

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of April 19

All School

Campus Closures Extended

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the extension of our campus closures through the end of the school year, in compliance with the governor's executive order. [Please click here for details.](#)

Additionally, we know you may be eager to pick up personal items from school. Please know we are working through details for picking up belongings and locker contents as well as a process for returning athletic uniforms, laptops and devices, and books and equipment.

A Note from the Business Office

We know this is an extraordinary time, and our business office and entire administration are here to support and assist our families while providing flexibility. Please reach out to us if we can be of assistance or answer questions for you. To that end, we are providing a few options to remit payment for 2020–21 tuition.

If you will be making one annual tuition **payment by check, e-check, or credit card** for the 2020–21 school year, that is due on or before Friday, May 1, 2020.

- If you choose to pay by **check**, please make it out to St. Francis Episcopal School and mail it to Chanda Hutton, accounts receivable specialist. We are still checking our mail biweekly, and you will not be assessed a late fee as long as the envelope containing your check is postmarked by the payment due date.
- Parents may also log into My BackPack and make an online payment by **credit card** or **e-check** (for non-ACH annual tuition payers only). Please note that there will be an additional convenience fee for online tuition payments.

If you chose the **annual by ACH** tuition payment plan option on your 2020–21 enrollment contract, please complete [this Authorization Agreement for ACH Debit](#) and submit it to Ms. Hutton if you have not already done so. The school will draft your bank account on Friday, May 1, 2020, for the annual tuition payment.

If you chose the **monthly by ACH** tuition payment plan option on your 2020–21 enrollment contract, please complete the [Authorization Agreement for ACH Debit](#) and submit it to Ms. Hutton if you have not already done so. The school will draft your bank account on Friday, May 1, 2020, for the first monthly tuition payment for the 2020–21 school year. Moving forward, the monthly ACH tuition drafts will occur on the first business day of each month starting June 2020 through January 2021.

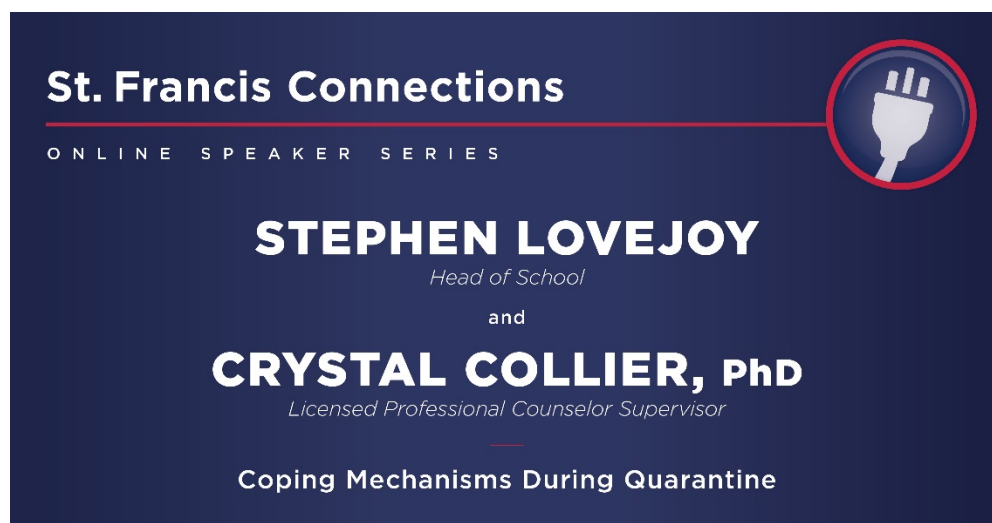
PA Spring Luncheon Has Been Rescheduled!

The Parents Association is excited to announce that the Spring Luncheon, featuring acclaimed author Julie Lythcott-Haims, has been rescheduled to **Wednesday, October 14, at Lakeside Country Club**. All original ticket purchases will be honored for the rescheduled event. If you are unable to attend in October, please [e-mail Lauren McCulloch](#).

