

## Preschool Ministry Annual Report 2020

Director: Karen Pedigo  
Council Liaison: Cheryl Zacharias  
Teachers: Karen Pedigo and Kristine Lavelle  
Business Assistant: Lisa McManis

The 2019 - 2020 school year began with 22 students enrolled in the four-year-old program and 11 students enrolled in the three-year-old program. The students adjusted to the program and met many of the academic and social/ emotional goals that were set for them by the preschool staff. On March 13th, 2020, Governor Pritzker announced the closing of all schools in the state of Illinois for two weeks, due to an outbreak of COVID-19. With the continued spread of the virus, emergency remote learning began in April and continued throughout the remainder of the school year. Remote learning consisted of staff sending lesson plans and learning materials to families via email, to enrich the child's academics while learning at home. The students enjoyed participating in music class and having the opportunity to communicate with their friends via zoom meetings. On June 2nd, 2020, the students in the four-year-old program graduated from Shepherd of the Hill Preschool in a Drive - In ceremony.

Due to the spread of COVID-19 and a modified in person learning schedule, the year began with 12 students in the four-year-old program and 5 students in the three-year-old program. Through advertising, a virtual open house and a vaccine, the preschool board and staff are expecting an increase in enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year.

The staff has experienced changes for the 2020-2021 school year. Mrs. Karen Pedigo remains the Director with Mrs. Lisa McManis as the Business Assistant. Mrs. Karen Pedigo is teaching Math/ Science to students in both programs. Our Fine Motor teacher for both programs is Mrs. Kristine Lavelle. Mrs. Pedigo and Mrs. Lavelle will share the responsibilities of teaching Language Arts, Bible Stories and planning circle time.

The students in the four-year-old program began the year attending in person learning in three groups of four students, who attended one day per week for one hour at a reduced tuition rate. The students in the three-year-old program attended on Friday morning for an hour at a reduced rate. All students had their temperature checked upon arrival and wore a mask during class time. As of January 12th, the students in the four-year-old program will be attending one day per week for three hours and the students in the three-year-old program will be attending for one and one half hours on Thursdays and Fridays.

The students participate in circle time and Language Arts in a group setting, seated six feet apart. Then, the students will participate in Math/ Science and Fine Motor in groups of 2 or 3. Due to COVID-19 -19 restrictions, students are not participating in music or large motor at this time. To enhance learning, enrichment bags, which include all the materials for remote learning, were distributed weekly. Zoom meetings were scheduled for students in both programs each week to participate in stories, music and learning games.

Our curriculum meets the academic standards from DCFS, as well as the needs of our students and parents as they search for a well-balanced preschool program. The staff uses the curriculum as a guide and adds materials found in resource books, educational websites, workshops and conferences to enhance the program. The materials connect the academic requirements of the four-year-old program to the three-year-old program. Common themes are presented across age groups, but different activities are used to meet academic standards from DCFS. Even though Shepherd of the Hill Preschool is licensed exempt, we still follow DCFS guidelines and standards. Students can still communicate with each other but continue to stay six feet apart. They will experience activities selected from math and science awareness, pre-reading skills, art and fine motor skills and manners. The children are introduced to a new concept and are given time to practice and review the concept independently. Due to the small class sizes, students are receiving 15 to 20 minutes of

one-on-one time per learning area as the other children are using self- correcting activities which help students review learned concepts.

Parent involvement is encouraged in our program, even during a pandemic. In October, the students invited a guest to attend the Fall Festival on their regularly scheduled school day. The children searched for and decorated pumpkins, played a few games with their special guest, enjoyed a special snack and rode their bike or scooter around the circle drive. All the scheduled activities took place outside! At Thanksgiving, the children made bracelets and decorated mini pumpkins for their feast. After singing songs, listening to stories and playing games about pilgrims and Native Americans, the children enjoyed a delicious feast. All foods were prepackaged, and students were seated six feet apart. In December, the children and their families would gather via a zoom meeting to snuggle in their beds or on the couch, while the teachers read bedtime stories. Later in the month, the children rolled pinecones in peanut butter and birdseed to hand on one of the Christmas trees displayed in front of the church. We are looking forward to sledding down the hill, a special Valentine's day activity, riding our trikes for St. Jude, a picnic and Graduation. We will celebrate our children and what they have accomplished, just in a different way.

Please continue to pray for our staff and students. Thank you for all your support and the opportunity to touch the lives of God's children.

Respectfully,

Mrs. Karen Pedigo