



**DECEMBER**

**“It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas when its mighty Founder was a child himself.” Charles Dickens**

Christmas preparations are underway. Music fills the hallways and small hands excitedly prepare projects. It's a wonderful time of year! Since we can't invite you into the classroom this year, we plan to send a peek inside the classroom home to you – your child's teachers will send you a video presentation of the children. For the sake of privacy, we ask that you, as always, keep this recording for your own personal use only – do not post it anywhere! Thank you!

**Thank you** to everyone who participated in Operation Christmas Child. Your gifts will surely put smiles on many children's faces this Christmas! Thank you also for your generosity to a local food pantry – your donations are especially welcomed, needed, and appreciated at Thanksgiving.

**Registration for the 2020-2021 school year** begins Dec 1<sup>st</sup> for church members and Dec 6<sup>th</sup> for all currently enrolled families. Please be sure to get your application in promptly as most classes fill quickly! Applications are accepted on a first come basis. Please put your application and \$50 check in a large manila envelope (do not fold – we want them to stack in order) and place in the mailbox by the front door. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the registration process. And thank you for spreading the word about our school! So many new families come because they hear your testimony about the kind and loving care as well as excellent education your child is receiving. I appreciate your kind words. Thank you!

**Weekday Playgroup**, a church run program for 1-2 year old children, is also registering for next year. If you have a younger sibling, please call Angela Pagano at 908.790.1919 or email her at [weekdayplaygroup@thecornernj.com](mailto:weekdayplaygroup@thecornernj.com) for more information.

We are closed for the **Christmas Holiday** from December 17<sup>th</sup>-January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

We are waiting for quite a few **flu shot records**. Please remember that if your child is not yet 5 years old, in order to return to school in January, we must have flu shot documentation or a note from you claiming religious exemption or a note from your doctor claiming medical exemption. Please see me if you have any questions.

You are warmly invited to attend **Christmas Eve Services** with us. Three services will be held December 24<sup>th</sup> starting with a special service for children. Here is the schedule:

- 4:00pm – Children’s Service
- 7:00pm – Candlelight Service
- 9:00pm – Candlelight Service

In closing, I hope you enjoy Shauna’s wise words.

“During Christmastime we find ourselves tempted to abandon Christlikeness in favor of overdoing. The season that centers around the silent, holy night, the simple baby, and the star quickly becomes the season in which we over-everything — overspend, overeat, overindulge, overcommit.

I fall into it every year, and one year, I was falling even a little bit deeper than usual. The stress and chaos were on the rise, and something had to change, or I’d miss the loveliness of the season entirely. I stopped myself in the middle of it all—the trips, the wrapping, the cookies, the expectations — and I asked for help. I prayed for new eyes to see, for a way outside myself and my tense, swirling chaos. As I slowed down and listened, three words laid themselves on my worn-out spirit like a blanket: **present over perfect**.

I can show up with my perfectly wrapped gift and my perfectly baked cookies... and my perfectly resentful and frazzled self, ready to snap at the first person who looks at me wrong. Or I can rest my body and nourish my spirit, knowing that taking a grounded, present self to each holiday gathering is more important than the gifts I bring.

God designed us to need rest and nourishment. When we receive them, we are better able to be wholly present. What do you need to cut out this season, in order to be fully present?”

Excerpted from *Savor: Living Abundantly Where You Are, As You Are* by Shauna Niequist, copyright Zondervan.

**Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas,**

Maury