



How do we love? ❤️

February 3rd -February 7th 2020

Hello Families,

As we prepare to enter into our unit, “How Do We Love?”, I wanted to take time to share information on what will be discussed, and what tools will be used to help us all learn about what makes us all unique and how we can show love and respect to one another.

Below is a statement we have written, based on the Mission Vision and Values of United Church of Ferndale the guiding principles for our school as well. Promoting Justice for all and respect for one another is key to how we learn to interact with one another in community. Because of this, we believe in the importance of lifting up Diversity and ways we show love to one another:

Who we are:

Our program is “Rooted and Grounded in Love” and has a focus on the social/emotional needs of children ages 3-5 years old. We believe in treating a child with the same respect you would treat an honored guest. Our program is inclusive of ALL. We are an open, affirming and reconciling school where all are warmly welcomed and treated with respect. We work to promote justice for everyone, cultivate joy and laughter, and give abundantly of our time and talents. We strive to take positive action to help one another, our community and world. We are advocates for creation, and work to better our ways of being in relationship with the earth.

This year, we have chosen to use a curriculum from Teachers for Change. www.teachingforchange.org. You are invited to peruse the website and see what they are working for in the wider world. We will be using their: “D.C. Area Black Lives Matter at School Week of Actions” curriculum for the week. Our lessons are very simple and written for Early Learning Programs. It typically includes a talking point, and a story.

Attached you will find the various talking points we will be discussing during the week. The books we will be reading will be available for review in the hallway on our long display table. Feel free to grab, review and read. Many of the books show the many forms of diversity of family and friends.

This year, we have chosen not to include the book "I Am Jazz" written by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings. This is a wonderful story that illustrates the journey of a Trans Child named Jazz. The story is told in a developmentally appropriate way for all children. We encourage you as a family to explore this book as a family as one more way we can truly educate ourselves and become aware of the many ways we are created.

If there is interest, we would be happy to organize a school reading of this book, outside of class time for those who would like to participate. Please let me know if you are interested.

In addition to laying the ground work of "How Do We Love?" this first week, we are also celebrating Valentine's Day this year very simply by putting an emphasis on how each child can take action on their own to make others feel loved and respected. There is no need to buy valentines for classmates, or gifts, candies or chocolates! We will be creating gifts for each other during class time. Gifts of kind words and Art. Here is an excerpt from my last newsletter:

In addition to us researching love and compassion, we will be celebrating Valentine's day very simply. Each child will have a bag with their name on it, in the hallway. They will be up for a few weeks. During this time, their friends are encouraged to write notes and pictures to their friends during class time and we will have the letters and pictures "delivered" to each bag.

This approach helps with:

**developing literacy and writing/drawing skills*

**learning that love and acknowledgement doesn't need to come from gifts or purchased items. That words and acknowledgement have meaning and feel good! Often times better than a box of chocolates.*

**Building confidence in each child, knowing that they can take action to make another person feel good on their own.*

**Being part of community and experiencing "delivering Mail"*

Thank you for supporting us in teaching your children something simple and meaningful

Thank you in for taking time to read our information, and supporting us, and we support your child's growth in Mind, Body and Spirit!

As always, please do not hesitate to ask any questions. I would be happy to meet and discuss at any time.

Kindly,

Kelly O. Sullivan