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Esko's Corner

Esko Public School District #99

Connecting School and Community

Volume 25 Issue 4 **December 2020/January 2021**

Community Education programs are currently closed due to the school closure. We are trying every way we can think of to keep our programs and funding strong.

The Adopt a Pet activity is to help raise funds to help programs like Cool Kids, after school clubs and school readiness programs. Please consider supporting our programs by purchasing a pet or a gift certificate.

We appreciate your support!

Michele Carlson, Director of Community Education

ADOPT A Pet deadline has been extended to December 4th!! This is a fundraiser for our community education programs and a fun family activity for you while you are home!

You may now register online!

Adopt a Pet!

Take Home Craft $20

Create one of the pets to keep or give as a gift this holiday season!

Create and Adopt one of these adorable pets!

No sew project. Animals are 16".

Name_____ Grade_____ Teacher_____

Parent/Guardian:_____

_____ I would like the pet sent home with my child on December 18th.

_____ This is a gift and I would like to pick up at the community education office on December 18th or 21st

Send a check for $20 made payable to Esko Community Education to the community education office at P.O. Box 10 Esko MN 55733 by November 25th, 2020. * Limited scholarships for this activity are being provided by Piontek Construction. Call 879-4038 for information.

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Community News

Troop 4146, for their Bronze Award Project, put together six medical backpacks for the Esko Fire Department. They wanted to provide the Esko Fire Department with extra immediate care for emergency situations at Jay Cooke State Park.

Publication Title - **Esko's Corner**
Statement of Frequency- monthly (9 months)
Authorized Organization: **Esko Community Education,**
P.O. Box 10 2 E Hwy 61, Esko, MN 55733

Issue Number- On front cover

Articles and submissions may be sent to the Esko Community Education office or e-mailed to mcarlson@esko.k12.mn.us. The deadline is the 15th of each month for the next month's issue. The publication schedule can be found on the website. Articles may be edited for space and content. If you have questions, please call the community education office at **879-4038**. Visit the school website: **www.esko.k12.mn.us**

Thank You!

to Joe Jukich and Cruz Mattonen for donating wood scraps to the elementary art studio! These scraps have provided artists with discovery opportunities and creative endeavors to design and build various sculptures. We appreciate your donation!

Carlton County Master Gardener Volunteer Update

Who are Master Gardener volunteers? They come from all walks of life and share gardening best practices that promote healthy landscapes, healthy foods and healthy lives. They complete a core course taught by University faculty and Extension educators.

Upon completing the core course, they contribute their time teaching research-based horticulture practices in their communities.

The Carlton County group currently has 23 members and kept busy this gardening season by collecting plants for a drive up plant giveaway, a virtual garden tour, maintaining outdoor public gardens and answering gardening questions from the general public.

The Carlton County group will welcome 8 new Master Gardeners for the 2021 gardening season and hope to resume their regular programming next year. If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener volunteer or would like to receive programming notifications, please email Ann Rust, Volunteer Coordinator at: rustx048@umn.edu or call the office at 218-384-3511.

To view the virtual garden tour go to the Carlton County Extension YouTube channel at: Carlton County Garden Tour search Carlton County Extension on the YouTube main page.

Do You Know Who This Belongs to?

When Dawn moved out and Julie moved in, they found this ring under her desk. It's a 1987 class ring with the name Julie on it.

Community Education Financial Series

Many community members have heard that community education programs are suffering financially this year which has prompted questions regarding the funding of CE. I quickly realized that CE funding is complex, so I thought I could share some of the basics with all of you!
~Michele Carlson

If you are short on time:

- Community Education has three separate "pots" of money: general community education, ECFE, and school readiness.
- In Esko, we receive $26,625 from state tax revenue to run school readiness.
- We charge tuition to make up our budget of over $85,000.
- 90% of the budget goes to paying staff.
- Budget shortfall this year is over $38,000 due to lost tuition.
- We are open to ideas to raise revenue.

School Readiness

School Readiness preschool is one of three "pots" of money that community education handles. Funding for school readiness is determined by the number of four year old children who live in the Esko school district in the PRIOR year and is indexed by the number of students in the district utilizing free and reduced lunch services. The mathematical formula is complicated, but the most important number to remember is the amount of money that Esko receives from the state to run the program is $26,625. The cost to run the program for our 3 and 4 year old classes is over $85,000 and 90% of the cost is for staff. This means we run a lean program when it comes to supplies. Annually, we budget $1500 for all of the supplies used in the classroom. Other costs for the program are a share of Esko's Corner publication, postage, phone, copier, paper and other miscellaneous office costs.

This school year, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we had many families opt out of school readiness. We understand and support our families decision to keep their children home this year. We have to deal with a shortfall in the budget of over $38,000. In that we are still running all of our classes with smaller numbers, cutting costs is nearly impossible as our staff is still working their normal schedule. We have cut costs to the best of our ability.

We continue to look for ways to increase revenue in our programs and are open to ideas from the community. Contact our school readiness coordinator, Shannon Matzdorf at smatzdorf@esko.k12.mn.us with any ideas or questions about the program.

Registration for School Readiness is coming up! Look for information in the March issue.

Why register with us?

Our School Readiness Classes are directly connected to Winterquist Elementary.

- Visits to the Kindergarten classrooms
- Reading with their 1st grade reading buddies
- Elementary Principal, Mr. Harker, and Kindergarten teachers visit the classroom for storytime sessions.
- Weekly play on the school playground
- Class programs held in the school

We know how to get your kids ready for Kindergarten:

Child observation and assessment
Parent and child kindergarten preparation
Emphasis on emerging literacy
Enhancing personal, social, and physical development
Collaboration with Early Childhood Special Education
Communication with K teachers about preparedness

Classes
4 year olds
- 3 days a week
- AM or PM class options
3 year olds
- 2 days a week
- AM class only

Community Education

Due to the Governor's orders, we are only offering distance make & take type classes right now.

Please remember to buy your Community Education gift certificates for your family members this Christmas. You will make the recipient happy and keep our programs afloat.

HOME Sign Kit

Create a unique HOME sign for you or for a gift this holiday season. The kit will include the driftwood pieces for you to make letters, rocks, twine and the board to mount it on. You need to have hot glue and a clipper to make your driftwood pieces perfect for you!. You will need outdoor glue if you plan to hang this outside.

