



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

January 2026

We are excited to officially kick off our 50th anniversary celebration. As you will read below, Wonders Early Learning and Extended Day was founded in 1976 as a secular, nonprofit community outreach program of All Saints' Church. This was just 5 years after President Nixon vetoed the Comprehensive Child Development Act in 1971. The bipartisan legislation stated that locally run child care programs should be available "as a matter of right to all children regardless of economic, social, and family background."

Five years after the vision and plan for a coordinated and well funded child care system was denied, All Saints' All Day (now Wonders) was founded to support working families by providing high quality care and education that prepared young children for kindergarten. Establishing a nonprofit child care organization then took vision and clarity about the mission and values and a commitment that communities need high quality child care to thrive.

A little over a decade later, when I began working in All Saints' All Day's after school program, I realized that I had found an organization that aligned with my philosophy. Our work enables families to be the families they need and want to be. Our teaching practices support the whole child as we nurture children's identity development and foster inquiry and exploration. Our workplace culture promotes life-long learning and honors the professionalism of our staff. Collectively, we have a shared commitment to a respectful community where all families, children and staff feel known and welcomed. Above all, Wonders recognizes the value of this important work.

It is an honor to be able to celebrate Wonders at 50 years and to establish the foundation for the next 50 years. Thank you for joining us as we build the future for young children.

Warmly,

Joanne Hurt

Joanne Hurt
Executive Director



50th Anniversary

Honoring 50 Years of Wonders





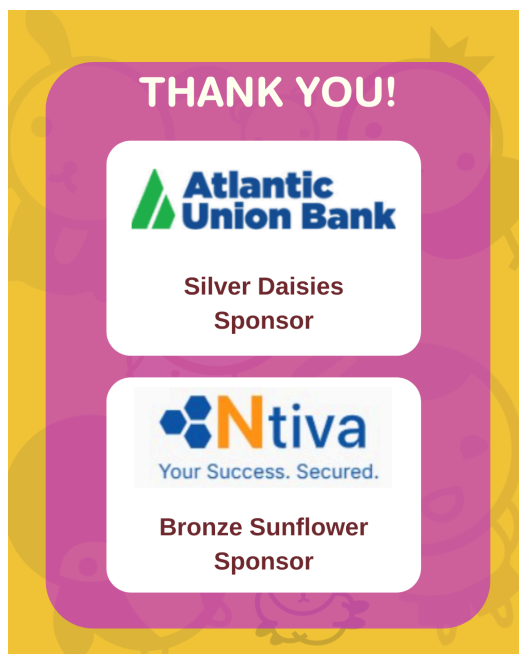
What began as a single center in the basement of All Saints' Church in Chevy Chase, Maryland, has grown into a vibrant community of NAEYC accredited early learning, extended day, and summer camp programs serving families across Montgomery County, Maryland, and Washington, DC—touching thousands of lives along the way. Every milestone in this journey has been made possible by your generous support.

As we begin a new year, we are proud to continue celebrating Wonders' 50th Anniversary, honoring five decades of learning, growth, and community impact. Throughout 2026, we will spotlight the children, families, educators, and partners who make Wonders a place where our community thrives.

With the launch of our [50th Anniversary Campaign](#), we invite you to join us in this special celebration. Our goal is to raise **\$150,000** to strengthen Wonders' Reserve Fund—a vital resource that helps ensure long-term organizational stability and the continued delivery of high-quality programs for years to come.

We are thrilled to share that we have already raised **\$20,000** in pledges and donations, and **\$10,000** in event sponsorships.

Thank you to our current sponsors, Atlantic Union Bank and Ntiva!



The Wonders Story

A lookback on the last 50 years

News of All Saints' Church
Chevy Chase, Maryland



January 18, 1976

Dear Friends,

I am happy to be able to write that after surmounting many obstacles, the Child Care Center which was one of the recommendations of the Task Force on Goals has at last begun its operations. It began January 5 with ten children enrolled in the full and half-day child care program. Housed in the building we call "Kingan Annex" at 3901 Oliver Street, the Center is open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a. m. until 6 p. m., and is the only day care center in Chevy Chase. There are openings for children two to six years old, with tuition \$5.00 per half day, less deductions for time contributed by parents.

In providing a loving homelike atmosphere in which young children can learn and play, "All Saints' All Day" Care Center hopes to serve working and student parents. Every staff member has training and experience in child development or early childhood education, and together are trying to build an exemplary learning program for both the children and their families. A continuing goal is the real participation by the parents whose children are with us and to make it their center as well as the children's center, for the underlying philosophy of the Center is that parenting and teaching should be done in partnership. A "post office" in the Center, a newsletter, and daily personal contact with the teachers are all expected to support this.

