



# Children's Ministries News



St. Thomas's Church, Newark, DE  
December 2016/January 2017

*Thanks for joining St. Thomas's Children's Ministries for another great year!!*

In this newsletter you will find useful information about our regular programming as well as highlights of special events that are coming up. Please read carefully and find out how your family can be involved!



## Regular Weekly Children's Worship

With the exception of the last Sunday of each month, we meet weekly for Children's Worship (Sunday School) from 9:30 to 11:10 in the Undercroft. We use *Godly Play* for children 3 years to 3rd grade and *Living the Good News* for children in grades 4 to 6. In each of the classrooms, we follow a worship schedule that mimics the liturgy of the Episcopal Church: greeting and opening prayer, liturgy of the word, response in the form of art and prayer, then feast and fellowship. The older children will also participate in activities which will give them a deeper understanding of our Episcopal faith and traditions.

Please try to bring your child as close to start time as possible. But if being a bit late is necessary, don't hesitate to send him or her downstairs. Some worship/fellowship time is better than none. We will be preparing for the annual children's Christmas pageant during Sunday School beginning on November 26. During the "getting ready" time of Advent, please try to bring your children as regularly as possible. Here is a typical schedule of our worship time.

9:30-9:45	Building the Circle/Getting Ready	10-15 minutes
9:45-10:05	The Lesson and Wondering	20 minutes
10:05-10:30	Individual Response Time	25 minutes
10:30-10:35	Putting Things Away/Cleanup	5 minutes
10:35-10:45	Bible Reading	10 minutes
10:45-10:55	Great Thanksgiving/Prayers	10 minutes
10:55-11:05	Feast	10 minutes
11:05-11:10	Blessing	5 minutes

\*Times are approximate, will vary with age of children, size of class, time of year, and special circumstances.



## Family Church Sunday

December 25, January 1 and January 29 will be Family Church Sundays. The children and youth are again invited and encouraged to serve as ushers, readers and communion assistants during the 10:30 service. In addition, on January 29, Father Paul will be delivering a grab bag sermon. Please encourage and support your children's participation in the service in whatever way he or she is interested. Let Belinda Young-Payne know who is interested. Readings can be provided early and training is available for any service role. Children are invited to bring anything that is not alive to put in the grab bag.



## Breakfast with Santa

On December 3, from 9 am to 10:30 am, we will be having Breakfast with Santa as part of the St. Thomas's Craft Bazaar. This is an event for all ages. Come have a delicious pancake breakfast at the North Pole Cafe, enjoy good company and meet Santa. The cost of the event is \$4.00 per person or \$20.00 per family. \*\*Pictures with Santa will be available for an additional fee. In addition, if you feel so inclined, please consider volunteering to help with cooking (adults), set up or serving (must be at least 10 years old). For questions or to RSVP (not necessary but appreciated), call or e-mail Belinda Young-Payne.



## Christmas Pageant

Our Christmas pageant will be on Dec. 18 at 5:30 this year. *This year we will presenting a modern tale which will help us all to recall the true story of Christmas. There will be speaking and non-speaking parts for anyone who wants to participate.* In order to get ready, the children will be practicing every Sunday during Sunday School during the month of December. In addition, there will be three extra practices: Sun. Dec. 11 at 12:30pm; Fri. Dec. 16 at 5:45 pm (pizza provided); and Sun. Dec. 18 at 3:00 pm (everyone should bring a snack). I know that families are very busy this time of year, but please try to bring the children for practice as much as possible. The more they practice, the more comfortable they will feel, and the smoother and more beautiful the service will be.

*We also need a few parents to help with the following jobs: cueing kids for their entrances/exits, helping kids get into costumes, practicing hymns, making and collecting props, setting up and cleaning up 12/17 and 12/18 snacks. Please talk to Belinda Young-Payne or another Children's Worship leader if you are willing/able to help. Thanks in advance.*



## Trick or Treat for UNICEF Project

The children's yearly Trick or Treat for UNICEF project was a great success! The children set a goal of \$400. To date, they have collected \$524.85!



## Epiphany Potluck and Service

This annual event will take place the evening of January 6. There will be a potluck dinner, a service and burning of the Christmas greens. The Worship Ministry is seeking someone to coordinate the potluck dinner portion of the evening. If you are interested in coordinating or helping, contact Sally Price.



## HANDS Ways that Parents Can Support Our Ministry

As we have done in the past, this year we are asking families to donate their time, talent and/or resources to support our Children's Worship/Sunday School program. There are several ways to do this:

*The first, of course, is to visit a time or two in your child's classroom. There are two benefits of this. First, you will be able to experience firsthand what we do in Godly Play or with Living the Good News. Second, your child will feel that you value what he or she is doing in their classroom.*

*The second way is to be in the library from 9:15 to 9:30 with the children who are waiting for Sunday school so that the teachers will have an uninterrupted time to prepare for the day and to pray together.*

*The third way is to donate supplies (e.g., goldfish crackers, popcorn, animal crackers, cheese crackers, pretzels, light colored juices or water) or money for supplies for our feast. These things can be sent in to your child's classroom, given to any children's worship leader or placed in the marked bin in the Great Hall. If each family made one donation a year to our Feast supplies, then we would have enough for the entire program year.*

*The fourth way is to be the coordinator of our annual Christmas pageant. We are seeking someone to coordinate the various activities/committees necessary: rehearsals, costumes, props, snacks for the children. Of course, the children's worship leaders would be available and willing to support whoever was coordinating.*