



Children's Center Update

January 27, 2017

Dear Idlewild Family:

You may know that Idlewild Children's Center has been in existence for some 40 years, and currently serves more than 134 children with preschool, summer camp and aftercare programs. The Center occupies classrooms in the Jones Building and also makes extensive use of the gym, playground, and the basement kitchen and eating area. Providing high quality, reliable care and education for children of working parents, the Children's Center has been a source of energy, growth and laughter at Idlewild.

Our upcoming renovation will involve the building that houses our Children's Center, and as you can imagine, a construction site is not an appropriate place for children to play, learn, nap and eat. As plans for our construction timeline have been developed, it has become clear that it will not be possible to offer a safe, quiet and comfortable space for the children's center during the construction process and there is no available alternative site that meets all requirements for a children's center. Focusing on what is best for the children, we have made the difficult decision to close Idlewild Children's Center at the end of the school year in May. With approval from the Session, **the center's last day of operations will be Friday, May 26, 2017.**

The Children's Center board developed this plan after much prayer and deliberation, and they chose the closing date at the end of a semester because that's the usual classroom transition time for the children and teachers. The Children's Center staff will continue to love and care for the children, and they will aim to make the coming months a special and memorable time for them.

It is with sadness that we have come to this realization. We simply can't safely care for and teach children in a hardhat construction area, and there is not another nearby location that offers the space and facilities needed to provide a high quality children's program. We are sharing this information well in advance of the closing so families have time to make other child care arrangements that will best meet their needs.

We are deeply grateful for the Idlewild Children's Center teachers and Center director Latrice Toombs. We will do all we can to help them through this transition in their lives and to express our appreciation to them in a meaningful way.

Idlewild plans to again offer a children's center following the renovation, and we expect an opening date to be no sooner than Fall, 2018. Updates on the status of construction and timeline for opening the new children's center can be found at www.idlewildchurch.org/moreidlewild.

Please keep the children and families of Idlewild Children's Center in your prayers, and please also pray for the Center staff as they navigate this transition. I know they will all be grateful for your support.

If you have questions about this, please reach out to Marion Samuel, chair of the Idlewild Children's Center Board.

May the peace of Christ be with you all,

The Reverend Dr. Stephen R. Montgomery
Pastor

