

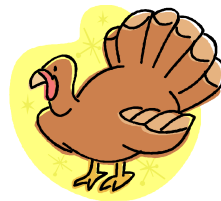
SIMI COVENANT PRESCHOOL

Preschool Newsletter

November is here! Thanksgiving is just around the corner! We would like to take this opportunity to tell you how grateful we are for our conference time with you. Thank-you for taking the time to meet with us and for sharing your goals for your children. We have observed some wonderful things happening in our school. What a sense of community we are building here at Simi Covenant Preschool!

Thursday and Friday, November 20 and 21, we'll have our Thanksgiving Chapel and Finger Food Feast.

This is a feast we all share in providing and eating! Please watch for the sign-up sheet on our board to bring something for our feast. We will need "main dish" items, fruits and/or vegetables, dessert, cups, napkins, and beverages. The only requirements on food items is that it be something that can be eaten with the fingers (no silverware!) and that it contain **no nuts or nut products of any kind and that it has not been processed in a plant that processes nuts** (*please check labels carefully*). Examples of appropriate foods are: veggie sticks, cut up fruit, cheese and crackers, small sandwiches, "appetizer" type foods, as well as cultural favorites such as Swedish meatballs, mini pizza slices, quesadillas, etc. It doesn't have to be fancy! Parents, please come to our room at 11:30 to pick up your child and go to the Worship Center. There we'll have our Thanksgiving Chapel (a time of singing praise and thanks), and then you will return to your child's room with your child for our feast. You're welcome to sample the goodies on the other classrooms' tables, too!

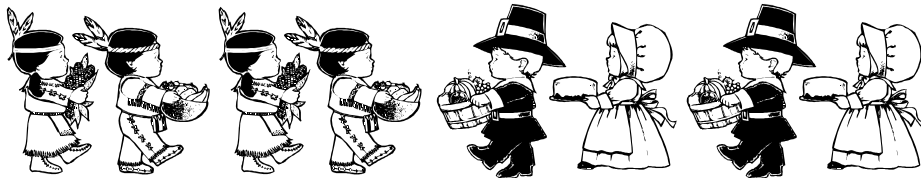


Events for November/December 2014

- All month – bring in non-perishables for **food pantry donation**.
- Mon., Nov. 10, **Operation Christmas Child Boxes or items** due.
- Tues., Nov. 11—**Operation Christmas Box** building and packing
- Tues., Nov. 11—**Veterans Day**, No school.
- Thurs. & Fri., Nov. 20 & 21 – **Thanksgiving Chapel** and Finger-food Feast. Please join us at 11:30 a.m.
- Mon.—Fri., Nov. 24—28 – **Thanksgiving holiday**—no school.
- In Dec. please bring in your wrapped children's book for our **gift exchange**.
- Sun., Dec. 14—**A Night of Christmas Joy** concerts at 3:30 & 6pm.
- Thurs. & Fri., Dec. 18 & 19—**Christmas Chapel** 11:30 a.m.
- Mon, Dec. 22– Mon., Jan. 5 – **Christmas Vacation**
- Tues. & Wed., Jan. 6 & 7 – **School resumes**.



Gift Exchange As in years past, the children will participate in a book gift exchange during our Christmas Celebrations on December 20 & 21. We would like each child to bring a **wrapped book** (similar in size, shape and price to a Golden Book, about \$3.00) to school as soon as possible. Please **do not put any name on the gift**. The gifts will decorate our rooms; then just before vacation, each child may select a gift to take home from a friend at school. (Many wonderful children's books are at WalMart, Target and the Dollar Stores.)



Winter is approaching! We encourage you to send a jacket to school with your child, as it is often cool and breezy at school. Please help us by **labeling your child's jacket(s)!!** You may also want to check their extra clothing bag to switch any shorts for long pants. Thank you.



As cold and flu season approaches, we will try to keep our students and staff as healthy as possible. To help us do this, please keep your child home if he/she exhibits **any** symptoms. Since fevers tend to be down in the morning and go up by evening,

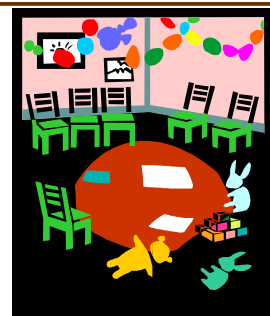


ning, please be sure your child has had **no fever or other symptoms for 24 hours** (without medication) before he/she returns to school. Thank you.

