



St. Luke Child Development Center

11810 Burke Street • Omaha, NE 68154

"Going Zen"

It may be the sanest way to deal with all the clutter.

By Dahlia Lithwick

I wasn't a neat freak when I married, but I'd be the first to tell you that somewhere between having two kids under age 3 and the consequent explosion of Cheerios, teeny white socks, puzzle pieces, sippy-cup valves, and Plastic Things That Play Mozart, I have lost my mind and changed my ways. My husband would be the first to tell you that "foreplay" around here now means emptying the kitchen drain of the Arthur-shaped pasta and wiping down the counters.

The worst manifestation of my new obsession with neatness and order is this: I am frantic about toys with multiple parts. I am frantic about receiving them, frantic about letting my boys open them, and frantic about collecting and sorting all of their scattered pieces at the end of the day.

There was a time when I believed that life with children would be simpler, that we could limit the amount of stuff we would accumulate to a handful of cunning and educational wooden toys. Yet somehow, and almost as if he brought them forth with him from my uterus, Coby arrived with dozens of pieces of colorful plastic: the stacking rings ("a classic"); the teething toys ("a must-have"); the yellow bus on the pull cord with the small lions and bears; the nesting boxes; the musical bees; the blocks. Then more blocks.

And there was a time when, each night, after Coby was tucked up into his crib, my husband and I would painstakingly pile rings upon rings, pair small wooden pegs with large wooden boxes, match like with like. Presumably we did all this only so that if by chance we were robbed in the night, the burglar would be able to play with complete sets of educational toys.

I didn't really understand how truly pathological my attempts to keep multipart toys intact had become until I ran into a friend at the park. Like me, she was watching her toddler and her newborn. Like me, she looked exhausted and delighted. And like me, she was exhorting her 3-year-old not to lose any of the pieces of the toy he had insisted on dragging to the playground. "I know I sound nuts," she confessed. "But some bigger kids got hold of it yesterday and lost parts, and then he was devastated." (next page)

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Highlighted in this issue:

Fall Schedule Notice	3
Birthdays	3
Classroom Notes	4-7
Specialty Classes	6
Activity Calendar	7
Summer Latchkey	7
Staff	8
Menu	9

Child Care hours:

Weekdays

6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

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Continued from front page...

I confessed then, full of both shame and relief, to evenings spent maniacally hunting down the last, lost foam pieces that had strayed from the book to which they belonged; confessed to going half out of my mind at the missing puzzle piece that instantly renders the whole puzzle junk.

Recently, Coby selected his first big-boy toy—a plastic camper, with plastic *Sesame Street* characters that can sleep near a tiny plastic campfire, surrounded by little plastic water pumps and life rafts. "Are you sure you want that?" I asked, steering him hopefully toward large and self-contained items—kites and soccer balls—that wouldn't scatter to small spaces under exceedingly heavy, furniture in random rooms the moment he carried them across my threshold.

But the camper came home with us, and for several days I guarded its pieces like the Hope Diamond, barking like a prison warden that it wasn't to leave the playroom. Until I realized that since I'd eventually have to cook dinner, I'd also have to allow him to play unsupervised with these things, and therefore accept that these objects would likely break and become lost amid the other lost and broken things.

Offering my usual and perfunctory warning that "you will be sad if you lose this," I watched in some wonder as Coby took the Cookie Monster part of his camper set directly up to his bed. He then used the camper piece to ferry his Elmo doll to the Applebee's he'd made out of building blocks. And while, yes, the thing was no longer a "set" in the way we might conventionally use that term, its various pieces were all somehow deployed into service where they belonged.

There's a lovely Zen parable (seized upon by no less a mystical figure than basketball coaching legend Phil Jackson) about a meditation master, Achaan Chaa. When his students came to see him and asked how he could be happy in a world of such impermanence, the master held up a glass and said, "For me, this glass is already broken. I enjoy it; I drink out of it. But when I put this glass on a shelf and my elbow brushes it and it falls to the ground and shatters, I say, 'Of course.' When I understand that this glass is already broken, every moment with it is precious."

