

St. Peter's Preschool Newsletter

November 2025



From the Director's Chair – by Rita Dai Wang

The season for giving thanks is upon us. I am so thankful for our St. Peter's family: teachers, church, and you -- our families! The things the kids say and how they see the world remind me to be present and enjoy every moment. Thank you for sharing them and entrusting them to us.

Brightwheel: Our Brightwheel rollout seems to have gone pretty smoothly so far. Thank you for your patience as we worked out the hiccups regarding attendance, billing, and photos!

Emergency Drills: We practice a Fire Drill with each class once a month, where we evacuate the building and go sit on the curb in the Nature Center. Twice yearly, we also practice Shelter-in-Place Drills in the bathrooms downstairs. The 3's and 4's have also practiced another evacuation drill this week, where we have gone inside the backyard of the Rectory (church-owned house with white fence on the left as you drive up the driveway to school). We hope to never have to employ these skills, but it's always good to plan for the worst while hoping for the best. Ask your kids if they remember how many dogs and cats the family who lives in the Rectory have!

Dinner and Dialogue: We are looking forward to a night of good food and good conversation on Thursday 11/13! RSVP at <https://forms.gle/TYgHUNJ5tGdWJk9p9>

Restaurant Night: We are looking forward to our first Restaurant Night at Carrabba's Italian Grill on 11/17! Stay tuned for more details!

St. Peter's Christmas Pageant: Save the date for the annual St. Peter's Christmas Pageant – 12/14 at 9:45! If your children would like to participate, please contact Ms. Rita or Sara Radcliffe (former Preschool parent) at spryor09@gmail.com by November 9.

St. Peter's Food Pantry: Thank you again for all the canned goods brought in during our Pizza and Popsicle Social. The Church Food Pantry is experiencing low inventory, so if you can spare some canned/dry goods, it would be greatly appreciated. Feel free to bring donations to school anytime.

If you or anyone you know is experiencing food insecurity, attached below are locations where families can get free food/hot meals. St. Peter's Church can also help. Feel free to reach out to outreach@stpetersec.org.

Kids Clothing Swap: We are looking forward to our first-ever Kids Clothing Swap on Saturday 4/18 from 9:00-11:30! You are invited to bring your kids' clothing, shoes, and extra diapers and swap them for the next size up. If you don't have anything to bring but just want to shop, that is fine too. Or if you are really disciplined and want to just drop stuff off without taking anything home, that is OK too 😊 To help, please contact Kendall Dougherty (Bennett's mom) at kendall.dougherty@yahoo.com.



Dates to Remember

- 11/5 Black Barn Alpaca Farm field trip – all classes
- 11/5 No Extended Day
- 11/7 Jump Bunch – 4's in school field trip
- 11/13 Dinner and Dialogue
- 11/17 Restaurant Night – Carrabba's Italian Grill
- 11/20 Breakfast with Buddies – 2's/4's
- 11/21 Breakfast with Buddies – 3's
- 11/25 4's Parent Conferences (no class for 4's this day)
- 11/26-28 Thanksgiving Break



11/7 Ayden

Fostering Independence in Kids

When we at St. Peter's look at the kids, we see them not just as they are now, but also as the young adults they will be someday. So when you hear us say, "Hmm, what can you do to figure it out?" or "I see that you didn't like what your friend did. What can you do to solve the problem?" this is us teaching them to become the Capable, Competent people they will grow into. It would be easier and faster for us to solve all their problems, but that wouldn't serve the long-term goal of raising them to be successful adults someday.

I've attached an article below on ways you can help foster independence at home. When we focus on the kind of people we want our kids to grow up to be, it helps make the interminable wait as they do things for themselves a bit more bearable :)





6 Little Things You Can Do Every Day to Make Your Child More Independent

Teaching our kids independence is key. But it's not easy. Here are some simple things you can do each day to help your little one be more independent.

By [Alanna Gallo](#), Parents Magazine

As parents, one of our primary [parenting goals](#) is to teach our children to be independent. But it's not always easy for them to become more self-sufficient and responsible—or for parents to let go. Some of this is because our instinct as parents is often to make things easier for them, rescue them from their mistakes, and limit their experiences with [struggle or \(gasp\) failure](#).