Kits will be available for pick up in the CE entry alcove December 14th. Please keep in mind each sign will look a bit different based on the differences in driftwood pieces.

Cost:$10.00

Take & Make Jewelry Stamping

We have been getting rave reviews for this first take home class- Try it out!!

Looking for a hobby to start during these crazy times? Why not try Jewelry Stamping! We are offering a kit with everything you need to make awesome necklaces, bracelets, and key chains. This kit will supply enough items for up to 10 people, so you may call your friends or family over to have a Jewelry Stamping get together! Once you register, the kit will be available for pick up on Thursday and needs to be returned the following Monday. Pick up will be in the front entrance of the Community Education Building on Thursdays between 8-4. You may take the supplies home for the weekend and make your own unique creations. Monday you may drop off the supplies in the same spot at the Community Education building between 8-4. Have fun stamping!

:$50.00 for 10 people
$25.00 for 5 people
Front Entry Pick Up

Are you missing ECFE classes?
We now have ECFE in a box kits that you may check out and take home with you! We have three different themes; dinosaurs, farm animals and trains. All are available for registration online. $5 each.

Teaching your Preschoolers From Home

Building your child's fine motor skills to prepare for Kindergarten.
Submitted by Shannon Matzdorf, School Readiness/ECFE Coordinator

Fine motor skills involve the use of hands, fingers, wrist, feet, and toes.

Preschool aged children should be exposed to the use of pencils, crayons, markers, glue, paintbrushes, and scissors. Fine motor skills also include daily tasks of zipping up zippers, tying shoes or pulling Velcro, and buttoning buttons. Giving your preschooler the opportunity to handle these challenges on their own is key to fine motor growth and independence. It is important to offer support along the way, but let them do as much as they are able to independently.

Although markers are fun to use, and give a nice bright color when working on projects, it is also important to have preschoolers practice writing with other writing tools. Crayons and pencils are important for teaching a tighter grasp. This will encourage the child to use a bit more hand pressure to leave a mark on the page and help them build up hand strength.

Scissors are also a great tool to teach fine motor strength, by building up hand muscles when opening and closing when cutting. Scissors also help develop eye-hand coordination, teach how to cross the midline of the body, and build attention skills. Children need to focus on where they are cutting while completing a cutting project.

Some ideas of things you could try at home to enhance your child's fine motor skills:

1. Snipping paper

If your child is a beginner cutter you can offer them scraps of paper to practice making small straight cuts. At preschool, we often play pretend with a shoe box covered with a picture of a fish (or other seasonal characters). We cut a hole in the box where the mouth would be. The children love snipping at the scrap paper to cut little pieces of "fish food" to feed the fish.

2. Pipe cleaners and beads

Let your child lace the beads onto the pipe cleaner to make bracelets, necklaces, or their own creations.

3. Folding paper

Have them make a paper person by adding fun arms and legs to them. Folding accordion style paper (back and forth folds) can teach patterning while also builds their fine motor skills through flipping and pressing paper.

4. Water bottle spraying

Give your child a shallow bucket of water and a plastic boat to float in it. Llet them spray the water towards the boat to get it to move around the bucket. For added fun you could have two boats floating and two people spraying them. Make it a boat race across the bucket.

In the wintertime. add some food coloring to the water in the spray bottles and let kids spray pictures onto the snow. Kids can spray their name or some random shapes in the snow. Make sure to monitor this play though, as the food coloring will stain clothing.

5. Using liquid glue

If you are nervous to let your young one squirt the glue themselves, don't be. This is a great skill to learn. It not only teaches them to learn their limits on the amount of glue needed, but it also helps to increase hand strength.

Gather a bunch of small random craft items (beads, buttons, pom pom balls, small cut up straws, etc.) and allow your child to glue them down onto a plain piece of construction or printer paper.

6. Painting a masterpiece

Let your child have fun with washable paint, a paint brush, and a large piece of paper. Let them design their own masterpiece. Painting is a great way to strengthen their wrist muscles, while moving up and down and back and forth with the brush. You may look at random painting as just that, random. However, there is a lot of strength developing while that masterpiece is being created.

Finally… Demonstrate! Demonstrate! Demonstrate! Children learn best by watching you do it too. As they are doing all this writing, cutting, folding, gluing, spraying and painting, you can get involved and have some fun with your children!

Winterquist P.I.E. Meeting Mintues

Minutes
Time: 6:30pm
Location: Library and Virtual meeting on Zoom
Board members in attendance: Crysta Reeves, Emily Waldo, Josh Michaud, Heather East
Minutes Approval
Approved
Treasure Report

Starting Balance (10/01/2020):		$19,176.70
Deposits (total):		$200.00
Checks (total):	$(2,736.26)	
Interest: $0.08		
Ending Balance (10/31/2020):		$16,640.51

Teacher Requests		
Starting Balance:		$7,750.00
Paid Requests:	$0.00	
Unpaid Requests:		$(3,486.51)
Less Knowledge Bowl:	$(500)	
Total Remaining:		$3,763.49

Food Requests Beginning Balance:	$250.00
Food Requests:	$0
Unpaid Requests:	$0
Total Remaining:	$250.00

Teacher Requests
~Christine Ringat - card making kits for sending cards home for the troops. $50 total. Motion made to approve, motion passed.
Apparel Sale
Site is live until November 15th. We have had 44 orders so far, 26 of them hats.
Winterquist HEROES
Everything is setup for this month. Gifts should be going out next Friday. December gifts have also been purchased. $630 going into January. Redbox tickets haven't been purchased yet. The group is spending for gifts a month ahead, and then looking for donations to to cover the cost. Discussion is going to happen about the financials due to the success of the program. The process is going to have to be more formalized.
This project changed from being an elementary only project, to a K-12 project for all Esko school staff.
Yearbook pricing/compensation
Current stipend for working on yearbook is $400. $500 plus 3 free yearbooks has been proposed since it is a large project for one person to work on. Motion made to increase spending. Motion passed.
We would like to expand the yearbook process into a committee with one parent per grade level to help out. This would be for next year after COVID has passed.
No December meeting. Next Meeting January 11th, 6:30pm Virtual Meeting and Library
Any questions you can email at pie@esko.k12.mn.us

Our ESKO SCHOOL HEROES were all smiles for their special delivery in November!