That plastic Cookie Monster probably belonged in Coby's bedroom even before it came out of the factory. That puzzle piece is lost before you tear off the shrink-wrap, and the action figurine is down the toilet or lost under the ficus even before you've paid for it. Maybe the very best thing for compulsively ordered mamas like myself would be to once in a while take the whole darn camper, and hurl it against the living room wall, recognizing that it's already broken and that every moment your child interacts with it, making sense of it in his own, albeit incomprehensible, way is precious.

The harder lesson here, the one I can barely manage to think about as my boys rustle about in their diapers, might be this: It's probably not a coincidence that I came to this compulsive orderliness just as they came into this world. At the end of each day, it's likely that the thing I am trying to sort, catalog, match, organize and preserve for all eternity is not so much their stuff as their lives. The thing that's already broken, in fact, is their childhood. Not broken, *per se*, but changing, dispersing, repurposing itself in unexpected ways. Like the small plastic stuff, they are already moving on to where they are meant to be.

I am not ready for that; not ready for the possibility that this scattering of small colorful plastic objects is a harbinger of the scattering of their selves. It's a scattering that's necessary, that's already happened, and that makes this time with them doubly precious. That Achaan Chaa was a wise man. I bet his Cookie Monster camper had only three wheels on it for the get-go. And I bet he loved it that way.

Dahlia Lithwick is a senior editor and legal correspondent at Slate.

Fall Schedule Begins in September

As we bid a farewell to many of the children leaving to start their elementary schools, most of the Center will experience room changes. Some children from Infant A through Pre-K 5's will be moving to new classrooms and starting the Fall 2008 Schedule.

*****Room assignments will be determined by age and development, and of course, space availability.**

On September 2nd, following the Labor Day holiday closing, water play and Pre-K outside centers will finish and the Specialty Classes (Music, Computers and Body Movement) will be in full swing! Your child's teacher should have the new schedule posted on their individual bulletin boards or inside the classroom. It will also have any changes in meal times associated with the new rosters in the classroom.

This is an exciting time and a busy one! It will be a time of transition affecting students, parents and teachers. Many of you "veteran" families will notice some new faces (and probably a little confusion) as the new families get started at St. Luke. Please offer assistance as needed. Let's welcome the 2008-2009 school year with the anticipation of great things to come!

Office Request of Parents

Parents please call the Center if your child will be absent from school. Often the teachers ask if we have heard from a family when a child is missing. It is advantageous for the office to know if it is due to illness or other circumstance as well. Always let us know if your child will be using a Free Vacation Week if absent 5 consecutive days for billing purposes. Thanks for your help!

Request for Latchkey Parents

On a related note regarding attendance for your child, please call ahead to inform the Office if your Latchkey-age child will be attending St. Luke during the school year. We understand when schools are out for weather related reasons that you will not be able to make reservations in advance; but for all planned time off please contact the Office at 333-6886 x301 to reserve a spot for your child. This pre-planning allows us to make food changes and have the appropriate amount of supplies on hand.

Kids' September Birthdays

Peyton Arians	18th	Age 2
Leah Bates	9th	Age 3
Lauren Crowe	5th	Age 3
Jackson Fischer	13th	Age 4
Ella Graeve	17th	Age 1
Brooke Kozak	18th	Age 3
Jake Kozak	18th	Age 5
Sydney Meyer	8th	Age 5
Jackson Morrissey	30th	Age 3
Seth Sapone	11th	Age 4
Adam Sucha	19th	Age 2
Katie Walters	14th	Age 4

Staff Birthdays This Month

Ashley Epps	Floater	25th
Audrey Haecker	Infant B	20th
Lisa Lind	Specialty Classes	19th
Kristina Warner	Floater	5th

Staff News & Notes

- ◆ Care and concern is expressed to Teg Karr, Latchkey teacher, whose mother is hospitalized.
- ◆ Care and concern is expressed to Tasha Jackson, Infant C teacher, who has had some health concerns.

Bad Weather Days

Weather cancellations will be handled as follows: Announcements will be made on radio stations KFAB (1110AM), KKAR (1290AM). Additionally, The St. Luke web site: www.stlukeumc.com will have this information. Check the yellow box on the home page. Any delay in opening or closing will be posted by 6:15 a.m. ****Please note: with the exit of Pastor Scott Shreve, there will not be a "mass email" to personal addresses any more.**

It is the intent of St. Luke to remain open. St. Luke has been closed less than five days in the last ten years due to inclement weather! However, always check the web site on any questionable bad weather day.