However, kids need to be challenged in order to develop the skills, tenacity, grit, and self-reliance needed to (eventually) function in the world on their own. It takes time, effort, and trust to guide your child to become more independent, but the rewards are well worth it.

Here are some simple things you can do every day to help your little one be more independent.

Let Them Make Mistakes

It may seem counterintuitive at first, but [letting kids make mistakes](#) will teach them how to succeed in life. When they make a mistake, let them know it's OK and help them brainstorm how they might do better next time. Come up with strategies for rectifying the issue, as needed, as well. Mistakes should be welcomed as learning opportunities.

This mindset shift can be used with anything from small mistakes, like choosing not to bring an umbrella when the forecast calls for rain, to larger ones, like failing a test because they decided to wait until the night before to study. Allowing them to feel any discomfort or disappointment that comes with their choice can be difficult. But doing so helps them thrive, and can actually [improve their self-esteem](#) and ability to [cope with adversity](#).

It's hard to see your child struggle. But if you focus on teaching them that failure is just feedback, it helps develop a growth mindset, and with that mindset, they will be able to overcome any struggle confidently and make more informed choices in the future.

Involve Them in Authentic Household Tasks

Encourage your child to [take on small tasks](#) like cleaning up toys after playtime, helping put away groceries, and picking up their room. Make sure you are [giving them chores](#) that are age-appropriate and necessary. Kids are much more willing to help out when they feel they contribute to the household authentically.

The [chores don't have to be big](#), just something that requires them to think ahead and plan. For example, if there is laundry piling up, ask them what they think should happen. Encourage them to bring a pile of laundry to the washing machine. See if they can help you put clothes into the machine. Maybe they want to help push the button. That's awesome! All of these small tasks are needed to start laundry, and by involving them, they will feel empowered (and eventually, they will get to the point where they can do their laundry on their own!).

Offer Choices and Freedom But Within Limits

Offering [reasonable levels of freedom and allowing children](#) to make choices is a great way to empower them, build confidence in their decision-making skills, and help build a sense of responsibility. This can mean asking your child to decide whether to wear a red or blue shirt or letting them walk home from school with a friend. When children can make their own choices, there are more significant opportunities for them to think on their feet and experience natural consequences.

Providing plenty of chances for kids to make their own decisions (and learn from mistakes) is one way parents can show children that their preferences, ideas, wants, and needs are respected and valued. The more practice kids have making choices for themselves, the better.

Keep in mind that if kids have too many options, they can get overwhelmed. So, instead of saying what do you want to do today? Ask them if they would rather go to the playground or for a hike. Try to offer two or three options that you are comfortable with—this helps you say "yes" to whatever option they pick. Also, be sure to provide any scaffolding (such as supervision, rules, or guided choices) necessary when giving them new freedoms.

Note that mess-ups will happen. That just means your child isn't quite ready for the new privilege. In that case, be prepared to step in to keep them safe or behaving responsibly. Losing the privilege will act as a [natural consequence](#). So, rather than focusing on what they did wrong, lean toward helping them to build the skills necessary to try out the freedom again in the future when they're ready.

Give Them Space

Children need space to learn and develop. And they aren't likely to become more independent if they never have the chance to actually *be* independent. Encourage self-reliance by giving your child plenty of opportunities to explore without being overly supervised. If they are playing in another room, let [them play without you](#) (or if you must check in, try to be discreet). If you notice a conflict with a sibling or friend, give them a chance to resolve it productively before interceding.

Let them walk a little ahead of you on the sidewalk (use your best judgment based on the street traffic and their readiness). Send them out to get the mail if your mailbox is a safe distance away. Give them a chance to go inside the cafe, order, and pay for their lunch while you watch from a safe vantage point.

Try to find at least one way every day where your child can accomplish something "on their own" without you right by their side. This could be hanging up their coat, feeding the dog, or repacking their lunch for school.

Avoid Over-Correcting

As much as possible, avoid correcting your child when they are trying to do something independently. For example, if you ask your little one to make their bed, and it isn't perfect, resist the urge to fix it (hard, I know!). Always try to keep in mind that [perfection isn't the goal](#). The goal is to allow your little one to take on the responsibility. They will not want to keep trying if every time they do, they feel they aren't doing it up to your standards.