We would like to send a HUGE THANK YOU to MAGNOLIA CAFE in Carlton for partnering with us on this month's gifts! The staff are looking forward to stopping by to enjoy some coffee, ice cream and many other delicious treats that you have!

We hope to continue this wonderful program well into 2021, but we need the donations and support to do so! As we go into the coming months, your donations are critical in order to provide these monthly "Gifts of Gratitude" to our K-12 Staff.

YOU CAN MAKE DONATIONS AT ANY TIME IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

Venmo: @WinterquistHeroes
Paypal: winterquistheroes@gmail.com
Check: made out to "Esko PIE", mailed to Katie Siats, 12 Keanu Lane, Esko, MN 55733

Winterquist Heroes

Help us support our School

Hardworking
Excellent
Reliable
Overachieving
Esko
Staff

Every teacher and staff member at Esko Schools is going above and beyond their duties this school year. It is time to show them how much they are appreciated!

December Gift: The holidays are a special time spent with family and it will be a wonderful time for our school staff to "recharge" and relax with their families. Your donations are needed! We would like to gift each teacher and staff member with a **Family Movie Night Basket,** stocked full with root beer, candy, popcorn, and a RedBox rental code.

Donations can be sent in a variety of ways:

1) Venmo: @WinterquistHEROES
2) Paypal: WinterquistHEROES@gmail.com ("send to friend" option)
3) Cash/check, made out to "Esko PIE", mailed to:
Katie Siats
12 Keanu Lane, Esko, MN 55733

If you would like to send a personal thank-you note to a staff member to accompany their gift, please visit the following link. Thank you!
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904094AAAAC2EA1FE3-personal

Esko Corner Survey

Esko's Corner Survey

I read Esko's Corner.

_____ yes

_____no

Esko's Corner is the primary way I receive information about the school district.

_____ yes

_____ no

I look for registration information about community education classes in the Corner:

_____ yes

_____ no

The information I like to read in Esko's Corner includes:

_____

I would like to see more _____ in Esko's Corner :

_____

I would like to see less _____ in Esko's Corner:

_____

I would prefer to read the paper online:

_____ yes

_____ no

I think it's a good idea to have people sign up to continue receiving the paper (for free) and stop mailing to those wanting to read the paper online.

_____ yes

_____ no

Comments: _____

Esko's Corner is a valuable part of communication in the community. During this time of budget crunching, we are trying to make sure we are meeting the needs of our readers. Please fill out the survey and return to the community education office at P.O. Box 10 Esko, MN 55733.

You may also complete the survey on Survey Monkey. The link can be found on our community education main page from the school website.

Esko's Corner costs the community education budget over $15,000 annually to print and mail. The mailing costs run around $275 per issue and the printing costs vary on the number of pages in the paper, but usually are between $1200 and $1700 per issue. We typically print 2400 papers per issue. We also pay for staff time in putting the paper together, picking it up and delivering to the post office. Because the investment for the paper is a large portion of the budget, we would like to make sure we are getting the best bang for our buck! Because our program is funded by state tax dollars, we are not able to sell advertisements or subscriptions to the paper. Call 879-4038 if you have any questions.

From Our School Board

Clerk's Minutes

The Esko Board of Education, Independent School District No. 99, Esko, Minnesota, held their regular board meeting on Monday, October 19, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM.

Members present: Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm, Jeff Salo, Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg and Superintendent Aaron Fischer. Members absent: Julian Bertogliat.

Call the Meeting to Order

Acting Chairperson Jeff Salo called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Jerry Frederick, second by Margaret Sunnarborg to approve the agenda with modification. Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm, Jeff Salo, Todd Rengo, and Margaret Sunnarborg and no nay votes.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Mark Nyholm to approve the Consent Agenda items:

- Approve the minutes of the October 6, 2020 regular School Board meeting.
- Approve the checks as follows:

Date	Check #s	Total
10/9/20	Void #89644	$134.10
10/13/20	89926-90000	$131,622.97
10/19/20	90001-90030	$68,842.46*

*Pending Treasurer's approval of 10/19/20 checks

- Personnel:

Semester II Lane Change Request from A. Tacheny from MA to MA15

Semester II Lane Change Request from J. Zervas from MA to MA15

- Fundraiser Requests:

Grad Party - B&B Wagon 10/21/2020 and 5/21/2021

Grad Party – Sponsor a Senior

Grad Party – Online gift sale

Grad Party – Gift Card sale

- Donations:

Winterquist PIE Group in the amount of $2,736.26 for teacher requests.

Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm, Jeff Salo, Todd Rengo and Margaret Sunnarborg and no nay votes.

Covid-19 Discussion and Planning

Superintendent Fischer discussed a possible change to the Hybrid Model C for K-2 and special education students. Students would be on campus Tuesday through Friday and Mondays would be a Distance Learning day.

Change the Hybrid Model C

Moved by Todd Rengo second by Jerry Frederick to approve the Hybrid Model C change for K-2 and special education students. Students would be on campus Tuesday through Friday and Mondays would be a Distance Learning day. This would be used if the District moved to this model. The District is not changing models at this time. Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Jerry Frederick, Margaret Sunnarborg, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Posting of a Skills Assistant Position for Grades 7-12 through December 31, 2020

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Jerry Frederick to approve the posting of a Skills Assistant position for grades 7-12 through December 31, 2020 at a rate of $18.00 per hour. Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Jeff Salo and Mark Nyholm and no nay votes.

Approve the Purchase of a Van

Moved by Mark Nyholm, second by Jerry Frederick to approve the purchase of a Dodge Promaster FWD van for up to $46,000.00. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo, and no nay votes.

Update on Bus Garage

ICS will come to the November 23, 2020, board meeting with the final budget summary. The sheetrock is up and is ready for taping and mudding. Electricians will have things roughed in and Stack Bros. will have the heat in by next week.