Classroom Notes

INFANT A (Room 121)

Summer has finally come to an end. We are looking forward to Fall and cooler weather. The babies are growing so fast. Most of them are rolling over and scooting. We get excited to see each one meet a new milestone but then we know it won't be long and they will move up to the Honey Bears. We get so attached! Good thing we have new babies to fill our arms and thoughts.

We will celebrate River City Round-Up Week Sept. 25–28. Please dress your child in western wear: cowboy/girl outfits, blue jeans, flannel, plaid shirts/overalls, etc.

Please label all bottles, blankets, pacifiers with medical or masking tape and black marker for their names. (We can assist you if you need help.) Be sure to have 2 sets of clothing everyday in their diaper bag in case the others become soiled.

INFANT B (Room 120)

It's September—WOW! We had fun taking pictures for Beach Day in August. On September 17th, we will be celebrating River City Round-Up (a little early). Please dress your child in a white top and blue jeans if possible this day.

And a quick reminder, please label supplies such as bottles, blankets, etc.

INFANT C & D (Rooms 110-111)

Bumblebees: Summer is almost over. We are excited that the heat will end soon (hopefully), and we will be able to spend more time outside. We smile when we see the big kids, many of them older siblings, pass by. As school begins we'll miss the waves, hugs and kisses they always gave us. Good Luck and have a great school year!

Butterflies: Wow! It's September and the classes are changing to a fall schedule. We had a blast learning about the Jungle! We'll focus on Apples as a theme in September. Be sure to bring a sweater/sweatshirt/jacket for cooler morning playtime. Please label it with your child's name. Thanks.

TODDLERS (Room 123)

Summer has flown by and we are all excited for fall. We had a blast playing in the water on Wednesdays. We loved having our friends from the Iguanas class come to read to us. We did many fun crafts. We made peacocks, painted lemonade glasses and colored on chalkboards.

Our themes for the month of September are: All About Me, Leaves, Apples and Numbers. Check your child's cubby on Fridays for all the fun art we have done during the week.

We will be making a family tree, painting leaves and many more projects. The color of the month is yellow. Please dress your child in yellow on Fridays in September.



**"You Are Our
Sunshine"**



2's (Rooms 116, 117, 118/119)

Monkeys: Last month we flew to the moon and in September we are "Driving in to the Future" with school buses and books, old and new. (You are always welcome to bring a book from home to share with our friends.) We continue to have Movie Day on Fridays and potty training is coming along nicely too.

In September, we will learn about Labor Day by making a collage of the many different jobs our mommies and daddies work at every day. We'll make special cards for the grandmas and grandpas to help celebrate Grandparents Day on Sept. 7th—mark your calendar!

Be sure to bring in needed supplies and extra clothing for training accidents. As the weather cools a light weight jacket would be nice to have in your child's cubby for morning play. Remember to label it with your child's name. Have a wonderful September! We love to smile back at your smiles!

Classroom Notes (continued)

2's continued:

Toucans: The summer months are winding down and fall will soon be here. We've had a great summer this year! Water play has been a splashing good time. In August we had themes on Dinosaurs and Jungle/Safari. We painted dinosaurs and made our own dinosaur, called the "You-a-Saurus." These were a big hit and we learned many things about our friends.

September themes will be: All About Me, Pets, Apples and finally, Cowboys/Western which will coincide with River City Round-Up in Omaha.

We have new art folders; please check these weekly.

Giraffes: We are sad to see summer go but fall will be a welcome change. August was fun when we painted a T-Rex using pudding! We enjoyed making a "You-a-Saurus" to learn about our friends. (Parents, thank you for helping with this activity.)

Watch for September themes on: All About Me, Pets, Apples and Cowboys. Also make sure your child has season appropriate clothing in their cubby.

3's (Rooms 112-115)

It's hard to believe how fast the summer has gone by, especially August. We have had a lot of fun learning about the many planets, how astronauts fly to the moon and the different constellations. We have done many colorful art projects involving the ocean and ocean animals.

