

Dear Parents,

Hello! Our first few days have been wonderful. Old friends were happy to see one another, and new friends were welcomed into the family. We thank every family that has entrusted their children to our care. We look forward to many more wonderful weeks yet to come.

With the school year well underway, I'd like to offer everyone a little background for the festival gatherings at our school. When we celebrate festivals together at Morning Meadow, it helps to mark the changes in nature and to revitalize the tradition of the community. Modern life - with all its conveniences - can be somewhat disconnected. We have lost some of the sense of community found in the smaller, more intimate setting of days gone by. Neighbors would often gather together to share the changes in nature. In Waldorf schools strive to bring back a greater sense of belonging. Seasonal festivals bring us together for a few hours, pausing to connect, enjoying each other's company, and realizing that we are all part of the same world.

MICHAELMAS

The festival of Michaelmas is celebrated throughout Europe in late September, a few days after the Autumn Equinox. As Autumn approaches, the life forces of nature recede. We begin to see the expansion of summer lessen as we start to enjoy fall. We traditionally tell stories of a knight taming a dragon, stories where the knight must overcome challenges to face the dragon ultimately, and then tame him. The dragon represents those aspects of our personality that we might like to or need to overcome or tame, so to speak.



The knight is our Ego force—making a conscious decision to change a trait, habit, or challenge as we enter a new season. This adult explanation is not shared with the children; instead, we portray themes through stories of how a knight, using bravery, wits, and skill can overcome the dragon. This shows how the human being is capable of great things.

As adults, we can see how we can take up our “sword” to right the wrongs in our world, our community, and in ourselves.

For the children, we gather and transform apples into applesauce. We may plant bulbs in the garden and then imagine what happiness abounds when they bloom in Spring so many months later (sometimes we wait a long time to see the effects of our actions). We will dye some cloths to make capes with natural turmeric dye and enjoy dragon bread. We will participate in artistic expressions to bring the abstract into form. Some of the activities we do yearly to form traditions, such as apple sauce and a marionette show, and others we refresh to keep the festival alive.

This year, our Michaelmas celebration will be on **Saturday, September 28**, from 10:00 to 12:00 at Morning Meadow. A small cost to help us offset the materials is \$20.00 per family. However, if this is difficult, please still join us. I do not want that to be a barrier to joining us; please just catch me privately so you can join us, and your private life stays just that—private. We want all of you to join us!

SOPHIA STUDY GROUP



We are preparing to enjoy another year of our Anthroposophical study group, the Sophia Study Group. I know that some of you are asking, "What the heck is that?"

The educator and philosopher who founded Waldorf education, Rudolph Steiner, is also the founder of a philosophy known as Anthroposophy - the study of man. The analogy I often use is that Anthroposophy is like the trunk of a tree. This tree has many branches, one of which is Waldorf education. There are many other biodynamic gardening medicine speech, movement, and architecture, to name a few. This philosophy is the foundation of Waldorf education.

We study as a group one of the many Steiner books or lectures and will soon be starting a new book. We meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30 am to 11:00. All are welcome to join us; please note this is an adult-only group.

A FEW REMINDERS

We ask that sugary desserts please stay at home. Fruit is always a healthy alternative and enjoyable. I know every once in a while, a cookie or a special treat may make its way into your little one's lunch, and I can understand that. However, we do ask that daily treats not be a matter of practice, and it makes eating their "growing food" that much more difficult. I appreciate your support.

We also ask that toys please stay at home. It is hard to share easily; one of the life lessons we are learning here is that if toys join us at school, it makes sharing more difficult with a larger group because it is their home toy versus all the toys at Morning Meadow belonging to all of us. Thank you!

We are looking forward to a year of getting to know your wee ones; it's been fantastic so far.

Thank you for your continued support!

Ms. Sylvia and the Morning Meadow teachers!