Approve the Annual Audit for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020

Moved by Jerry Frederick, second by Margaret Sunnarborg to approve the Annual Audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. Thanks to Janet Halonen for her successful work in this area. Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Actual Dollar Amount of Previously Committed Funds in the Amount of $306,797.00

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Jerry Frederick to approve the actual dollar amount of previously committed funds in the amount of $306,797.00 at June 30, 2020. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Commitment of Funds from the Unassigned Fund Balance

Move by Todd Rengo, second by Mark Nyholm to approve the commitment of funds from the unassigned fund balance. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Designation of Julie Pelletier, District Administrative Assistant, as Authorized Personnel for Banking Purposes

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Margaret Sunnarborg to approve the designation of Julie Pelletier, District Administrative Assistant, as Authorized Personnel for banking purposes. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

School Readiness Reduction Presentation

Michele Carlson, Community Education Director, updated the board on the status of her programs and potential loss of revenues and the need for possible reductions or transfers between funds.

Approve Transferring Funds from ECFE to School Readiness and ECFE to Community Ed

From Our School Board

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Mark Nyholm to approve the transferring of funds from ECFE to School Readiness and from ECFE to Community Ed. Amount to be determined at a later date. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve Recommended School Readiness to "Right Size"

Moved by Mark Nyholm, second by Todd Rengo to approve recommended School Readiness to "right size" up to $6000.00, to maintain programming. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Community Education Director to "Right Size" Staffing Patterns

Moved by Jerry Frederick, second by Mark Nyholm to approve the Community Education Director to "right size" the staffing patterns to fit the program needs in Community Education up to $35,586.00. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo, and no nay votes.

Accept a Letter of Resignation from Laura Godfrey, Paraprofessional

Moved by Mark Nyholm, second by Todd Rengo to accept the letter of resignation from Laura Godfrey, Paraprofessional, and to post for her position. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Accept a Letter of Resignation from Karrin Olson, Benefits Coordinator

Moved by Jerry Frederick, second by Todd Rengo to accept the letter of resignation from Karrin Olson, Benefits Coordinator, and post for her position. The board thanks her for her many years of service to the district. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Revised Fall Coaching List

Moved by Mark Nyholm, second by Todd Rengo to approve the revised fall coaching list. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the 2020/2021 Winter Coaching

Moved by Todd Rengo, second by Mark Nyholm to approve the 2020/2021 winter coaching list. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Approve the Revised Budget for FY 2021

Moved by Mark Nyholm, second by Jerry Frederick to approve a revised budget for FY 2021. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

2020 - 2021 Revised Budget
October, 2020

Fund	Revenues	Expenditures
General Fund (fund 1)	$12,549,769	$12,436,598
Food Service Fund (fund 2)	$477,419	$455,809
Transportation Fund (fund 3)	$563,634	$910,233
Community Service Fund (fund 4)	$543,314	$549,966
Capital Operating Fund (fund 5)	$951,825	$600,360
Building Construction Fund (fund 6)	$200	$521,996
Debt Service Fund (fund 7)	$973,529	$1,004,100
Student Activity Fund (fund 11)	$43,200	$43,200
Irrevocable OPEB Trust (fund 45)	$11,351	$6,701
Total Budget	$16,114,241	$16,528,963

Special Board Meeting to Canvass Election Results via Zoom

Moved by Jerry Frederick, second by Todd Rengo to approve special board meeting to be held on Friday, November 13, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom to canvass election results. Motion carried by the following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Administrative Reports

Principals' Reports:

Elementary School – Principal Brian Harker reported the following:

- Not going to the Hybrid Model yet but just wanted to be prepared in case we do.
- Thanks to three specialist teachers who would be classroom teachers during the Hybrid Model.
- We will cancel our elementary costume parade this year.
- Fall conferences will be held virtually this year.

High School – Principal Greg Hexum reported the following:

- Fall conferences will be held virtually this year.
- Looking at some potential tweaks to have better distance learning results.

Board Committee Reports:

Jerry Frederick – Meeting with teachers and administration to go over some recommendations. Worked with electricians and Minnesota Power to go over lighting at the new bus garage.

Mark Nyholm – Meeting with teachers and administration on their recommendations.

Margaret Sunnarborg – EEF meeting was postponed

Superintendent's Report:

Supt. Aaron Fischer reported:

- Our discussion on Hybrid learning models was based on if we need to go to Hybrid Model C. However, we are staying with our current model based on the foreseeable future. We will keep monitoring the Covid numbers in the county.
- We will do what is right for our students and if we need to adjust for distance learning concerns, we will address those.
- We did choose a provider for the streaming service for one year for our activities. It is up and running and the information is on our website to find out how to connect.
- Enrollment update

Adjournment

There being no further business, moved by Todd Rengo, second by Mark Nyholm to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. Motion carried by following vote: Aye votes by Todd Rengo, Margaret Sunnarborg, Jerry Frederick, Mark Nyholm and Jeff Salo and no nay votes.

Todd Rengo
Clerk

MINUTES
TOWN BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Present: Terry Hill, Bill Gerard, Ruth Janke, Tony Compo, Jason Paulson, Rhonda Peleski, Leah Pykkonen, David Pritchett

Chairperson Hill called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Board Room at the Town Hall.

Janke made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Second by Gerard. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Gerard made a motion to approve the current vouchers in the amount of $ 26,621.37 (Check #'s 45598 – 45626) to pay payroll and due bills and electronic payments in the amount of $ 7,835.66. Second by Paulson. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

August receipts in the amount of $ 309,843.67 and August fund balances were reviewed.

Peleski provided an update on the food truck festival that was being planned by the Esko Boy Scouts. They wanted to start with a few Friday's in the fall at the Town Hall but have now decided to wait until spring to begin the festival.

A motion was made by Paulson with a second by Compo to approve the 2019 audited financial statement which was completed by Wipfli. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Gerard updated the Board on the Wood City Riders snowmobile trail project through the township. They have gotten permission from most of the property owners on the route. They are in the process of raising funds for the trail. The Town has already granted permission to use the right-of- way on three Town roads. A form putting that permission in writing is being reviewed by legal counsel.

Resolution No. 2020-09 which allows for the reimbursement from The CARES Act Relief Funding (CRF) of expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Paulson with a second by Compo. Resolution approved with 5 yeas. Just over $ 20,000 has been used through August 31.

The committee that has been working on a list of projects that the CRF money can be spent on presented the list they developed. It included an extractor and a dryer for the fire hall to better clean turnout gear, SCBA masks for firefighters so they don't need to be shared, electrostatic sprayers for disinfecting the town hall, fire hall and garage, replacing chairs at the town hall with those that can be disinfected, and adding a locker and shower area to the fire hall, in addition to other items.