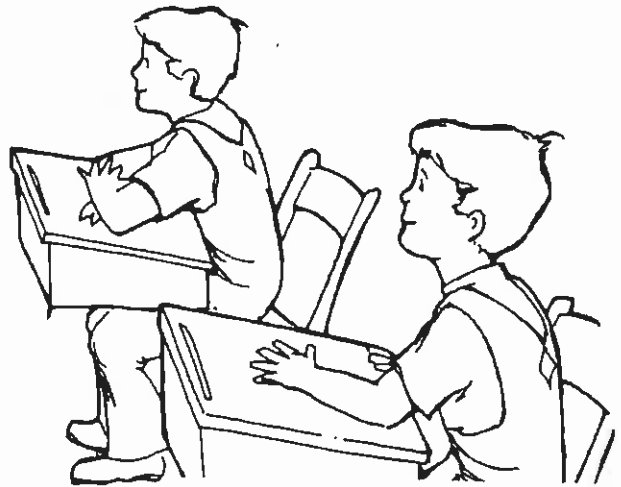
Next month themes are: All About Me, Pets, Apples and Cowboys/Western.

4's (Rooms 125-127)

August was an emotional month for the 4's/5's. We said goodbye to our friends heading off to Kindergarten or to new classrooms to start the fall school schedule. On the plus side we welcomed new friends to our rooms—some are children from the 3's classes here and a few are new from the community. We also welcomed Ms. Tammy who is now the lead teacher for the Kangaroos! In spite of all these changes, transitions have been smooth.

Some fun things we learned about in August were Safaris, Jungles and Rain Forests. Ms. Mary made a cardboard Jeep which we used to travel through the different landscapes. We found many interesting animals. Then we went digging for dinosaur bones while learning about these awesome beasts that once roamed the Earth!

During September we will begin to learn about our friends, old and new, as we tackle a theme called "All About Me." We will enjoy getting to know about each other, our families and even Community Helpers.



Classroom Notes (continued)

PRE-K 5's (Parlor)—Polar Bears

Diving into the Water Life theme was quite fun for the Polar Bears. In the Science Center we had sea animals in water and did an experiment with "sink or float" using various objects around the room. We sorted animals between those that live in water or on the land. For a math application we counted goldfish on to numbered aquariums and then we ate them! We sorted different shapes and sizes of fish in the pond section of the Math/Sensory Area.

Rain Forests, Jungle, and Safari Week was a blast! We made a cardboard safari truck. Some of us dressed like animals, hiding about the room, and others wore a safari hat and binoculars. Then we went on an imaginary safari. We matched toucans and animal prints to cut-out shapes and counted ants for the ant-eater. We floated crocodiles and snakes in a grassy marsh created in the Science Area. And most important we talked about preserving and protecting the Rain Forests of the world.

We became Paleontologists during the dinosaurs theme and dug for bones. We measured those we found. In math we sunk islands: "How many dinosaurs does it take to sink an island?" In the cooking lab we made an Amber Snack using jello and gummy dinosaurs.

September themes will be: All About Me, Pets, Apples and Cowboy/Western.

"On a personal note, I want to thank all the parents for letting me spend this year with your children. They are ready for Kindergarten, a new leg of their life journey. Enjoy this time, it will pass quickly just like infancy and the pre-school years!

I'm looking forward to welcoming the new-kids on-the-block (and their parents) to the Polar Bears class. We will get busy with our Kindergarten curriculum right away. Watch for a note introducing the room and my objectives as your child's teacher. We have a great year ahead of us!"

Ms. Mary

SPECIALTY CLASSES

Body Movement, Music, and Computers are offered for 3's, 4's, Pre-K, and Latchkey.

Music/Movement: We have had so much fun this summer in our outside Music/Movement Center. We have enjoyed singing songs like Just Can't Wait To Be King, The Circle of Life, Harold the Hippo and Put Your Left Paw In for the Jungle theme. We moved right in to the Dinosaurs theme with songs such as Wee Sing Dinosaurs, The Dinosaur Hunt and many others. We also enjoyed an Ice Cream Social in August as a send off to all the students beginning Kindergarten. It was a nice way to say goodbye to many of our friends. We're happy we'll still see many of them when they return For Occasional Care with the Latchkey Program when school is out for various reasons. We sang some karaoke, did ribbon dancing, African drums, hula hoops and bubbles during the Center time too.

