

Getting into Winter

(Reporter's note: These articles are based on monthly reports by the department heads at the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center. As a result, they are a month behind. So, the activities you will read below happened in December as, at the time of this writing, January isn't over! Kinda like going back in time...kinda.)

As you might guess, December was full of holiday celebrations. But at the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, it was a lot more.

Center Curriculum Coordinator, Dashaba Fielder, says that the holidays bring out different colors like gold, red, green, white and opportunities to be creative.

"(Toddler scholars) painted hands and feet to create holiday keepsakes for their families. They sang the traditional *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, and they enjoyed creating 'reindeer' hats using construction paper and crayons."



Meanwhile, the preschoolers enjoyed a winter theme. "They made snowflakes,...hot cocoa at the hot chocolate bar (with) sprinkles, candy canes, and whipped sprinkles. They even enjoyed a holiday movie, *The Polar Bear Express*."

Of course, what would a Christmas celebration be without a visit from Santa?! Center Deputy Director, Brandon Furrowh, says the season's highlight was the second annual *Brunch and Books with Santa*.



"This event hosted over 40 families within local communities, including Hilltop employees and their families. This literacy-centered event was filled with holiday-themed music and décor, delicious soul food provided by *The Vibe Catering*, a range of books purchased from *2nd and Charles*, family reading time, a live dance performance, a reading of the classic book *A Night Before Christmas*, pictures with Santa, and more. Families unanimously attested to this being a great event and look forward to next year."



According to Hilltop Executive Director, Michelle Williams, there was programming for adults in December too.

“The Build & Bond Men’s Wellness Group’ met at Hilltop on December 23rd. Participants learned how to cook healthy with simple, real ingredients. The group is lead by stroke survivor, wellness expert, David Hannah, MS.”

At least 3 Christmas miracles occurred at the center in December. Michelle says the first was “Speedway Children’s Charities, Dover Motor Speedway Chapter, awarded Hilltop \$5000 to continue supporting children in need and making positive impacts. I attended the Grant Awards Luncheon at Evergreen Farms in Dover to accept the award on December 3rd. ”

The second miracle was the gifts supplied by the Lutheran Churches in New Castle County. “The annual Christmas gift delivery was held on December 21st. Thanks to all who made it possible for every child to receive gifts!”

Michelle says the third miracle involved providing a special Christmas for two Hilltop families who, “were adopted for Christmas. Both families recently found affordable housing after experiencing homelessness for extensive periods of time.”

And so another year draws to a close. Another year of service to the children and their families in the Hilltop Area of Wilmington. Here’s to an even better year full of opportunity and service for those in need.

Thank you for your continued support,

*Eric F. Mease
Member, Board of Directors
Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center*