Discussion was held on improving internet service across the township. Janke reported that the Carlton County EDA is looking at improving internet service in an underserved area of the County. It was questioned whether something could be done in the township. Could the CRF money be used to do a study on service? There's also the timeframe for CRF projects that needs to be considered. Pykkonen stated that once the engineering for a project is done, the Town can apply for State funding. This will continue to be looked into.

Discussion continued on the list developed by the CRF committee. Two quotes were received for the resurfacing of the floors at the fire hall. The project will be awarded to the low quoter. Fire Chief Kyle Gustafson updated the Board on the locker room and shower improvement. The fire hall would also need to be sprinkled which would not be covered by CRF money. After further discussion a motion was made by Gerard with a second by Compo to continue with the projects listed. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Road and Utility Supervisor Logan Saline received a quote for Mastic patching around some sewer manholes. Because Sinnott is the only area contractor that does Mastic patching, only one quote was obtained. It was requested that Saline look outside the area for a second quote. A motion was made by Paulson with a second by Compo to approve the Mastic patching of manholes contingent on a second quote obtained. This is not to exceed $ 3,800. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

There was recently a request from Oregon officials for firetrucks and personnel to assist in their firefighting efforts. Gustafson asked that the Board consider authorizing him to send a truck with personnel if the opportunity comes up again. In the past fire assistance has been provided to western States as well as southern States and northern Minnesota. In this instance a decision needed to be made immediately but the terms did not make it feasible to assist. If a truck were sent it would not jeopardize fire protection in the Town. A motion was made by Janke with a second by Gerard to authorize Gustafson to make the decision to assist in the future if the terms are better for the Town. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Saline reported that the new entrance to Northridge Park is almost finished. The crew will try to stockpile gravel in the parking lot so work can begin before road limits are lifted in the spring. Also, a gate has been installed at the entrance to the spoils pit area on E. Harney Road.

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:31 pm by Gerard with a second by Paulson. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Peleski, Clerk/Treasurer
Terry Hill, Chairperson
Town of Thomson

OCTOBER 1, 2020

Present: Terry Hill, Bill Gerard, Ruth Janke, Tony Compo, Jason Paulson (remotely), Rhonda Peleski, Leah
Pykkonen, David Pritchett

Staff also attending: Kyle Gustafson, Logan Saline, Dan Stangle (remotely), Rob Lucas (remotely), Andrew Barnebey

Chairperson Hill called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Board Room at the Town Hall.

Janke made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Second by Gerard. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Gerard made a motion to approve the current vouchers in the amount of $ 73,295.78 (Check #'s 45627 – 45648, Void 45627) to pay payroll and due bills and electronic payments in the amount of $ 9,303.92. Second by Janke. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

A final assessment hearing needs to be scheduled for the Hillside Road paving project. A motion was made by Janke with a second by Gerard to schedule the hearing for Thursday, October 29 at 6:30 p.m. Motion carried with 5 yeas. Peleski will notify property owners.

A work session will be held on Thursday, October 29 at 5:00 p.m.

Gustafson reported on the schedule that's been developed for the construction of a shower and locker area at the fire hall. Once the project is advertised for bids and the project is awarded, construction might not start until February 2021. Gustafson has been in

contact with Carlton County regarding the CARES Act money and earmarking, for this project, the unspent funds that the Town will be required to turn over to them. They are ok with this timeline. The project will continue to move forward.

October 2 is the deadline to receive proposals for engineering services. The proposals will be reviewed by Paulson, Compo, Peleski, Stangle and Saline.

Esko Community Development Corporation had funds remaining in what is now National Bank of Commerce. Since a fee was going to be charged to the account because of a low balance, the previous treasurer had a cashier's check written to the Town. Peleski will deposit the money and contact Carlton County to see if the money should be returned to them.

Saline reported that mastic sealing was done to several manhole covers in town. Roads are being graded.

The Canosia Road bridge should be open by Oct. 9.

The fire department pancake breakfast is scheduled for Oct. 3. It will be pickup orders only.

Stangle gave his report for the month. In addition to reviewing plat sketches for construction of new structures and parcel splits, he's had four additional variance requests. He's also been working with a developer of a multi-family structure, researching gravel pit requirements, working with property owners regarding private road easements and providing zoning information for cell tower inquiries.

Deputy Rob Lucas gave his monthly report. He continues to work on recovering stolen property.

Pritchett has reviewed the agreement with Wood City Snowmobile Club for using Town rights-of-way for some portions of the snowmobile trail. Church Road was not included so the agreement will need to have that added before signing.

Peggy Meseroll was present to let the Board know that because of the estimated cost, she will not be making improvements to extend Manisto Road. She also offered the use of her driveway as a plow turn around area.

At 7:02 p.m. a motion was made by Janke with a second by Compo to close the regular meeting to discuss personnel issues. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

A motion to open the regular meeting was made at 7:22 p.m. by Gerard with a second by Paulson. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

A motion was made by Paulson with a second by Janke to approve the payout of unused vacation hours following the resignation of a probationary employee. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Compo voting nay.

A motion was made by Compo with a second by Gerard to advertise to fill the position of Heavy Equipment Operator. Motion carried with 5 yeas. Peleski will have the position posted in the usual places.

After more thought, Gerard would like to go on record as not supporting a possible request to send a fire truck to fires in western States. This motion was approved unanimously at the September 17, 2020 meeting. No further requests have been made for assistance.

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:25 pm by Gerard with a second by Compo. Motion carried with 5 yeas.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Peleski, Clerk/Treasurer
Terry Hill, Chairperson
Town of Thomson

OCTOBER 15, 2020

Present: Bill Gerard, Ruth Janke, Tony Compo, Jason Paulson (late), Rhonda Peleski, Leah Pykkonen, David Pritchett

Vice-chairperson Gerard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Board Room at the Town Hall.

Janke made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Second by Compo. Motion carried with 3 yeas, Hill absent and Paulson late.

Compo made a motion to approve the current vouchers in the amount of $ 48,437.05 (Check #'s 45670 – 45711) to pay payroll and due bills and electronic payments in the amount of $ 8,945.70. Second by Janke. Motion carried with 3 yeas, Hill and absent and Paulson late.