In September, Music and Body Movement will be separate classes so look for your child's new schedule in their classroom. We'll have so much fun learning together!

Water Play: We have thoroughly enjoyed Water Play this month. We love the squirty toys, water tables, sliding on Spiderman Slip'n'Slides, splashing in pools and of course, going down the tall Bonzai Slides! We had lemonade Bomb Pops while drying off on our towels afterward. We'll be sorry to finish this activity when August ends.

Computers: We have been learning on fun software such as Putt Putt Saves The Zoo, Madagascar, 3-D Dinosaur Adventure, Spiderman, Franklin Learns Math, Just Grandma and Me, Pajama Sam, Scooby Doo Jinx at the Sphinx and Magic School Bus Explores the Ocean! We'll miss our Latchkey friends when they leave for school.

Classroom Notes (continued)

LATCHKEY PROGRAM

St. Luke's Latchkey Program is designed as a bridge between school and home. It provides a healthy balance of structure and individual freedom to make choices, as well as a place to build friendships with peers and a variety of adults.

The Latchkey program offers different types of care for school-age children during the year:

*Occasional Care Latchkey is a popular program during the school year when your elementary-age child is out for conferences, holiday breaks or snow days. This drop-in service is for registered children only. Reservations are highly encouraged for any planned/scheduled days that your elementary school is not in session.

*Full-Time Summer Latchkey offers many activities such as swimming lessons at the YMCA, tae-kwondo lessons, field trips around the Omaha area, water play days, arts and crafts, and cooking projects to name a few. All transportation to and from these activities is provided.

Eagles (Great Room—East)

We have had a nice summer together; the months went by quickly. They were filled with many cooking projects, crafts, E-Gads! Science, water play, computer class and for some Tae-kwondo and swimming lessons. Even as the children had various weeks off for family vacations and sport camps, we managed to keep our friendships tight with each other.

Some of our "regulars" have ended their care at St. Luke—either due to location changes, siblings starting elementary school or becoming too "old"! We will miss them, especially their humor, kindness and the closeness of friendship throughout the years.

The last week of Summer Latchkey as a class was filled with multiple cooking projects and an especially cool, personalized craft called, "Mosaic Sand Hands." We used sea glass, river stones, sea shells and plaster-of-paris. They put one hand in fine sand then created a mosaic design with the materials provided, attached a chopstick as a stem and mounted all of it on a wooden block. The kids were very proud of their work!

Continued.....

***A huge thank you to Mr. Eddy (Infant B teacher, Donna's, husband) for cutting the blocks of wood for that project. Also a big thanks to Ms. Lucy, Infant C teacher, and Jessica's mom, for drilling the holes in the wooden blocks to attach the stems! Without their help, I would have not been able to do this amazing project.

We enjoyed a tour at Godfather's Pizza and each child made a personal pan pizza for the final field trip of the summer.

Parents, plan your child's reservations for Occasional Care this school year; I hear some schools already have a day off in September.

Thank you for sharing your children with me this summer. It's been a pleasure!

Ms Teg

Activity Calendar for 3's, 4's and Pre-K 5's

During the month of September the themes for ages 3-5 will be:

9/2—9/5	All About Me
9/8—9/12	Pets
9/15—9/19	Apples
9/22—9/26	Cowboys/Western

Foreign Language Development—Spanish words:

