, we will make choices in this New Year.... I hope they will be good ones for you & your family.

Speaking of choices...some of you will be deciding whether or not this will be the year to send your child to Kindergarten. Please read the back of this Newsletter for some insightful information.

So off we go into this New Year... On behalf of myself & our wonderful staff, I would like to wish all of you a happy, healthy, & prosperous New Year!

May God watch over you & keep you in the coming year,

Karen Wilson

### Tax Credits

Childcare, including preschool tuition, if it falls within the hours that you work, can be claimed as a tax credit. Our Federal Tax ID number is 95-215-9109.



### Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will begin on Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup>.

If you are interested in scheduling one please see/call Mrs.

Kern in the office

(951-683-4500) to set up a day and time.

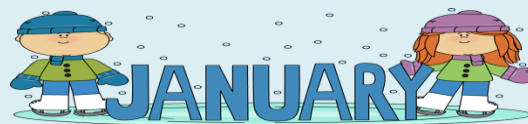


### A call for oranges...



This month we are celebrating our local heritage by eating and crafting with citrus. If you have a tree and have citrus to share, please bring a bag to the preschool this week. We will be having oranges for snack, making juice, printing with citrus and sampling all different varieties of our local gem!

A special THANK YOU to all the parents who generously donated supplies and party goodies last month!



- 1 Happy New Year!
- 3 Preschool Resumes
- 10 Parent /Teacher Conferences begin
- 16 Preschool Closed for MLK Holiday



### Happy January Birthdays to...

#### Friendly Fish

Camila Bui	1/17
William Cairns	1/17
Ava Ramos	1/19
Solomon Sandu	1/19
Leela Hinojosa	1/20
Elinor Phillips	1/20

#### Little Rascals

Weston Gearhart	1/3
Cassidy Hopper	1/7
Shaun Davis	1/26

#### Miss Snowball

1/14

### Hats Off to our Cute Kitten Teachers. ...

**Melissa Erdman** was born in Orange County about a mile from Knott's Berry Farm. Melissa's family moved to Riverside when she was in first grade. She has one older sister who lives in Northern California and a niece and nephew whom she likes to visit. Melissa began her teaching career while still a student at RCC. She had stopped by their Work Experience Office to fill out job applications and while she was there, First Methodist's Director, Mrs. Natta Lea Wiffin called looking for an assistant teacher. Miss Erdman applied and was hired. Melissa has her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Studies. She believes that childhood should be a journey and not a race. She believes the preschool experience is very important and she works to make it the best experience it can be. Melissa collects Precious Moments figurines, loves cats, traveling, gardening, the beach, cooking, and her Cute Kitten Class. Her favorite pastime, and one that she is expert at, is counted cross-stitch.

**Assistant Teacher Claudia Rodriguez Arce** was born in Anaheim, CA and raised in Buena Park. She moved to Riverside when she was ten years old. She attended Loma Visita Middle School and then Norte Vista High School where she graduated in 2018. After high school she began taking classes at RCC and is still taking courses where she will eventually get her Associates Degree in Education and become a successful teacher. She truly enjoys working with children. Claudia is one of three siblings- Daniel is her older brother and Evelyn is her younger sister. In her free time Claudia enjoys going to the movies with her boyfriend and exploring Universal Studios with her friends.

## Important Information for our 4 Years Olds . . .

About this time every year many parents are faced with making a decision about next year. Is their child ready for kindergarten just because chronologically they are old enough? Does knowing their ABC's and numbers guarantee them success as they begin their formal academic education? What about maturity? Maturation evolves at a different pace in each child's body, brain and emotions according to their own personal development schedule and the experiences they have had. Educators will agree that most school failure is due to immaturity.

What does Kindergarten Readiness mean to Kindergarten Teachers? Data from a survey of kindergarten teachers in California's Santa Clara County compiled by Lisa Guernsey on November 2, 2009 adds to the mounting evidence that kindergarten readiness is not simple to define.

Contrary to popular conceptions of what it means to be a 5-year-old ready for kindergarten, most kindergarten teachers are not wishing for rooms full of children who can already identify the letters of the alphabet. What they want instead are children who have learned how to regulate their impulses, follow through on a difficult task and have the self-control to listen to the teacher's directions for a few minutes.

While academics seem to be what's being pushed, most teachers do not report that children need to come in with a strong base in academic skills if they want to have a successful school year. Instead they gave top billing to self-care and motor skills followed by self-regulation.

Teachers said that it was easiest to help students develop their academic skills and hardest to make an impact in developing their self-regulation skills. In fact, they said they had to spend the most time in the classroom focusing on self-regulation. This reinforces the importance of designing interactions in the preschool years that are developmentally appropriate. Worksheets that force 4-year-olds to trace the outline of a letter are a far cry from the types of experiences young children really need in the preschool years.

How can preschool and kindergarten experiences help children learn to self-regulate? Research on the importance of building self-regulation skills in young children has been accumulating over the past few years, and some of it is starting to zoom in on the significance of playtime, particularly pretend play scenarios that are child-led but feature teacher input. Classrooms that incorporate pretend play have been shown in scientific research to improve children's executive function and self-regulation skills.

The assessments in the Santa Clara Survey were not about standardized tests for 4-year-olds, but instead, information collected from parents, teachers and observations of children in classroom settings. The results were not used to determine where children should be placed or what schools they should attend, nor were they used to evaluate teachers or for other high-stakes purposes. The observations were done by trained teachers who looked for signs of children's progress on multiple levels. Some examples of what they looked for:

- Can the child operate zippers or work with crayons?
- Can the child cut using scissors?
- Can the child follow one- or two-step directions?
- Can the child engage in symbolic play with others (like playing house or fire station)?
- Can the child count 10 objects correctly?

We at FUMPS are very aware of how important it is for a child to be ready socially, emotionally and developmentally for kindergarten. Chronological age should not be a major determining factor. The most recent studies in early childhood education strongly suggest, and are statistically proven, that children should be at least five years old by June of the year they are to begin kindergarten. There are still a few schools beginning in July, allowing some children to enter kindergarten at age four. If these children fall on the young side of the developmental readiness scale and are placed in classrooms with large student to teacher ratios, increased academic expectations and testing, not to mention having to compete with five & even six year olds at the same grade level, their chances of experiencing success in school may be greatly diminished.

We encourage parent/teacher conferences throughout the year. It is during these conferences that your child's readiness skills should be discussed. If there is some question in your mind whether or not your child should begin kindergarten or transitional kindergarten in September, these conferences can be very helpful. More often than not, if parents choose to wait a year before sending their child to kindergarten, that child "blossoms" when given a little more time to mature and their kindergarten experience is most often a successful one.

*We encourage parents to listen, read, ask questions, and get other opinions whenever it involves your child. Action should not be taken based on one opinion or evaluation, but rather, all should be taken into consideration when making your final decision.*

Welcome the New Year, let the bells ring!  
Lift up your voices; everyone sing!

The New Year's beginning; start it off right.  
Bid it good fortune and welcome tonight.

The old year is passing, but there's none to mourn.  
We are rejoicing; the New Year is born!

-Nona Keen Duffy



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**\*\*\* Please note that 2023-2024 Registration packets for returning & new students will be available in the office starting Wednesday January 25th. \*\*\***