The Center has its own telephone number (654-5339), which is NOT connected with the parish telephones and cannot be answered from any of them. Persons wishing further information are invited to call that number weekdays, or to visit the Center during its time of operation. Those who come will find it a warm, friendly learning center which provides all day care for little children, welcomes parents, encourages parish support, and hopes to be of real service to the community. It is a non-profit venture of which all of us may be proud. Franna McClelland and Penny Eisenhart are parishioners who operate the Center, and we -- along with all who will benefit from their labor -- are deeply in their debt.

Faithfully your Rector,

Charles Edward Buzza

Vol. XII, No. 3

1976: All Saints All Day began with only 7 children in one classroom

Wonders began with Frances "Franna" S. McClelland and Penny Eisenhart's vision to create an exemplary early childhood program as a community outreach of All Saints' Church, one that nurtured children *and* supported families.

The launch was shared in the *All Saints' Church* bulletin:

"A continuing goal is the real participation by the parents... for the underlying philosophy of the Center is that parenting and teaching should be done in partnership."

That spirit of collaboration and creativity still guides us today—50 years later.



1980: The program grew to serve 45 preschoolers

1984: The first school-age program opened at the Chevy Chase Circle location

1985: Before & After School programs open at Chevy Chase Elementary School in Chevy Chase, Maryland

1985: Wonders Summer Camp program was launched

1986: Before & After School and summer camp programs began at Somerset Elementary School



1987: State accreditation granted to operate a half-day nursery at Chevy Chase Elementary

1989: A second full-day Preschool program opened at Leland Children's Center

1992: Kindergarten Enrichment program started at Rosemary Hills Primary School

1997: Before & After school programs expanded to include North Chevy Chase Elementary School

1999: All Saint All Day initiated Before & After school programs at Rosemary Hills Primary School



2001: Kindergarten Enrichment and Before & After School programs opens at Bethesda Elementary School

2002: Launched the first Washington, DC based program; an After School program at the Jewish Primary Day School

2004: Before & After School programs open at Horace Mann Elementary School in Washington, DC

2005: Edgemoor Children's Center open, serving infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in Bethesda, Maryland

2006: All Saints All Day changes its name to Wonders Child Care Center, Inc and Wonders characters were born!



2016: Wonders Child Care Center, Inc changed its name to Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day

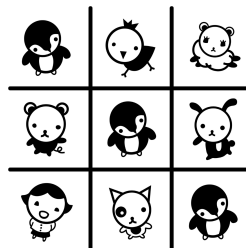
2019: After School Enrichment programs open at Charles E. Smith in Rockville, MD

2021: After School Enrichment programs open at Geshar in Fairfax, Virginia

2022: Before & After School programs open at John Francis Education Campus in Washington, DC

2022: Before & After School programs open at Murch Elementary School

2026: Currently serving over 760 children with 9 different program locations throughout Maryland and Washington, DC



I love wonders.
Thank you wonders.
I like wonders.
I is Think Great. wonders.





50th Anniversary Events

Join us this year!

To kick off our 50th anniversary celebration, Wonders is hosting a community discussion reflecting on the past 50 years of child care—both locally and nationally. Together, we will explore key trends, policy developments, and systems-level changes from a variety of perspectives. We invite the entire community to join us as we honor our past and envision a strong, sustainable future for child care in our community. Hot lattes, along with black and herbal teas, will be served for you to enjoy.

[Free event, registration requested.](#)

Panel Discussion with Journalist Rebecca Gale

Panelists:

Jennifer Arnaiz, Senior Administrator, DHHS Early Childhood Services

Jennifer Park, Founder & President, Early Childhood Solutions

Joanne Hurt, Executive Director of Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day

Date: Friday, January 30, 2026

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Location: Chevy Chase Town Hall
4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Join Us! 50th Anniversary Community Conversation

A Panel Discussion led by Journalist, Rebecca Gale

To kick off our 50th celebration, Wonders is hosting a community discussion to reflect on the past 50 years of child care locally and nationally. We will discuss trends, policy, and systems change from our various perspectives. We invite the community to join us in person for this discussion as we reflect on the past and envision a future for child care in our community.

Jennifer Arnaiz, Senior Administrator DHHS Early Childhood Services

Jennifer Park, Founder & President, Early Childhood Solutions

Joanne Hurt, Executive Director, Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day



Friday, January 30, 2026

8:30 am

*The Town of Chevy Chase Town Hall
4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase MD*



free event, registration requested

This spring, we're thrilled to invite our entire community to a very special milestone celebration, The **Wonders 50th Anniversary Garden Party**, taking place March 28, 2026. The Garden Party will bring together families, alumni, staff, supporters, and friends to celebrate the many "seeds of opportunity" that have blossomed at Wonders over the past fifty years, and the bright future ahead. Please note this is an adults-only event. Tickets on sale soon!