El Padre/La Madre	Father/Mother
La Manzana	Apple
El Caballo	Horse

Sign Language: classroom letter of the week

Cultural Speakers: TBD

St. Luke Staff

Director

Valorie Buis

Enrollment Director

Kimberly Walker

Secretary

Phyllis Gabelhause

Office Assistant

Kristin McCormick

Curriculum Coordinator

Teg Karr

Music, Body Movement & Computers

Lisa Lind

Kitchen

Karen Moore

Subs/Seasonal

Christine Gabelhause

Kerri Gabelhause

Chelsea Hill

Kara Kahnk

Kacey Lee

Erin Ommen

Infant A & B

Sayna Amoura

Laura Breitenfeld

Donna Eddy

Audrey Haecker

Yong Middleton

Bev Nihsen

Georgia Sage

Dawn Sutton

Infant C & D

Sandy Bevington

Carolyn Charnquist

Lucy Hack

Megan Harper

Tasha Jackson

Toddlers

Lois Brodin

Judy Fisher

Tiffany Mauseth

Jennifer Ruud

2's

Rawda Al-Sharif

Natasha Baldwin

Courtney Gazda

Melonie Kleinberg

Mai Nguyen

Havaja Suleta

Helen Wheeler

Amy Young

3's

Teresa Gaskill

Wendy Snyder

Deb Zagurski

Pre-K

Stephanie Cox

Tammy Sorensen

Shelly Steffen

Mary Stoops

Latchkey

Jill Bruckner

Teg Karr

Floater Teachers

Sayna Amoura

Laura Breitenfeld

Jill Bruckner

Kathy Budka

Ashley Epps

Sally Grimes

Megan Harper

Nicole Leffler

Mai Nguyen

Christopher Peters

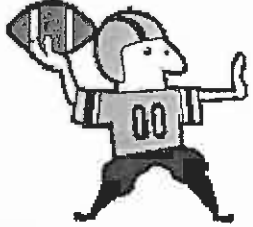
Kristina Warner

Tabatha Williamson

Amy Young



SEPTEMBER LUNCH & SNACK MENU

1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Closed	Egg Roll W/ Sweet & Sour Sauce Fried Rice Pineapple AM-Eggs & Sausage PM-Bear Cookie	Pizza Hut Pizza Lettuce Salad Mixed Fruit AM-Cereal & Toast PM-Chocolate Choc. Chip Cookie	Cheese Enchilada Broccoli Slaw Banana AM-Breakfast Pastry PM-Brownie	Grilled Chicken Filet Sandwich Cucumber & Tomato Salad Peaches AM-Waffles PM-Dolphin Crackers
8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Sloppy Joe on Bun French Fries Apple Wedges AM-Cereal & Toast PM-Cherry Oatmeal Bar	Macaroni & Cheese Cucumber Slicks Mixed Fruit AM – French Toast PM – Rice Krispy Treat	Pizza Hut Pizza Lettuce Salad Mixed Fruit AM – Cereal & Toast PM – Sugar Cookie	Crispy Tacos Lettuce & Cheese Cup Corn Banana AM – Breakfast Pastry PM – Flag Cake	Turkey Pot Pie Peas Fresh Pear AM-Pancakes PM-Jello
15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th	19 th
Whole Grain Grilled Cheese Baby Carrots Applesauce AM – Cereal & Toast PM – Kitty Chow	Herb Roasted Chicken over Rice Steamed Broccoli Grapes Dinner Roll AM – Eggs & Sausage PM –Cheese on Cheese Crackers	Pizza Hut Pizza Lettuce Salad Pears AM –Cereal & Toast PM – Choco. Chip Cookie	Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce Green Beans Watermelon Garlic Bread Stick AM – Breakfast Pastry PM – Shortbread w/ Rainbow Icing	Nachos w/ Beef & Cheese Mexi Tots Banana AM – Waffles PM – Cinnamon Crumb Cake
22 nd	23 rd	24 th	25 th	26 th
Chicken Nuggets Cherries Dinner Roll Autumn Crisp AM – Cereal & Toast PM – Bear Cookie	Creamed Turkey Mashed Potatoes Apple Wedges Dinner Roll AM – French Toast PM – Brownie	Crispito w/ Chili con Queso Corn Watermelon AM – Cereal & Toast PM – Snicker Doodle Cookie	Egg, Sausage & Cheese on Bun Hashbrown Casserole Orange Wedges AM – Breakfast Pastry PM – Soft Pretzel	BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich Corn Apple Wedges AM – Pancakes PM – Caramel Bar
29 th	30 th			
Chicken Nuggets Baby Carrots Cinnamon Apple Slice AM – Cereal & Toast PM – Sugar Cookie	Chicken Noodle Soup w/ Oyster Crackers Grapes AM – Eggs & Sausage PM – Cinnamon Breadstick			

Every lunch is served with 2% milk. Snacks are served with milk or juice, dependent upon what snack items are on the menu. Occasionally there will be substitutions as necessary.