



The Ark Children's Center

Recipient *Best of Olney* 2009, 2010, 2011 Award

3425 Emory Church Road, Olney, MD 20832 301-774-5369

December 2011 Newsletter

From the Director's Office . . .

Christmas cheer is in the air! The children have begun talking about Advent and are excited about the birth of baby Jesus. Our building is filled with Advent wreaths, holiday baking, Christmas songs, and many sparkled projects adorn the halls. We all think . . . It's the most wonderful time of the year!

We have so much to celebrate as we end 2011 . . . a great school community, fabulous staff, and an encouraging Board who supports our program needs. Our successful outreach collections have helped to provide shoes for the disadvantaged and much appreciated gifts for children all around the world. God is amazing and we give praise to Jesus and His love for each of us. Thank you for opening your hands and hearts to model generosity toward others. Through your example, you bless your children with the gift of compassion and in turn bless others in our community and around the world.

In the month ahead we have many special moments planned. Our T-TH classes, Lambs and Chicks groups will participate in Christmas Craft Days. Please check classroom doors and newsletters for details and come share a special activity time with your child. Our MWF & M-F classes will gather in the Sanctuary on December 21st for a short pageant performance which will be followed by a reception in Brigham Hall. We have heard that a visitor from the North Pole might make a special appearance so be sure to bring your cameras!

Wishing you Christ's hope, joy, peace and love in 2012!



Susan
&
Staff

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Week of December 5
Winter Clubs Begin

Monday, December 19
Chicks Room 108
Christmas Craft Corner with parents—see classroom newsletter for time and details.

Tuesday, December 20
Lambs Room 108
T/TH Classes, Rooms 103 and 106
Christmas Craft Corner with parents—see classroom newsletter for time and details.

Wednesday, December 21
MWF and M-F Classes
Christmas Pageant and Reception
Parents, Please Join Us!
9:30 a.m. — 11:15 a.m.
(children do not return to classes after reception)
See next page.

Thursday, December 22
Classes DO meet.

Friday, December 23—Monday, January 2
Christmas Holiday Break

Tuesday, December 27
Domino's Fund Raiser

Tuesday, January 3
Classes Resume

*See pages 2 and 3 of the
OEUMC Advent Devotional (attached)
for many Advent/Christmas
fellowship/worship opportunities
here at Oakdale.*

**And this shall be a sign unto you;
you shall find the babe wrapped in
swaddling clothes, lying in a
manger. Luke 2:12**





Christmas Pageant—(MWF and M-F Classes Only)

Wednesday, December 21~9:30 until 11:15 a.m.

Children arrive to classrooms at regular 9 a.m. start time. Parents (guests) may go to Sanctuary where program will begin at 9:30. Holiday attire for children, please. Reception in Brigham Hall to follow with special visitor from the North Pole! **No classes following reception—early dismissal.** Please watch classroom doors for reception food donation sign-up.

Clubs Update

We still have room in both Karate and Soccer.



And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Luke 2:10



The Annual Santa Secret Shop

Saturday, December 10

9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Brigham Hall

Only Children Can Shop

(while parents enjoy refreshments in the Parlor).

No gift over \$10 ~ gifts for all the family!

Recommended for children

4 to 12 years.

Proceeds benefit United Methodist Women Scholarship Fund, Folds of Honor Children's Fund, and two Uganda Orphanages.

Christmas Crafts

Chicks —Monday, December 19

Lams & T-TH classes —Tuesday, December 20



See individual classroom newsletters and notices for times and details. It is our hope each child will have parents or grandparents participating in these activities.

No siblings, please.

The ultimate expression of generosity is not in giving of what you have, but in giving of who you are.

—Johnnetta B. Cole



Many thanks to all of the **food providers** and **classroom helpers** who made our Thanksgiving Feasts a delicious memory.

We are grateful for the leadership and support of the **OEUMC church staff** — whether praying, cleaning, fixing, or shepherding ideas and programming — their behind-the-scenes dedication is a blessing.

Operation Christmas Child was a huge success as a result of **The Ark families (current and past—alumni still participate!)** who creatively filled 78 boxes and supported this effort financially. A special thank you to our music teacher, **Peggy Manion**, for delivering the boxes. Please continue to pray for the children who will receive our gifts.

Please help us to begin our school day on time. Our teachers have worked very hard to establish classroom routines which foster social connections and sharing time. Late arrivals are disruptive and can be upsetting to the children. Please make every effort to be here when the doors open at 9 a.m.

Toys for Kids Collection

Look for the large red box in our hallway, near the "morning exit" doors. Help OEUMC collect unwrapped, new toys. Collection continues until December 20th.