September receipts in the amount of $ 52,941.47 and September fund balances were reviewed.

Carlton County Association of Town Officers has canceled their fall meeting. They provided updates from those that normally speak at the meetings.

The 2019/2020 financial statement has been received from the Esko Hockey Association. A motion was made by Compo with a second by Janke to approve the payment from the Recreation Fund to the Esko Hockey Association in the amount of $ 3,150. Motion carried with 4 yeas, Hill absent and Paulson late.

The Board of Canvass is scheduled for Thursday, November 12 at 10:30.

Three quotes have been received for garage doors at the Town Garage. Two quotes were received to replace just the bottom panels of the doors. After discussion a motion was made by Janke with a second by Compo to accept the low quote for replacing just the bottom panels. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent.

The committee reviewing the engineering services proposals will meet on Monday, October 19 at 9:00 am.

Resolution No. 2020-10 which allows for the reimbursement from The CARES Act Relief Funding (CRF) of expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A motion to approve the Resolution was made by Paulson with a second by Compo. Resolution approved with 4 yeas and Hill absent. Just over $ 30,000 has been used through September 30.

Discussion was held on the list of approved items. Peleski provided quotes for chairs for the Board Room. It was suggested that another quote be obtained from Innovative Office Solutions before a decision was made.

Three quotes were presented for touchless toilets and faucets at the Town Hall and Fire Hall. A motion was made by Paulson with a second by Compo to accept the low quote from ABCO Plumbing. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent.

Two quotes were presented for new flooring in the Board Room. A motion was made by Compo with a second by Janke to accept the low quote from Contract Tile and Carpet. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent.

Two quotes were received for a rolling door for the service counter in the community room kitchen. A motion was made by Janke with a second by Paulson to accept the low quote from Peterson Door. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent.

Pykkonen provided the Board with options for audio/visual equipment for the Board Room, a phone system, and a networking system. After discussion about each proposal a motion was made by Paulson to award the networking equipment and audio/visual projects to Marco. This will include an added new POE switch. Also, to award leasing of telephones to CW Technology with their monthly managed services. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent.

Around Town

An email was received from Paul DeLaRosa from MNDOT regarding signal installation at the E. Stark Road railroad crossing. It is in the schedule for Federal funding in the 2023 funding cycle. He is asking if the Town and the railroad would each commit to contributing 10% of the cost of the project. The railroad has already agreed to the 10% contribution. A motion was made by Paulson with a second by Compo to contribute 10% of the cost of signal installation at the E. Stark Road railroad crossing. Motion carried with 4 yeas and Hill absent. The estimated cost for the installation is $245,000.

Peleski informed the Board that Carlton County Transportation is inquiring about payment for the Anderson Road bridge replacement. The project was completed in 2012 or 2013. The Town agreed to pay the County for the engineering and other services. Peleski is checking to see if a bill was received and payment was made.

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:34 pm by Paulson with a second by Janke. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Peleski, Clerk/Treasurer
Bill Gerard, Vice-chairperson
Town of Thomson

Town of Thomson would like to pass on a reminder to all residents.

The ordinance which regulates the parking of vehicles within the Town of Thomson states in Section 4 that "During the period from November 1 of each year to March 31 of the following year, no person, firm, or corporation shall park any motor vehicle on the roads, streets, alleys, boulevards, sidewalks, or public grounds within the corporate limits of the Township between the hours of four o'clock a.m. and seven o'clock a.m. It shall be the duty of law enforcement to cause any motor vehicle that is so parked between 4 o'clock a.m. and seven o'clock a.m. to be removed and impounded, and the motor vehicle shall not be released until the fees for towing and storage of the vehicle are paid."

If you have any questions, please contact the Town Office at 879-9719. We appreciate your cooperation.

SNOW PLOWING REMINDER

The Town of Thomson reminds all snow removal operators/property owners that it is unlawful to deposit snow on or next to a public highway or street.

Minnesota law prohibits the plowing, blowing, shoveling or otherwise placing of snow onto public roadways. **This includes the ditch and right-of-way area along the roadside.**

This would include pushing the snow from your driveway across the street onto the right-of-way of a vacant lot. The snow from your driveway needs to remain on your property.

According to state law, violations are considered misdemeanors, but civil penalties also apply if the placement of snow creates a hazard such as a slippery area, frozen rut or bump that contributes to a motor vehicle or pedestrian crash. The civil liability can extend to both the property owner and the person who placed the snow.

Other hazards created by improper placement of snow on or near a public roadway include drainage problems, drifting, sight obstruction and safe accessibility. Special attention should be made to keep crosswalks, intersections, entrances and exits clean and unobstructed.

RECYCLING SHED HOURS

The recycling center is located at the Town Hall at 25 E. Harney Road.

Year-round hours of operation are
Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday: 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The staffed facility in Esko is for residential recycling only.

With the increase in on-line shopping there has been an increase in cardboard being recycled. If you have a large amount of cardboard, please bring it directly to the Carlton County Transfer station at 1950 Highway 210, Carlton. All boxes must be broken down before putting them in the dumpster.

Please do not leave items at the facility when it is unattended.

TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

The Town of Thomson Board of Supervisors holds their regular meetings on the first and third Thursdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. The meetings are held in the Town Board Room at the Town Hall, 25 E. Harney Road.