JOIN US IN MARCH!

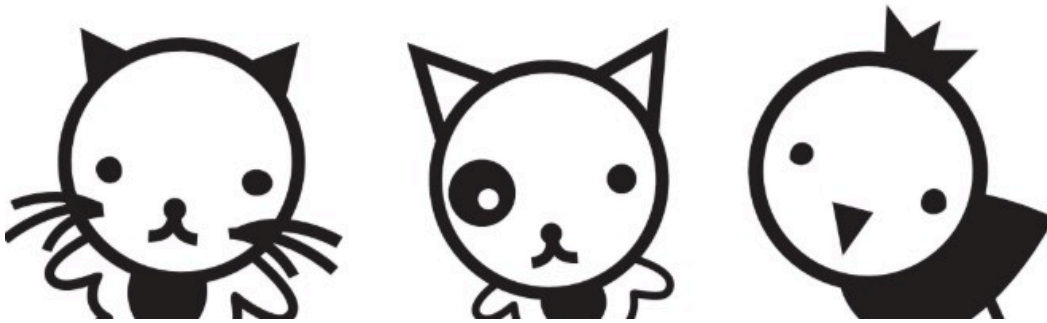
WONDERS 50TH ANNIVERSARY GARDEN PARTY

**SATURDAY,
MARCH 28, 2026**
Imagination Stage
4908 Auburn Ave.
Bethesda, MD
6:30 - 9:30 PM

Ticket Prices:

Individual: \$125
Couple: \$225

*Please note this is an
adults-only event*



Wonderspalooza is more than just a carnival- it's a celebration of our community's spirit, values, and resilience. It's an inclusive gathering where families, friends, and neighbors of all ages can come together to connect, create, and celebrate what makes Wonders so special.

WondersPalooza

Community Family Fun Carnival!
We invite our entire community
— all ages welcome —
for carnival games, laughter, and fun!

Saturday, May 2, 2026 | 10:30am - 2:00pm

Tickets on sale in March

**Chevy Chase Elementary School,
4015 Rosemary Street, Chevy Chase, MD**



Community Spotlights

First Friday Reader



Our Leland community was delighted to welcome former board member and current Leadership Circle member, Mary Gross, this month as our First Friday Reader. She shared the beloved story *A Chair for My*

Mother by Vera B. Williams—a heartfelt tale of resilience, generosity, and community, following a young girl and her family as they work together to save money for a special chair after a devastating house fire.

Wonders Merchandise



Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day Merchandise

Pricing:



\$35

Adult Crewneck Sweatshirts
Sizes: XS–3XL



\$20

Youth Long-Sleeve Shirts
Sizes: XS–XL



\$15

Toddler T-Shirts
Sizes: 2T–5T



\$15

Bear Keychain



\$15

Penguin Plush



\$3

Crayon Set



\$5

Colored Pencil Set



wonderslearning.org/donate

Additional Ordering Instructions

- When purchasing online, please include in the comment section: Program site location, item purchased, and size needed.
- All purchased items can be picked up at your program site; please coordinate with the Program Director.
- If you need your item mailed to you please indicate in the comment section.

Annual Giving Campaign

Thank you!

Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day extends our gratitude to our community, including current families, alumni, grandparents, grandfriends, former board members, and friends of Wonders, for their support and belief in our mission. Your contributions to our Annual Giving Campaign strengthen our investment in high-quality childcare programs that children love, and parents depend upon. Together we raised \$53,078 in donations and pledges. Thank you for ensuring that Wonders continues to Strive, Build and Thrive!

Parent + Caregiver Workshops

Join us for our virtual Parent/Workshop Series! We continue to partner with the Child Development Consultants for informative sessions for parents, guardians, and caregivers. Each workshop in the series highlights a different topic.

We will no longer use Eventbrite for parent workshop registrations, but each session remains free and open to the public.



March Workshop Topic: Wondrous 2's Formerly Known as Terrible 2's

Date: Wednesday March 11, 2026

Time: 1:00pm- 2:00pm

Location: ZOOM (Virtual)

[Register Here](#)

May Workshop Topic: Developing Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills in Young Children

Date: Wednesday May 13, 2026

Time: 1:00pm- 2:00pm

Location: ZOOM (Virtual)

[Register Here](#)

Wonders Summer Camp 2026

Calling all campers,
ages 5 - 12 years old!

wonders summer camp

June 22 - Aug 7

Wonders Summer Camp will be here soon! Registration opens in December 2025. We look forward to an exciting, fun-filled, and memorable summer with campers at our Bethesda location!

LEARN MORE

wonderslearning.org/summercamp



Donate to Wonders

Teaching children through play and a nurturing and diverse community.

[Make a donation today to ensure access to quality care and education.](#)

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