Design Your Space With Independence in Mind

How you organize your space is going to impact your kid's ability to [practice being independent](#). Are your little ones capable of reaching their cups, plates, forks, and napkins? Is there a pitcher of water they can use to refill their cup if they get thirsty? Do you have a lightweight hamper so they can be in charge of bringing their clothes to the laundry room? Can they access a sink and soap to wash their hands without help?

Think about ways you can increase the chances of your child being able to do something on their own. For example, you could use a lower rack for clothes, so they are more easily accessible. Add a hook at eye level for them to hang their backpack after school. Keep a step stool near the kitchen to get their snack from the fridge or pantry without help.

The Bottom Line

Fostering your child's independence can be both a gift and a struggle. Just remember that the more you do for them, the less they can do (and learn) for themselves. Stop and ask yourself: Can they do this on their own? Do I do too much for them? If you do, keep this [Maria Montessori](#) quote in mind: "Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed." The key to helping kids become more independent is to actively and confidently allow them to be independent.

ELKRIDGE

Elkridge Food Pantry and Garden

Good Samaritan Outreach Center
5646 Furnace Ave
Elkridge, MD 21075 | 443-492-9209
Open: 2nd & 4th Friday each month 4pm to 7pm

Howard County Muslim Council (HMC) Food Pantry

Elkridge Library Parking Lot
6540 Washington Blvd.
Elkridge, MD 21075 | 410-570-1938
Open: 3rd Saturday each month 11am to 1pm

FULTON

Open Doors Food Pantry (ODFP)

Mount Zion United Methodist Church
12430 Scaggsville Road
Fulton, MD 20777 | 301-854-2326
Open: 3rd Saturday each month 8:30am to 10am

GLENELG

Glenelg United Methodist Church Food Pantry

13900 Burtwoods Road
Glenelg, MD 21737 | 410-489-7260
Open: 3rd Saturday each month 9am to 10am

JESSUP

Grassroots Day Resource Center Food Pantry

Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center
10390 Guilford Rd
Jessup, MD 20794 | 301-776-9900
Open: Monday & Wednesday 2pm to 6pm
Open: Saturday 10am to 2pm

Martin Luther King Jr Holiday Commission Food Pantry

Ridgley Run Community Center
8400 Mission Road
Jessup, MD 20794 | 443-386-0405
Open: 2nd Monday each month 9:30am to 11:30am

My Father's Barn Food Pantry

Solomon's Porch Worship Center
10545 Guilford Rd Suite 104
Jessup, MD 20794 | 301-776-0000
Open: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am to 6pm
Open: Sundays 10am to 2pm

LAUREL

Elizabeth House Pantry & Meal Kitchen

FISH of Laurel Inc.
308 Gorman Ave
Laurel, MD 20707 | 240-547-9013
Meals - Open: Daily 6pm to 7:30pm
Food Pantry - Open: Tuesday & Saturday 10:30am to 12pm
Open: 2nd and 3rd Thursday each month 10:30am to 12pm

Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services (LARS) Food Pantry

311 Laurel Ave
Laurel, MD 20707 | 301-776-0442 #2
Open: Monday through Friday 9am to 2pm
Open: Monday 5am to 7:30pm

MultiService Center (MSC) Food Pantry

9900 Washington Blvd North Suite I
Laurel, MD 20723 | 410-313-0220
Open: Monday & Wednesday 12pm to 4pm

MARRIOTTSTVILLE

My Brother's Keeper Food Ministry Pantry

West Liberty United Methodist Church
2000 Sand Hill Road
Marriottsville, MD 21104 | 443-547-7702
Open: Fridays, by appointment only

SAVAGE

Bread of Life Food Pantry

First Baptist Church of Savage
8901 Washington Street
Savage, MD 20763 | 301-725-3944
Open: Thursdays 6:30pm to 8pm

WOODBINE

Morgan Chapel United Methodist Church Food Pantry

6750 Woodbine Road
Woodbine, MD 21797 | 410-970-2485
Open: 2nd and 4th Saturday 9am to 11am
Pet supplies - Open: 2nd Saturday only