TOWN HALL RENTALS

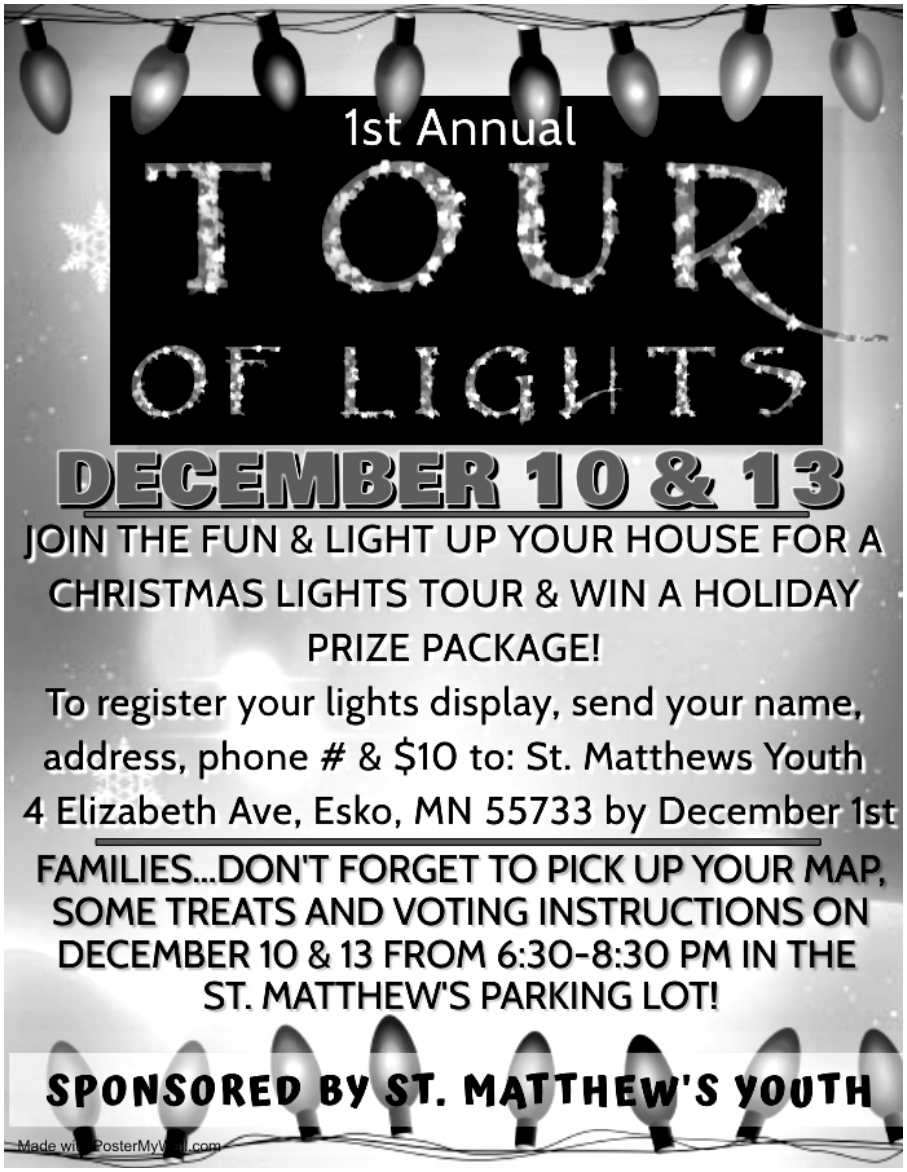
Remember: The Town Hall is available for private rentals. Contact the Town Office at 879-9719 for details or visit our website: thomson.govoffice.net

THOMSON TOWN OFFICE

The Thomson Town Office is located at 25 E. Harney Road. The regular office hours are Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Church News

Come let us
Adore
Him


1st Annual
TOUR
OF LIGHTS
DECEMBER 10 & 13
JOIN THE FUN & LIGHT UP YOUR HOUSE FOR A CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOUR & WIN A HOLIDAY PRIZE PACKAGE!
To register your lights display, send your name, address, phone # & $10 to: St. Matthews Youth
4 Elizabeth Ave, Esko, MN 55733 by December 1st
FAMILIES...DON'T FORGET TO PICK UP YOUR MAP, SOME TREATS AND VOTING INSTRUCTIONS ON DECEMBER 10 & 13 FROM 6:30-8:30 PM IN THE ST. MATTHEW'S PARKING LOT!
SPONSORED BY ST. MATTHEW'S YOUTH

ST. MATTHEWS YOUTH GROUP
SILENT AUCTION
THIS YEAR WE ARE DOING THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENT...WE ARE GOING VIRTUAL ON FACEBOOK!!!
JOIN US ON THE FACEBOOK GROUP "ST. MATTHEWS YOUTH GROUP SILENT AUCTION" OR COME CHECK OUT THE BASKETS IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER AFTER CHURCH ON DECEMBER 2ND OR DECEMBER 6TH & HAVE A YOUTH MEMBER HELP YOU MAKE A BID.
IT'S A PERFECT WAY TO SUPPORT THE YOUTH AND GET SOME CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DONE!
BIDDING STARTS DECEMBER 2ND AT 6:00 pm AND ENDS DECEMBER 6TH AT NOON
WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR ANY DONATIONS WE RECEIVE. CONTACT JEN PRACHAR (218)391-0503 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

Church News

NORTHWOOD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
A church with a BIG heart.
62 W. Hwy. 61 ~ Esko, MN 55733
608.495.3147 ~ www.northwoodesko.com
Pastor Brian Cornell
bcornell@wnccumc.net

Sunday OUTDOOR Worship: 9:00 am
Northwood UMC Parking Lot
Tune in from the comfort of your car!
FM 87.9

Sunday ONLINE Worship: 9:00 am
Facebook: https://bit.ly/2ECUWQH or
You Tube: https://bit.ly/2CU7uC8

Thursday, December 24 — 7:00 pm
Christmas Eve Outdoor Candle Light Service The community is welcome!

Regularly Scheduled Upcoming Events and Special Events have been cancelled or postponed until further notice.

Please check for updates on postponed events by contacting Ann at annonpond@yahoo.com

NUMC VISION STATEMENT
Northwood UMC is an open, welcoming, seven-day-a-week church that shares God's spirit, serves as a community hub and sponsors good works. www.northwoodesko.com

APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH
25 Church Road Esko, MN 55733 (PH: 879-3882)
Pastor Bruce Bergstedt & Pastor Nathan Juntunen
Website: www.esko-apostolic.org
E-mail: eskoapostolic@msn.com

As a precautionary measure, the church will be closed until further noticed. All other scheduled weekly events (Sunday School, Men's Fellowship, Ladies Bible Study, Family Night, Senior Song Service, Quilting, etc) have been postponed until further notice. Please keep an eye on our Facebook Page and website for recent updates on our worship service schedule and weekly events.

Sunday Worship Schedule
Livestream Worship Services are available on our YouTube channel - Esko Apostolic.

December 6, 13, 20, 27:
9:00 AM Livestream Worship Service

January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31:
9:00 AM Livestream Worship Service

Wednesday Worship Schedule

December 2, 9, 16:
6:30 PM: Livestream Advent Worship Service

Events
December 24:
4:00 PM:Livestream Christmas Eve Service with Special Music

† Check out our Church website at www.esko-apostolic.org.
There are pictures, upcoming events, bulletins, church calendar, cemetery information and more!

ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH
And Little Eskomo Lutheran Preschool
A family of believers grounded in, growing in and reaching out in Christ
4 Elizabeth Avenue - Esko, MN 55733
218.879.3510 - www.stmatthewsesko.org
Pastor Jeffrey Walther 218-591-1436
Pastor Tom Brinkley 218-343-2080

Sundays:
Worship
10:30 am Worship with safety guidelines
St. Matthews is also offering online worship via St. Matthew's Lutheran Church Facebook at 10:30 am and posted to our website www.stmatthewsesko.org
9:30 a.m. TV Option Channel 6 (KBJR) airs "My Savior Lives"

Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Tom posted to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church Facebook

Sunday School 9:15 am (preschool – grade 6)

Youth Bible Study 9:15 am (grades 7-12)

Tuesdays:
Coffee with our Pastors via St. Matthew's Lutheran Church Facebook 9:00 a.m.

T3 – Totally Terrific Tuesdays (grades 7-12)
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Thursdays:
Youth Group (grades 7-12) 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Experience Recovery 6:00 p.m.

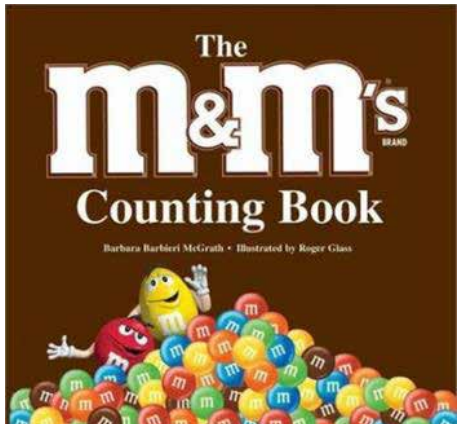
We have a Care and Outreach task force set up to help those in need. Please call the church office if you or someone you know has a need.
God is with us!

For Additional Information and updates, Check Our Website.
www.stmatthewsesko.org

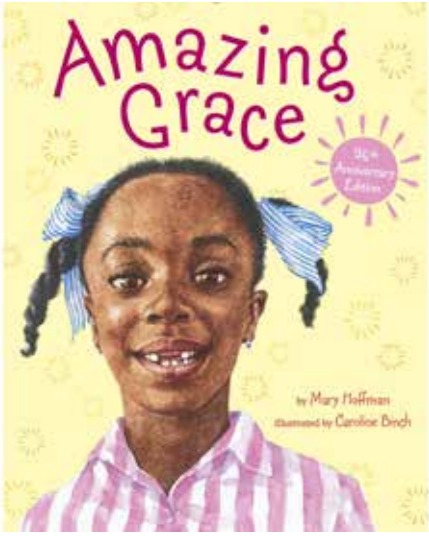
Holiday Gift Guide

Looking for great gift ideas for your little ones? Try these suggestions from Melissa Martineau, our 4 year old school readiness teacher.

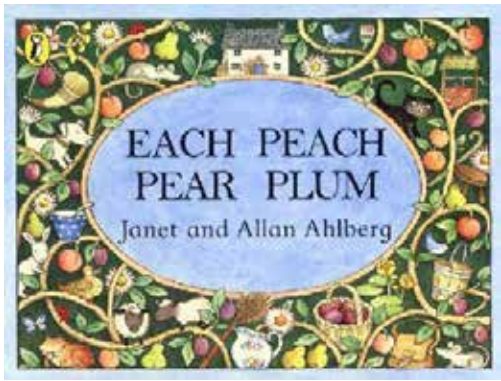
The M&M's Counting Book" by Barbara Barbieri McGrath is a fun and tasty choice for your preschooler. This book offers a hands on experience for color, shape and number recognition, as well as simple math. Just grab a bag of M&M's to pair with it, and let the delicious adventure begin!



Watch your child's imagination and confidence soar with "Amazing Grace"by Mary Hoffman. In this story, Grace is determined to play Peter Pan in the school play. Despite some challenges, with self assurance and support from Ma and Nana, she does just that. With her "never give up" mindset, Grace learns if she puts her mind to it, she can do anything she wants!



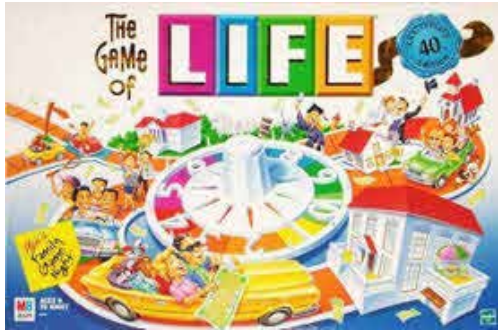
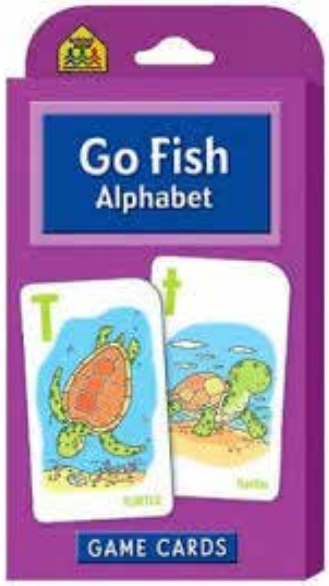
Play a game of eye spy consisting of classic nursery rhyme characters, as you read "Each Peach Pear Plum" by Janet and Allan Ahlberg with your little one. Enjoy the illustrations as they collectively move you toward a special celebration ending. Take time on each page, not only to play the game, but also to say each nursery rhyme....it leads to even more rhyming fun!



Here are a few of our favorite games!

Gretchen Grover
Unstable unicorns. Hilarious game for the family that includes silly strategy and the game changes every time. Just make sure you don't get your unicorns turned into pandas!

Brianna Mattonen
We enjoy playing Life together. We like it because we always end up getting a little silly. Any game we play as a family is fun as we get to hang out together! We also like to play dominoes!!



Emily Davey
We love to play card games such as go fish. We enjoy the fact that the kids are learning numbers and matching while having fun!