5 Strategies for a Positive Distance Learning Experience


Recently, Evan Weinberger of academic coaching and tutoring company Staying Ahead of the Game offered [this advice](#) for achieving a positive experience with distance learning. There are some great tips in here, and we encourage you to check the article out!

Join Us Thursday for 'Coping Mechanisms During Quarantine'



St. Francis Connections

ONLINE SPEAKER SERIES



STEPHEN LOVEJOY
Head of School

and

CRYSTAL COLLIER, PhD
Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor

Coping Mechanisms During Quarantine

Please join us (*virtually*) for the first session of our new online speaker series, St. Francis Connections, this **Thursday, April 23, at 5:00 p.m.** [Click here to access the session when it starts.](#)

Head of School Steve Lovejoy and Crystal Collier, PhD, LPC-S, will be discussing "**Coping Mechanisms During Quarantine.**" Many of you are already familiar with [Dr. Collier's work](#), and we look forward to hearing her strategies on navigating our current situation.

A Quick Festival Sale Announcement

If you have already supported the St. Francis Festival, you may donate your contribution to the One Community Fund (which supports St. Francis Episcopal Church and School), or you may receive a refund. Please [click here](#) to submit your preference by **Thursday, May 21.**

If you have any questions, please [e-mail Martha Chavez](#).

We value your generous support of this beloved St. Francis tradition and look forward to celebrating with you next year! Thank you!

A Note About Digital Chapels

Our digital Chapels include all of your favorite traditions: chimes, music, an encouraging message, prayers, and even birthday celebrations. All students are invited to share prayer requests, plus their art and videos. Fr. Wismer and Rev. Heinemann will use what you share in Chapels. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Virtue of the Month: Servanthood

During the month of April, the St. Francis community is focusing on servanthood. Our virtue verse is Matthew 20:26b: "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." Try to memorize it as a family. You can watch [this short video](#) to learn the ASL for "servanthood."

Table Talk: Play "pass the story." One family member starts a story and each family member adds a new part. See how many examples of servanthood you can add to the story. For an extra challenge, use the following words: "Easter," "kitchen," and "wash(ing)."

Primary School

From the Division Head

As we enter the fourth week of distance learning, some families may feel like things have gotten a little easier, with routines in place and expectations established for working from home. But this may also be a time when new challenges arise.

For Primary School children, learning from home may look very different than learning with older students does. Young children are especially dependent on predictable routines, and examining what that looks like for your child and your family can help you feel prepared for the challenges that come with working from home. While children are resilient, they like to know what to expect. Even though none of us really knows what to expect right now, trying to maintain some normalcy in our children's days can be beneficial.

Evan Weinberger, president and CEO of Staying Ahead of the Game LLC, a Houston-based academic coaching and tutoring company, focuses on helping students build the executive functioning skills they need to be successful in the classroom and beyond. His article ["COVID-19 Tips, Tricks, and Tactics"](#) highlights the importance of making a schedule, creating a workspace, making a daily list, recognizing effort, and collaborating with others. I hope you'll take a few minutes to read these recommendations.

Executive functioning refers to those skills that help us organize our thoughts, plan ahead, follow multistep directions, stay focused, and maintain self-control. These are skills that develop over time and position children for success in their friendships, in school, within their community, and later in their careers.

Weinberger's recommendations are especially useful now, as we try to find structure and consistency in our day. Identifying a place that lends itself to listening to Zoom class meetings, setting times for meals and snacks during the week, and maintaining predictable sleep schedules all give order to our time at home and help us establish routines that make children feel safe.

Please know that we miss seeing you on campus each day. We are grateful for all you are doing to help your children engage in distance learning and stay connected to us as a community. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Take good care,

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Primary School Faculty Transitions

We would like to keep you up-to-date on faculty transitions. As of today, we know we will bid farewell to Pre-Primary lead teacher Madison Brecevich at the end of the year. Mrs. Brecevich will be moving to another Houston independent school.

Please Note: We'll be announcing new hires and any internal transitions in upcoming editions of *Wolf Watch*. Stay tuned!

Sign Up for April 22 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conference Day is Wednesday, April 22. To sign up for your conference time, click on the name of your child's teacher below. Teachers will be holding these conferences via Zoom meeting or phone call next week.

Pre-Primary

- [Mrs. Brecevich](#)
- [Mrs. Britton](#)
- [Mrs. Meriwether 3-Day](#)
- [Mrs. Meriwether 2-Day](#)
- [Mrs. Oteiza](#)

Primary I

- [Ms. Burrow](#)
- [Mrs. Capasso](#)
- [Mrs. Ferguson](#)
- [Mrs. Scriber](#)

Primary II

- [Mr. Dominick](#)
- [Mrs. Hughes](#)
- [Mrs. Owens](#)
- [Mrs. Staller](#)
- [Mrs. Wiener](#)

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 20–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
-

Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for PS*

Lower School

From the Division Head

I hope you have been enjoying this gorgeous weather and getting out with your family. I also hope your distance learning experience is going more smoothly!

Teachers have communicated that the students are getting into a good routine. I would encourage you to be the “guide on the side” during this time as much as you can. Promoting independence, problem-solving, and self-reliance will really help your children during this time (and even when we return to more normal times). If you need guidance on some ways to do this, please reach out to your teachers, and they will be happy to have a Zoom meeting with you and your child to go over some tips for online learning.

Taking the opportunity to clarify expectations and procedures can help your child feel more successful. Your children are very capable of stepping up and taking charge; hearing that from their teachers often recharges and refocuses them. If your child shows signs of slipping, their teacher will reach out to let you know when it’s time to jump in and help. Allow your children to have this learning experience. This will also help you have some time for your work or for yourself. After all, you have already gone through school; now it’s your child’s turn.

Please take a minute to read [this article](#) on “COVID-19 Tips, Tricks, and Tactics” by Evan Weinberger, president and CEO of Staying Ahead of the Game (an academic coaching and tutoring company). In it, he offers some very sound advice for creating and maintaining a positive distance-learning experience. I know you will find these tips very helpful as you navigate this new learning environment.

Again, if you need guidance for your child in these or other areas, please let the teachers guide you; this is their life’s work, and they are really good at it!

We are here to help you in any way we can; reach out, and let’s work together for our precious kiddos!

Have a blessed week,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Lower School Faculty Transitions

We would like to keep you up-to-date on faculty transitions and moves. As of today, we know we will bid farewell at the end of the school year to kindergarten teacher Amie Johnston, who will be staying home with her baby girl, due in July, and to third-grade teacher Cassandra Cowen, who is heading to Spring Branch ISD as a literacy instructional specialist.

Within the division, Monica Masini will move from first grade to kindergarten, and Lynn Hardee will move from kindergarten to first grade. It is so exciting for teachers to make shifts in content and grade levels. This benefits our alignment process and keeps everyone fresh and invigorated!

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 20–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
-

Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for LS*

Middle School

From the Division Head

Thank you for your continued support and feedback related to distance learning. Your messages of support and your constructive suggestions have buoyed our spirits and helped us make course corrections to ensure this a positive experience for you and your children. Please continue to reach out to us when you have thoughts to share.

This week's focus is on the 2020–21 school year and electives. As you may recall, our electives program is growing, and this is the time for students to indicate their elective preferences for the opening trimester of next year.

This week, you will be receiving an e-mail containing a link to a Google survey. The survey will include brief descriptions of available areas of study in our electives programming, and will also ask students to indicate their *interest* in these areas. After reviewing the descriptions, **students will be asked to indicate their top five preferences:** Two “top-tier” selections that indicate the highest level of interest; two “second-tier” selections that indicate strong interest; and one “alternate selection” to

indicate a final area of interest. Based on the feedback we receive, we will create and balance course offerings that best align with our students' preferences and experience levels.

The data we receive will become a driver for scheduling next school year, and we will not be able to make major changes after that process begins. For this reason, I encourage you to sit with your child to complete this form. If you have questions about the form or process, please reach out to your advisor or [e-mail Amy Chandler](#).

Thank you for your continued partnership as we navigate our current circumstances and look forward to next year!

