

The Children's House News

December 2020

Dear Parents and Grandparents, Since March, we have been hearing the sentence, "These are unprecedented times." Since the COVID pandemic began, there has been very little that has been predictable or consistent, except that people are hurting. There is no doubt that each one of us knows someone who has suffered either in health, finances, or in some other way due to the pandemic. While there is some progress towards a vaccine and controlling the spread, we cannot speak of an ending to this situation with great confidence. However, we can speak of how to try to get through it, by looking to the gifts of this season: Hope, Peace, Joy, Faith, and Love.

Important Upcoming Dates

December 17 Last day of school before Winter Break
December 18 - January 4, 2021 Winter Break
January 5, 2021 Students Return to School
January 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, No School
February 11 & 12 Preschool and Kindergarten Conferences on Zoom
Grades 1-4 Conferences upon request
February 15 Presidents' Day, No School

At The Children's House, we have celebrated the Advent season for many years. Many of our families may have even incorporated Advent celebrations into their family traditions. Some may celebrate weekly, as we do at the school, and others may use daily calendars, counting down the days to the birth of our Savior. Whichever way you acknowledge this time, it seems that we all need the reminder that this pandemic does not need to steal our opportunity to remember the gift that was brought to us over 2000 years ago. Talk about "unprecedented times!" Our Father in Heaven sent His Son to earth as a baby, to reconcile us to His family, to provide a way for us to have relationship with Him!

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ..."
2 Corinthians 5:18-19

This pandemic has caused us to make so many adjustments to our lives, changing routines and lifestyles. We've had to give up some traditions and find new ways to acknowledge the values that are important to us. The Advent celebration is a value and tradition we cannot give up, for it ushers in the remembrance of the gifts that were given through the birth of Baby Jesus. This year, we need those gifts more than ever.

As we have done the past few years, we are including here a basic script for the lighting of the Advent candles. If you choose to celebrate Advent on the four Sundays preceding Christmas, the first Sunday to light a candle is Sunday, November 29th (since that night has passed, you may start any day the first week). If you are counting down the days until Christmas on a daily calendar, you can also follow the script each week. We hope this tradition, whether old or new, helps your family feel the safety and security of God's love this season.

The Advent wreath is traditionally a circle of evergreens, representing the never-ending love of Jesus and the gift of eternal life. There are variations in the set-up of the candles. At TCH, we use three purple for the 1st, 2nd, and 4th candles, and pink for the 3rd candle, the Candle of Joy. A large white candle is placed in the middle. As you begin this tradition at home, you may opt for different colors. The colors of the candles should not deter you from participating in this special tradition.

The symbols of Advent - the light of the candles and the never-ending circle of the wreath - remind us of the change Jesus brought into the world. Before Him, there was darkness; His birth brought us Light. Without Him, there was despair, chaos, sadness, doubt, and hate. With Him, there is Hope, Peace, Joy, Faith, and Love. These gifts encourage us, giving us the heart to keep moving forward. The gift of His birth, His presence in our world, is the most amazing reason to celebrate this season!



Advent 2020

Sunday, November 29, 2020 The Prophet's Candle, The Candle of Hope

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. It is the season each year for preparing our hearts and homes for the coming of Christmas, to celebrate Jesus' birth. Light the candle.

As we light our first Advent candle, the Prophets' candle, this candle reminds us of the prophets, those special people who spoke God's word to the Israelites during the hundreds of years before Jesus was born. The prophets told the people what God was going to do, and they instructed the people on how to get ready. The first candle reminds us to have Hope. *(Reading: Isaiah 9:2,6)*

Sunday, December 13, 2020 The Shepherds' Candle, The Candle of Joy

Relight the Prophet candle, Bethlehem candle, and the third candle (pink).

The third candle, the Shepherds' candle, reminds us of what happened in a far-off field. First the angels appeared to the shepherds proclaiming news of great joy. The shepherds were afraid, but they listened to the angels and went to see the newborn king. Then they saw Jesus and believed. The most important reason why we remember the shepherds and give them a special candle is because of what they did next: they went around and told everyone who they met and what had happened to them. The third candle reminds us to share the news with Joy! *(Reading: Luke 2: 8-18)*

Thursday, December 24, 2020 The Christ Candle, The Candle of Love

The first four candles are relit. Then, the Tall Christ Candle in the center is lit.

The Christ Candle out shines all the others for it reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the world. Where His light shines, there is no darkness. It reminds us that Jesus came to show us his love, and then, that we might show that love to others. *(Reading: John 1: 4, 5, 14)*

Sunday, December 6, 2020 The Bethlehem Candle, The Candle of Peace

Relight the Prophet candle and light the second candle (purple).

As we light our second candle, the Bethlehem candle, let us remember that Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem and found a quiet, humble stable where they could spend the night, and where Our Savior would be born. In spite of the long journey, they were able to find rest. The second candle reminds us of Peace. *(Reading: Luke 2:1-7)*

Sunday, December 20, 2020 The Wise Men's Candle, The Candle of Faith

Relight all three candles and light the fourth candle (purple).

The fourth candle is the Wise Men's candle. Three scholarly men far away were studying the stars and saw one star that they knew was different. They didn't know where the star would lead them, but they followed it in faith. It led them to the newborn King. The Wise Men remind us to walk and live in Faith. *(Reading: Matthew 2: 1-2)*



Important: No Christmas Cards or Unapproved Snacks

As usual, students are not to bring in goodies or goody bags to pass out to their friends for Christmas. Each class will have its own celebration, with specified treats designated by the teachers. Additionally, this year, students will not be allowed to bring Christmas cards to pass out to their friends. Again, we want to avoid the transfer of items through many hands.

Christmas "White Gift" Donations through Dec. 15

Our Thanksgiving donations were a blessing to many people! This Christmas, we will continue with the tradition of giving "white gifts" to the outreach program at Our Lady of Good Council, but without the white wrapping paper. Teachers will collect unwrapped donations in their classrooms until Tuesday, December 15th. The church has expressed a preference for the following items:

- Shampoo & Conditioner - either separate or as a combo
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste
- Shaving Cream
- Toilet Paper
- Small Hand Sanitizer
- Bar soap



Other Reminders...

Travel Plans

Please notify the office of any travel plans. You may call (808) 455-4131 or email attendance@childrenshousehawaii.org

Tuition Questions

Any questions regarding tuition can be sent to business@childrenshousehawaii.org.

Gifts to Staff

While your thoughtfulness and generosity are appreciated, it is **not** necessary that gifts be given to our staff members during the holidays. In continuing to follow safe practices we are discouraging bringing in gifts to staff and we ask that if you feel the need to do so, it be limited to cards or you may express gratitude by email. Please no food items or large monetary gifts. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Preschool & Kindergarten Parents...

Please have your child bring a bag with handles, labeled with their name on it. Your child will use this bag to take home his/her extra clothes, sleeping mat, and special items which they have made especially for the holiday season.

Office Holiday Hours

Our school office will have limited hours during the Winter Break from December 18th through January 4th, 2021. Please call or email if you need to contact us or need to come in. Normal office hours and school will resume on Tuesday, January 5, 2021.

Thank you for your generous

donation of canned goods! All items collected were donated to Our Lady of Good Counsel Church here in Pearl City. They will in turn the items to families in need. It is through your kind act of giving that we are reminded how amazing God's love truly is and how powerful His love is when we share it with others.