Updated: 03/2023

Howard County LHIC

Local Health Improvement Coalition



Howard County Food Pantries & Hot Meals



SCAN
QR CODE
FOR FOOD MAP



COLUMBIA**Celebration Church Food Pantry**

6080 Foreland Garth
Columbia, MD 21044 | 410-997-2088
Open: Fridays 5:30pm to 6:30pm

Columbia Community Care Food Pantry**Long Reach Village Center**

8775 Cloudleap Court
Columbia, MD 21045 | 443-583-4479
Open: Saturdays 10am to 12pm

The Barn

5853 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045 | 443-583-4479
Open: Saturdays 10am to 12pm

Wilde Lake Interfaith Center

10431 Twin Rivers Road
Columbia, MD 21044 | 443-583-4479
Open: Saturdays 10am to 12pm

Community Cupboard Pantry

Bridgeway Community Church
9179 Red Branch Road STE C
Columbia, MD 21045 | 410-992-5832
Open: 2nd & 4th Saturdays each month
9:30am to 11:30am
Open: Sundays after the 9:45am service

FISH of Howard County

6132 Nest Side
Columbia, MD 21045 | 410-964-8660
Ongoing

Howard Community College Fueling**Dragons Food Pantry**

10901 Little Patuxent Parkway
Columbia, MD 21044 | 443-518-4950
Hours vary based on term

Howard County Food Bank & Food Pantries**Community Action Council**

9385 Gerwig Lane, Suite J
Columbia, MD 21046 | 410-313-6185
Open: Tues 1pm to 4pm | Wed 1pm to 7pm | Thurs 1pm to 4pm
Open: Sat (by appt only) 9am to 1pm

COLUMBIA - CONTINUED**Long Reach Little Free Pantry**

Long Reach Village Center
8775 Cloudleap Court
Columbia, MD 21045 | 410-730-8113
Ongoing

Luminus Network for New Americans Food Pantry

Luminus Network
5999 Harpers Farm Road
Columbia, MD 21044 | 410-992-1923
By appointment only

Rachell L. Gray Community Foundation Inc. Food Pantry

10750 Little Patuxent Parkway
Columbia, MD 21044 | 443-796-5162
Pantry - Open: 2nd Saturday each month 10am-12pm
Produce - Open: 3rd Saturday each month

S.A.F.E. Emergency Food Pantry**Gluten-Free and Allergy-Friendly Food Only**

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 316
Columbia, MD 21046 | 443-741-1060
Open: 3rd Saturday each month 10am to 12pm or
by appointment

St. John's Baptist Church Food Pantry

St. John's - Harper House
5495 Cedar Lane
Columbia, MD 21045 | 410-992-6977
Open: 3rd Saturday each month

Unitarian Universalist Congregation Little Free Pantry

Owen Brown Interfaith Center
7246 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, MD 21045 | 410-381-0097
Ongoing

Washington-Ghanaian SDA Church Food Pantry

6080 Foreland Garth
Columbia, MD 21045 | 443-774-0080
Open: Friday, February 3 | Friday, April 7
Friday, June 2 | Friday, August 4
Friday, October 6 | Friday, December 1

ELLCOTT CITY**Bethany Lane Baptist Church Food Pantry**

3030 Bethany Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 410-465-0150
By appointment only

Ellicott City Seventh Day Adventist Church Hot Meals & Community Garden

9121 St Johns Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042
Open: Saturdays 12:30pm

First Evangelical Lutheran Church Soup Kitchen

3604 Chatham Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 410-465-6864
Open: 3rd Saturday every other month 3:30pm to 4:30pm

Food and Care for All Pantry (FCFA)

10262 Baltimore National Pike
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 410-988-5392
Open: Tuesday & Thursday 9am to 4pm

Indian Cultural Association of Howard County**Food Pantry**

Miller Library Parking lot
9421 Frederick Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 410-567-6599
Open: 3rd Saturday each month 10am to 12pm

JT Cares Food Pantry

Jesus Tabernacle
10176 Baltimore National Pike Ste 117
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 443-325-5566
Open: 3rd Sunday each month 2:30pm to 3:30pm

St. Vincent De Paul Church of the Resurrection Hot Meals

3175 Paulskirk Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 410-461-9112
Open: 3rd Wednesday each month 1:30pm to 4pm at
Grassroots Day Resource Center

Salvation Army of Central Maryland Food Pantry

Howard County Family Service Center
3267 Pine Orchard Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042 | 443-656-3376
Open: Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm