

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of December 15

All School

Join Us Tomorrow Night for ‘The Wonders of Christmas’



Don't miss "The Wonders of Christmas," our first *nearly* all-school Christmas concert featuring students in grades 1–10, tomorrow—Monday, December 16—at 6:00 p.m.

- The concert will be held at **Chapelwood United Methodist Church** (see map [here](#)).
- All St. Francis parents, friends, and family members are invited to join us and enjoy a healthy dose of Christmas spirit!
- If your child is participating in the concert, day-of details can be found [here](#).

Letters to Santa Mailing Tomorrow

If you've seen the red mailboxes on our campuses, you know we have a direct line to

the North Pole. Help Santa's elves by making sure letters include your child's full name and grade, plus a return address on the envelope. Make sure your child's letter is in the mailbox by tomorrow, Monday, December 16.

St. Francis Fund: Final Weeks for the Class Participation Contest

You have until Tuesday, December 31, to make a gift to the St. Francis Fund and have it count toward the class participation contest. [Click here for more details](#), or [click here to make a gift today!](#)

Admissions Applications Due Tomorrow

Please remember that all applications for future Wolves are due tomorrow—Monday, December 16.

Next Wolf Wear Sale is January 10

The Athletics Booster Club will hold its next Wolf Wear sale on Friday, January 10, from 7:45 to 9:00 a.m. in the Concessions area near the Main Campus gym.

Nominations for the 2020–21 PA Board Are Now Open

It's hard to believe, but it's already time to start thinking about the 2020–21 Parents Association executive officers! The deadline to submit names via [this nomination form](#) is **Friday, January 10**. For further details on submitting a nomination, [click here](#).

Save the Date for Primary School Grandparents and Grandfriends Days!

This February 12 and 13, we will welcome our Primary School grandparents and grandfriends to enjoy Chapel, classroom visits, and the book fair.

- [Click here for details](#) about our PS Grandparents and Grandfriends Days.
- To update your family's grandparent information or with questions, please contact Anne Chisholm at 713.458.6141 or [via e-mail](#).

SOTP Registration Now Opens February 25

Summer on the Point registration will now open on Tuesday, February 25, at 10:00 a.m. This is a week later than the originally published date, but we wanted to move registration so it didn't come after a long holiday weekend. Please look for updates in *Wolf Watch* in January for links to camp descriptions and course listings!

Register Today for Spring Explore and Extend Classes

Registration for spring 2020 Explore and Extend enrichment classes, as well as for School of Music lessons, is open through Program Registration in My BackPack. For class descriptions, [visit our web page](#).

December Virtue of the Month: Faith

During the month of December, the St. Francis community is focusing on the cornerstone of faith. Our virtue verse is Hebrews 11:1: *“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”* Try to memorize it as a family.

Table Talk: Virtue sightings—where do you see examples of faith in books, films, and life?

Primary School

From Primary School Lead Teachers

Earlier this fall, we featured the reflections of two teachers who attended the Opal School Summer Symposium, titled “Growing Changemakers.” Housed in the Portland Children’s Museum, the school hosts professional development opportunities focused on a Reggio-inspired approach to early childhood education. Today, three additional Primary School teachers share their reflections from the symposium: Susan Meriwether, Marissa Capasso, and Michelle Staller.

“Becoming a changemaker takes courage. Even though our students are young, we help them develop courage in small ways, over time. Our role in fostering courage is to provide an environment where students feel they can safely express their ideas and find the courage to stand up for themselves and even their classmates. When students are able to speak up for themselves and others, they feel empowered, capable of problem-solving, and courageous—these are all tools for becoming a changemaker.”

—Marissa Capasso, Primary I Lead Teacher

“As teachers and parents, it’s important that we hunt for meaning in our interactions with young children. Asking children questions communicates to them that we care about what they have to say. Children carry big hopes, dreams, and fears inside. We won’t always know what they are thinking and feeling unless we inquire. We need to be intentional and take more time to talk with young children. The world needs to hear their voices.”

—Susan Meriwether, Pre-Primary Lead Teacher

“Respect’ and ‘honor’ are words that we often use when talking and thinking about our students. We discuss respect with students and say that we honor them in many ways. But what is the difference between respect and honor? A conference speaker explained that respect is something that happens in the moment, and face to face—being respectful of a sacred space or a person’s feelings. Honor happens in the absence of the person—honoring their work by displaying it, or honoring them as a person with the words you use when they are not around. It is a slight difference, but a powerful and meaningful one!”

—Michelle Staller, Primary II Lead Teacher

We are grateful for opportunities to learn from others who share our passion for working with young children during this very formative time in their lives. Like the children in the Primary School, we are always learning!

Warmly,

Marissa Capasso, Susan Meriwether, and Michelle Staller
Primary School Lead Teachers

Primary School Dining Hall Menu

To view the Primary School Dining Hall menu, please click [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 15

- *School of Music Recitals in the FAC*
 - 1:30 p.m.—Students of Marc Garvin (guitar), Sylvia Ouellette (violin and viola), and Vessy Smith (piano)
 - 3:00 p.m.—Students of James Johnson (piano) and Andrew Nishikawa (piano and percussion)

Monday, December 16

- *Primary I Christmas Parties: 1:30 p.m.*
 - *Christmas Concert (Grades 1–10): 6:00 p.m. at Chapelwood Methodist Church*
-

Tuesday, December 17

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Pre-Primary Christmas Parties (Meriwether 2-Day and Oteiza): 1:30 p.m.*
-

Wednesday, December 18

- *No Chapel*
 - *Pre-Primary Christmas Party (Meriwether 3-Day and Britton): 1:30 p.m.*
-

Thursday, December 19

- *Primary II Pageants and Parties*
 - *Staller—Pageant at 9:00 a.m./Party at 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Owens—Pageant at 9:40 a.m./Party at 10:10 a.m.*
 - *Dominick—Pageant at 10:20 a.m./Party at 10:50 a.m.*
 - *Hughes—Pageant at 11:00 a.m./Party at 11:30 a.m.*
 - *Wiener—Pageant at 11:40 a.m./Party at 12:20 p.m.*
-

Friday, December 20–Monday, January 6

- *Holiday Break: No School*
-

Tuesday, January 7

- *Classes Resume*
 - *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, January 8

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Thursday, January 9

- *Primary School Admissions Tour: 9:00–11:00 a.m.*
-

Monday, January 13

- *Explore and Extend Classes Start*
-

Tuesday, January 14

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, January 15

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Thursday, January 16

- *Parent Step-up (Pre-Primary Visits Primary I): 8:30 a.m.*
-

Friday, January 17

- *Parent Step-up (Pre-Primary Visits Primary I/Primary I Visits Primary II): 8:30 a.m.*
-

Monday, January 20

- *Martin Luther King Jr. Day: No School*
-

Tuesday, January 21

- *Pajamarama Ingathering*
 - *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, January 22

- *Pajamarama Ingathering*
 - *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Thursday, January 23

- *Pajamarama Ingathering*
-

Friday, January 24

- *Pajamarama Day: PS students wear pajamas to school*
 - *Explore and Extend Parents' Night Out: Main Campus*
-

Tuesday, January 28

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, January 29

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Thursday, January 30

- *Pre-Primary Fathers and Friends Breakfast (Meriwether 2-Day, Brecevich, and Oteiza): 8:15 a.m.*
-

Friday, January 31

- *Pre-Primary Fathers and Friends Breakfast (Meriwether 3-Day and Britton): 8:15 a.m.*
- *Primary School Admissions Tour: 9:00–11:00 a.m.*

Lower School

From the Division Head

We had such a productive, fun week in Lower School! Next week will remain as normal as possible, despite the looming excitement of the Christmas festivities and the school holiday.

We have had our iPads up and running for about a month now, so I wanted to update you on how they are being used in the classrooms. Know that they are never used as rewards or incentives for completing work or for making good choices. They are only used as an educational tool to enhance our instruction and learning.

- Our youngest friends in **kindergarten and first grade** are working a bit on DreamBox, our differentiated math app, and Raz-Kids, an app for differentiated reading practice. These are just supplements to the already engaging differentiated reading/writing workshop and Bridges in Mathematics small-group work. Recognizing that young children should not have as much screen time as older students, this is limited to 20- to 30-minute segments once or twice a week.
- **Second graders** are working in a nonfiction reading and writing unit, which integrates social studies and research skills. Students will use the iPads (and appropriate websites) to research and take note-facts in order to complete a project about a famous person. In math, students are using Seesaw to explore graphing and two-digit addition with regrouping.
- In **third grade**, students are bringing the STEAM content to life by using Gizmos and Spheros. Gizmos are interactive math and science simulations, and Spheros allow students to draw, write, and block code. In math, students continue to use DreamBox for differentiated practice.
- **Fourth graders** have used Scratch to create projects, Gizmos to understand STEAM concepts on a deeper level, and Learning.com to help with keyboarding. In humanities, students have used interactive maps to complete regions map work, Google Slides to present new learning, teacher-assigned websites for research on the regions, and dictionary/thesaurus sites to search out our new vocabulary for word study in book clubs. They are busy bees!

We had a fantastic parent presentation a few weeks ago on **cyber safety**. [Here's the video](#) of the presentation, in case you could not attend.

I also wanted to pass along [this article](#) about **at-home screen time** that provides helpful tips about regulating electronics use, with a more positive outcome!

I look forward to a festive, fun-filled week with class parties, Lessons and Carols, the Sing-along, and Polar Express Day! I hope you and your family have a very blessed Christmas and Happy New Year. We have so much for which to be thankful in our St. Francis community!

Cheers!

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 15

- *School of Music Recitals in the FAC*
 - 1:30 p.m.—Students of Marc Garvin (guitar), Sylvia Ouellette (violin and viola), and Vessy Smith (piano)
 - 3:00 p.m.—Students of James Johnson (piano) and Andrew Nishikawa (piano and percussion)
-

Monday, December 16

- *Birthday Chapel*: Students with a birthday between December 15–31 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
 - *Christmas Concert (Grades 1–10)*: 6:00 p.m. at Chapelwood Methodist Church
-

Wednesday, December 18

- *NO Chapel*
-

Thursday, December 19

- *Dress Uniform Day*
- *Christmas Parties and Polar Express Day*: Students may bring a robe and slippers to wear at school

- *Lessons and Carols (Students Only):* 9:00 a.m.
 - *Sing-along (Students Only):* 2:00 p.m.
-

Friday, December 20–Monday, January 6

- *Holiday Break:* No School
-

Tuesday, January 7

- *Classes Resume*
-

Wednesday, January 8

- *Dress Uniform*
 - *Epiphany Eucharist:* 8:05 a.m.
-

Monday, January 13

- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between January 1–18 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, January 15

- *Student Holiday*
 - *Parent Conferences*
-

Monday, January 20

- *Martin Luther King Jr. Day:* No School

Middle School

From the Division Head

I am struggling to wrap my mind around the fact that 2020 is a few short weeks away. For me, the year 2020 has always felt like the far future, and I am learning that I failed to appropriately update my conceptions of the present over the last decade. But, ready or not, 2020 is almost here!

In schools, this is also the time when we solidify plans for our next school year. Though we are not quite at the halfway point of 2019–20, our planning for 2020–21 is well underway. In the spirit of transparency and partnership, we will be hosting an MS Coffee and Conversation event on Monday, January 13, from 7:45 to 9:00 a.m., where we will share information regarding scheduling, technology, and faculty/staff for the 2020–21 school year.

I also want to take this opportunity to re-recommend the book [At What Cost?](#) by David Gleason. After our return from the holidays, we will be sharing dates and times for parent discussions related to the topics and information in this short but powerful read.

In closing, I hope that the coming weeks are filled with joy for you and your family. Cheers to happy holidays, a happy ending to 2019, and a wonderful start to the “far future”!

With gratitude and appreciation,

Chris Bertha, MEd
Head of Middle School

Buy Your Yearbook Ad Today!

Parents of eighth graders and community businesses, please take this opportunity to purchase an ad in the 2020 edition of *The Howler*, St. Francis’s yearbook. Yearbook ads are a great way to commemorate your children’s experiences at St. Francis, celebrate special teams or clubs, or show your business off to the entire SFES community. Full- or half-page ads are available. [Click here](#) for complete details.

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 15

- *School of Music Recitals in the FAC*

- 1:30 p.m.—Students of Marc Garvin (guitar), Sylvia Ouellette (violin and viola), and Vessy Smith (piano)
 - 3:00 p.m.—Students of James Johnson (piano) and Andrew Nishikawa (piano and percussion)
-

Monday, December 16

- *Monday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Chapel: 10:45–11:15 a.m.* in the Chapel
 - *Christmas Concert (Grades 1–10): 6:00 p.m.* at Chapelwood Methodist Church
-

Tuesday, December 17

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m.* in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway
-

Wednesday, December 18

- *Wednesday Schedule*
 - ***Christmas/Holiday Attire***
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m.* in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway
-

Thursday, December 19

- *Special Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m.* in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway
 - *LS/MS Lessons and Carols (Students Only): 9:00–10:00 a.m.* in the FAC
 - *MS Christmas Sing-along (Students Only): 2:50–3:35 p.m.* in the FAC
-

Friday, December 20–Monday, January 6

- *Holiday Break: No School*

Tuesday, January 7

- *Classes Resume*
- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
- *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*

Wednesday, January 8

- *Eucharist Schedule/Dress Uniform*
- *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
- *Eucharist Chapel (Epiphany): 11:05–11:55 a.m. in the Chapel*

Thursday, January 9

- *Thursday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
- *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*

Friday, January 10

- *Friday Schedule/Friday Attire: Wolf Wear or SFES spirit gear with blue jeans or uniform bottoms*
- *NJHS Meeting (Geo Bee Challenge): 7:15–7:50 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*

Sunday, January 12

- *Eighth-Grade Musical Rehearsal: 1:00–5:00 p.m. in the FAC*

Monday, January 13

- *Monday Schedule/Dress Uniform*

- *MS Parent Meeting: 7:45–9:00 a.m. in the Hogan Board Room*
 - *Chapel: 10:45–11:15 a.m. in the Chapel*
-

Tuesday, January 14

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
-

Wednesday, January 15

- ***Student Holiday***
 - *Parent Teacher Conferences: 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.*
 - *Eighth-Grade Musical Rehearsal: 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. in the FAC*
-

Thursday, January 16

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15–7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
-

Friday, January 17

- *Friday Schedule/Friday Attire: Wolf Wear or SFES spirit gear with blue jeans or uniform bottoms*
- *NJHS Meeting (Geo Bee Preliminary Competition): 7:15–7:50 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*

Upper School

From the Division Head

We are one short week away from a well-deserved holiday! I want to extend my thanks to the parents who were able to join us for the Lunch & Learn with our friends Liz Prince and Kelly Truesdell from The Fontaine Center. We learned about the importance of transitioning to more of a “parent as consultant” role during this phase of our children’s

development, allowing our children to “fail up” as they take important steps toward independence and adulthood. Liz’s and Kelly’s presentation slides are linked [here](#) for your reference.

In an effort to extend our learning related to failing forward, I have selected Jessica Lahey’s *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* as this year’s parent book read. I encourage you to purchase a copy or download the audio version so that you can join in on the learning and sharing. During upcoming *Wolf Watch* messages (on January 12 and 26, and on February 9), I will provide my reading notes from each of the three parts of the book. Then, I invite you to **join me for coffee and conversation on three Friday mornings (January 17 and 31, and February 21) from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Andrews House**. These morning gatherings will provide us with an opportunity to learn from one another as we share portions of the reading that resonated with us and discuss how we can support one another in the often-challenging work of parenting teenagers.

Looking toward the week ahead, I hope you and your families will consider joining us for the All-School Christmas Concert tomorrow night (Monday, December 16) beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Chapelwood United Methodist Church (11140 Greenbay Street). If your child will be performing, please [click here](#) for the map and [click here](#) for important logistical details. I look forward to seeing you at the concert!

Merry Christmas!

Cara Henderson, EdD
Head of Upper School

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, December 15

- *School of Music Recitals in the FAC*
 - 1:30 p.m.—Students of Marc Garvin (guitar), Sylvia Ouellette (violin and viola), and Vessy Smith (piano)
 - 3:00 p.m.—Students of James Johnson (piano) and Andrew Nishikawa (piano and percussion)

Monday, December 16

- *Day 5 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
- *Boys' Basketball Practice*: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
- *Christmas Concert (Grades 1–10)*: 6:00 p.m. at Chapelwood Methodist Church

Tuesday, December 17

- *Day 6 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Chapel: 10:20 a.m. in the Andrews House*
 - *Swim Meet: 4:30 p.m. at British International School*
 - *Boys' Basketball vs. HCYA: 6:45 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Wednesday, December 18

- *Day 1 Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice: 7:00–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*
 - *Lessons and Carols: 9:30 a.m. in the Primary School*
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Thursday, December 19

- *Day 2 Schedule/SFES Spirit Wear*
-

Friday, December 20–Monday, January 6

- *Holiday Break: No School*
-

Tuesday, January 7

- *Day 3 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice: 6:45–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*
 - *Chapel: 10:20 a.m. in the Andrews House*
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Wednesday, January 8

- *Special Schedule/Dress Uniform*
- *Swim Practice: 7:00–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*

- *Eucharist Chapel*: 11:00 a.m. in the Main Campus Chapel
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice*: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
-

Thursday, January 9

- *Day 5 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice*: 6:45–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice*: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
-

Friday, January 10

- *Day 6 Schedule/SFES Spirit Wear*
 - *Boys' Basketball vs. St. Thomas*: 4:00 p.m. at St. Thomas
-

Saturday, January 11

- *Tomball Swim Meet*: 7:45 a.m. at Tomball ISD Aquatics Center
-

Monday, January 13

- *Day 1 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice*: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
-

Tuesday, January 14

- *Day 2 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice*: 6:45–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club
 - *Chapel*: 10:20 a.m. in the Andrews House
 - *Boys' Basketball vs. HCYA*: 6:45 p.m. in the Crum Gym
-

Wednesday, January 15

- *Student Holiday (Welcome to the Den Conferences)*

Thursday, January 16

- *Day 3 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice: 6:45–8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*
 - *Dads' Club Breakfast: 7:30–9:00 a.m. in the Crum Library*
 - *Boys' Basketball Practice: 4:15–6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Friday, January 17

- *Day 4 Schedule/SFES Spirit Wear*
- *Boys' Basketball vs. St. John's: 6:15 p.m. at St. John's*

Church

Epiphany Pageant Is January 12

Join us Sunday, January 12, during the 9:00 a.m. family worship service for our annual Epiphany Pageant. Rehearsals will be held in the church on Wednesday, December 8, from 3:15 to 4:00 p.m. and on Saturday, December 11, from 4:00 to 4:45 p.m.

For more information, please contact Allison Devlin via [e-mail](#) or at 832.325.2988.

Be an Angel, Shepherd, or Soldier: Christmas Eve Pageant Needs Participants!

Join us on Christmas Eve at either the 2:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. service for the annual St. Francis Christmas Pageant. Come be an angel, shepherd, or soldier as Father Wismer narrates the Christmas story!

For more information, contact Allison Devlin via [e-mail](#) or at 832.325.2988.

Bible Study for Moms on Wednesdays

Moms, give yourself the gift of studying God's Word with other St. Francis moms! Seeking God first puts everything in perspective. **Join us Wednesdays at 8:15 a.m. in the Andrews House on the South Campus.** Come whenever you can—in workout or work wear! We are studying the book of **Ephesians**.

Please contact Allison Devlin via [e-mail](#) or at 832.325.2988 with any questions.

Sundays at St. Francis Episcopal Church

- **Service Times:**
 - **8:00 a.m.:** Holy Eucharist, Rite I (casual and contemplative service)
 - **9:00 a.m.:** Family worship with Holy Eucharist (kid-friendly; updated music; all ages welcome)
 - **11:00 a.m.:** Holy Eucharist with organ and choir (traditional worship with beautiful music)
 - **5:00 p.m.:** Holy Eucharist, Rite I (casual and reflective service)
- **Let It Shine! Children's Bible Breakout:** After the children's message during the 9:00 a.m. service, all children in pre-K through middle school are invited to follow the cross to participate in the Let it Shine! Children's Bible Breakout. Children will learn lessons from the Bible, act out Bible stories, memorize key verses from Scripture, and pray together. They will return to the service during the announcements.
- **LightHouse Expressions in Art:** During the 10 o'clock hour, children in pre-K to middle school are invited to meet in the Guild Room to create an art project reinforcing the Bible lesson and key verse discussed during Let it Shine! High school youth are invited to serve as leaders and helpers during this time.
- **God Lights Our Way (GLOW):** Students in grades 5 to 8, join us at 10:00 a.m. in CE 212.
- **Breakfast Bites and Fellowship:** Please join us in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall for coffee, donuts, and light bites after the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services.