

## Anxious for Springtime at Hilltop!

As the students at the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center welcome springtime, they continue their study of a variety of topics. Most recently, our students celebrated and learned more about Black History.

Center Youth Services Coordinator, Teresa Allen, reports that, not only did the children learn about the more famous African Americans in history, but also some of the lesser known, though no less impactful Black contributors to American life.



“Our children are totally unaware of the contributions Black Inventors have made in this country. Their first activity for learning about Black Inventors was reading a book called *Black Invention: 15 inventions that changed the world*. From the reading of this book, they learned about Garrett Morgan, the inventor of the Traffic light and the Gas Mask; Charles Drew, the inventor of Blood plasma, which eventually became The Blood Bank as we know it today. Some women inventors,” Teresa noted, “helped to change the world! Women like Marie Van Brittan, who invented the Home Security System, Dr. Patricia Bath, who invented the Laserphaco Eye Surgery Device, which has helped millions of people improve their eyesight, and Lisa Gelobter, who improved computer technology and created WEB Animation.”

While the older Hilltop children were learning Black history, Center Curriculum Coordinator, Dashaba Fielder, says the toddlers were leaning into social-emotional skills.



“Our toddlers enjoyed the Built by People unit. They created train tracks using paint and tape. We had great lessons on taking turns and sharing. They were building structures with blocks and working together. We all know that sharing and taking turns can be difficult for our toddlers (and some adults too!).”

Meanwhile, Dashaba says, “the toddler 2s are always eager to show the world their counting skills! They enjoyed adding, removing and counting cotton balls from bowls, and of course, counting together!”

But the learning didn't stop there! According to Dashaba, “the students were introduced to some new vocabulary words: envelope, delivery, and mailbox. The children were able to identify all areas of the classroom to create a neighborhood map. They used the map to deliver the mail to the areas on the map. The students discussed their favorite stores they see in their neighborhood. They all agreed on Pizza Shop, Chinese Stores, McDonald's, and Dollar Tree!”

There was a food need during February which, Center Deputy Director Brandon Furrowh says, was overcome with the help of our Lutheran Church family.

“Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center supported multiple families for February. Families were elated that the food options expanded beyond pasta and dry goods into meat, eggs, and milk. Participants of the (Center’s) food closet this month were able to make full meals for their families, thanks to the generous donations from caring individuals at the Lutheran churches who heard the need and decided to help.”

Finally, the Hilltop Center’s wide ranging enrichment programs will continue this spring. Brandon says they resumed on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

“This rotation of enrichment will include cooking classes, DJ workshops, and Bible Nights (a play on summer’s traditional Vacation Bible School). Students registered for Bible Nights will receive their own Bible Study Workbook for Kids, a resource that includes lessons, interactive activities, quizzes, and thought-provoking questions to promote their growth in faith.”

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