

Dear Families,

Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed Christmas with your families, friends, and chosen family. May your hearts feel full of joy and your spirits feel replenished.

In the first newsletter of the New Year, I offer ideas for family rituals, suggestions for viewing an astronomical event, news from the nursery, and a calm space for bottle feeding and breastfeeding families.

### **Family Rituals**

In this New Year, starting with a new sun after the winter solstice, and a new calendar year, it is a time to renew connections with our families. Rituals, no matter how simple, bring us together. Later on, these tiny rituals will become the way your children recall their childhoods. In my childhood, some of my favorite nightly rituals involved my dad who worked overnights as a police officer. After dinner, his ritual was getting ready for work and putting on his uniform. I can still feel the joy of standing next to him at the bathroom sink and playing with the shaving cream and water while he shaved. On the nights that he did not work, I remember sitting on the back of the couch behind him, and playing hairdresser. He never complained even though I must have pulled his hair and pinched his scalp.

Like me, your children will remember the little daily and annual rituals as special time spent together. To remind yourself of the established rituals, gather your family and fill out the worksheet provided. I hope you will feel a sense of ownership and accomplishment by writing down at least one ritual that is important to you and your child or children. Perhaps you will look at the list of suggested rituals with your child or children and vote on a new ritual for 2019. Or, maybe your family is satisfied with the rituals in place. Taking ten minutes to discuss and explore rituals with your family will give you information about the rituals your children value most.

### **The Super Blood Wolf Moon**

Don't forget to check out the moon on Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, the day before the remembrance of Martin Luther King, Jr. This is a rare opportunity to see a super blood wolf moon, not just any old lunar eclipse. Let's break down what you will see. The supermoon is when the moon is closest to earth and appears larger and brighter. A lunar eclipse is when the moon is completely covered by the earth and turns red. A wolf moon is the January moon. So, you will see a larger than normal moon turn red and you can howl at it.

Seeing three spectacular lunar events in the night sky from the comfort of your own neighborhood at a reasonable evening hour is rare. Luckily, it's not a school night so you can all enjoy watching the beginning of the lunar eclipse at 7:33 PM. For the next hour or so, the moon will gradually take on a red tint and become fully eclipsed at 8:41 PM. If you have enough hot chocolate and snacks on-hand, you can watch the end of the partial eclipse at 10:50 PM. Be sure to find a comfy spot with good visibility before 7:30 and don't forget to strike up a howling chorus.

### **Care for Infants, Toddlers and Families**

Part of Faith Formation is supporting families who have small children. In the nursery, infants to 3-year olds enjoy safe, friendly and developmentally appropriate playtime. This provides parents and caregivers with time to nurture their spiritual needs. The nursery staff (lead caregiver and back-ups) have gone through background checks as part of the hiring process. (For more information, see the Safe Church

Policy on the Children and Families page of our website.) Here is some new information and reminders for you:

- Nursery services are available on Sundays from 9:30 AM -11:30 AM.
- A Pack and Play will be available starting in January. It will be used for sleeping infants and toddlers who are comfortable with rest time quiet time in a small environment. At drop-off, please tell the caregiver if your little one will benefit from time in the Pack and Play.
- Is your child turning three soon? Please alert the caregiver so that we can start a conversation about readiness and transitioning.
- Supplies-Please drop off the items your little one will need-extra diapers, wipes, bottles, and snacks, and give instructions if needed.
- As much as I love that we have a nursery, know that at KCC, we value having children in church and enjoy their sounds and vibrant hearts. Balancing the needs of a family is challenging and we try to offer options that meet your family's changing needs.

### **A Calming Place**

Starting in January, we will offer the meditation room as a calm and quiet place for families who are bottle feeding and breast feeding their infants and young children. The meditation room is on the second floor.

### **Simultaneous Broadcast of Church Services**

Both Sunday services are simultaneously broadcast in Lander Hall. Some families may find it easier to watch and listen to the service in the Hall while having access to the children's library and bathrooms.

### **What's Next?**

I want to hear from you about your family's experience at KCC. In February, I will begin surveying the Faith Formation Programs and need your help! Stay tuned for an electronic survey and a good old fashioned hard copy in your bulletin.

I have you in mind as I plan this year of Faith Formation services. As you enrich your connection with God at KCC, I hope you will discover opportunities for education and personal growth for your whole family. Please contact me if you have feedback and questions.

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