Food Pantry - We continue to strive to create an environment that fosters empathy, kindness, and appreciation for one another as we work with your young children. One of the ways we can do this is by encouraging our children to contribute to our collection of non-perishable items for the underprivileged in our community. A wagon will be on the patio all month. You might open your pantry or go to the store and let your child choose an item or items to contribute.



e-Scrip Information. If you already **shop online** why not earn shopping rewards? If you register your debit or credit card and shop online starting at our website (www.simicovenantpreschool.com), click on the Online Mall logo and **earn up to 16% for our school!** Your friends and family can support our school from anywhere at any time. Anyone can register their card on-line at www.escrip.com (our number is 137715209 or search Simi Covenant Preschool) or in the preschool office with Beth.



It's not too late to sign up for e-Scrip for you, your family, and your friends. This is the easiest way to fundraise, both for us and for you. It costs nothing extra, and it is very easy to sign up. We will even do it for you! Just provide Beth with your card numbers, address, and phone number, and she will do the rest! We can even sign up family or friends from other states. Check the website (www.escrip.com) or with Beth in the office for a list of participating stores across the country. *Don't forget about our "share the wealth" program. Ask Beth about using half of your e-Scrip credits toward tuition.*

Thank you to everybody who has signed up already. Last year we received **\$4,576**. We are currently saving up for improvements to our classrooms.

Operation Christmas Child—Once again we are participating in this wonderful program sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. This organization partners with churches worldwide to show God's love to children all over the world by presenting them with shoe boxes filled with gifts and the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is a great project to do as a family; it's one way to share with those less fortunate. If you would like to do something but are not able to do a whole box, the church will be collecting items and packing them in boxes on Tuesday, November 11. Watch your child's cubby for more details. **Completed boxes and items to put in boxes need to be turned in by November 10. The church invites you to come and help pack boxes on Tuesday, November 11, from 6:30—8pm.**



We would like to share a summary of 2 articles we recently read. These articles discuss important skills we try to foster at Simi Covenant Preschool that are the **building blocks for further academics success and life-long skills**. In one article, “Non-cognitive Skills: Bad Name, Really Important,” a University of Chicago literature review funded by Lumina and Raikes foundations said, “Students must develop sets of behaviors, skills, attitudes, and strategies that are crucial to academic performance in their classes.” Paul Tough, author of *How Children Succeed*, said, “We don’t teach the most important skills,” a list that includes “persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit and self-confidence.” He says these non-cognitive skills should be called “meta-cognitive learning skills.” He says teachers must become proficient in pro-social management and in high-leverage instructional strategies in order to proactively develop those non-cognitive attributes (motivation, goal direction, self efficacy) that students need to truly become college and career ready. Julie Wetherston, from an advocacy campaign called For Our Babies, said, “Research is showing just how incredibly important social and emotional relationships are in the early years.” The time parents spend with their babies is not just a luxury time, but an important time for brain growth. Researchers say that attachment (infant and parent bonding) is very important. A positive school culture in the early years can help develop these “meta-cognitive learning skills.” It is important that schools offer a strong support system that includes positive discipline, as well as social and emotional learning. Programs should have positive behavior management and an advisory structure that includes academic monitoring, self management skills curriculum, and cognitive and social-emotional skill building. Another recommendation from Tough’s book suggests the importance of allowing children to deal with adversity. Learning to overcome adversity appears to be a key to success later in life. Tough says, “The most valuable thing that parents can do to help their children develop non-cognitive skills—which is to say, to develop their character—may be to do nothing. To back off a bit. To let our children face some adversity on their own, to fall down and not be helped back up. When you talk today to teachers and administrators at high-achieving high schools, this is their greatest concern: that their students are so overly protected from adversity, in their homes and at school, that they never develop the crucial ability to overcome real setbacks and in the process to develop strength of character.”

In discussions with several Kindergarten teachers, they have said something very similar. They can teach a child to count to 100 or read their ABC’s, but what they need is for the child to be able to sit in a circle (self-control) or be able to get their shovel back on their own (persistence, self-control, conscientiousness, grit and self-confidence). These are all the basic skills that our teachers work on each day, building on the tool-belt of skills that children can add to as they get older and use whenever needed. If you have questions about this article or the skills mentioned here, please talk with your child’s teacher.

Copies of these articles can be obtained online at

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/on_innovation/2012/10/non-cognitive_skills_bad_name_really_important.html and <http://gettingsmart.com/cms/blog/2012/09/how-children-succeed-attachment-advisory-adversity/>.



FYI—Every day we post a “What We Did This Week” notice in our rooms. Take a look so you’ll know what’s going on! This might also give you a starting point in asking your child about his/her day.

A THANKSGIVING OFFERING

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.

Psalm 136:1

We sense this in our heart! God has been so good to us. He has blessed our lives, and he has blessed our school.

Martha, Sue, and Kristy