Best regards,

Chris Bertha, MA
Head of Middle School

Middle School Faculty Transitions

We would like to keep you up-to-date on faculty transitions. As of today, we know we will bid farewell to the following faculty at the end of the school year:

- Debbie Harris is retiring after 25 years in education—18 of which were dedicated to St. Francis. We thank her for her service and the countless ways she brought learning to life, not only for her students, but for parents, fellow teachers, and colleagues.
- Ron Robinson, our girls' lacrosse program head coach and assistant athletics director, will move on to assume the role of director of athletics at Annunciation Orthodox School next year. We would like to thank him for his 18 years of service as a dedicated teacher, coach, and administrator. We are also excited to announce Jamie Platt will be taking over as the head girls' lacrosse coach and associate athletics director in the fall of 2020.
- We will also be saying goodbye to sixth-grade science teacher Hanna Mecom, who will be moving on to new adventures on the West Coast.
- Kathy Elder, music program coordinator for Middle and Upper Schools will be retiring and moving to be near family at the end of the year.

We appreciate these faculty members, and we wish them the very best. They will be missed.

Please Note: We'll be announcing new hires and any internal transitions in upcoming editions of *Wolf Watch*. Stay tuned!

Breaking News: Wolf Weekly News Is LIVE!

Click [here](#) to get all the breaking virtual student life news—with your hosts Coach T and Mr. L—spotlighting the good news going on in our community. Please share with your students and encourage them to e-mail submissions to [Mr. Lakoski](#), and we will do our best to get them into a future edition! Go Wolves!

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 20–Thursday, May 21

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
-

Thursday, May 21

- *Last Day of School for MS*

Upper School

From the Division Head

Happy Sunday! I hope that this message finds your families healthy and successfully co-managing our current circumstances. At this point, students should have received e-mail notifications (on which their parents and advisor were copied) from all of their teachers providing an update on student progress to date during the third trimester.

Students, please remember that this is an opportunity to communicate with your teachers directly about any questions or concerns that you may have. Please also remember that your teachers are available for afternoon tutorial times by appointment. All you need to do is send your teacher(s) an e-mail to find a mutually agreeable time to meet. Then, be sure to show up to that virtual meeting on time (or even a few minutes early) and prepared with your questions.

Looking to the week ahead, please find the week 5 distance learning schedule below:

WEEK 5 (April 20-24) of Distance Learning in the Upper School at SFES:

	Time	April 20 (EVEN)	April 21 (ODD)	April 22 (EVEN)	April 23 (ODD)	April 24 (EVEN)
Block times = synchronous online sessions	8:30- 9:00	Block 2	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1	Block 2
	9:15-9:45	Block 4	Block 3	Block 4	Block 3	Block 4
	10:00-10:30	Block 6	Block 5	Block 6	Block 5	Block 6
Tutorial times = practice & teacher consults (by appointment, students join online call as needed and/or requested by teacher)	10:45-11:15	Block 8	Block 7	Block 8	Block 7	Block 8
	11:30-12:00	Advisory	Advisory	Arts Electives	Councils	Arts Electives
	12:00-1:00 (LUNCH)	12-1pm LUNCH (students)	US Faculty Mtg. (12:15- 12:45)	12-1pm LUNCH (students)	US Faculty Mtg. (12:15- 12:45)	12-1pm LUNCH (students)
	1:00- 4:00	EVEN Block Tutorials (by appointment)	ODD Block Tutorials (by appointment)	EVEN Block Tutorials (by appointment)	ODD Block Tutorials (by appointment)	EVEN Block Tutorials (by appointment)
	4:00- 4:30			PE		PE

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Cara Henderson, EdD
Head of Upper School

Upper School Faculty Transitions

We would like to keep you up-to-date on faculty transitions. As of today, we know we will bid farewell to the following faculty at the end of the school year:

- Kathy Elder, music program coordinator for Middle and Upper Schools will be retiring and moving to be near family at the end of the year. She plans to return to St. Francis to help with the Upper School musical in the fall.
- Ron Robinson, our girls' lacrosse program head coach and assistant athletics director, will move on to assume the role of director of athletics at Annunciation

Orthodox School next year. We would like to thank him for his 18 years of service as a dedicated teacher, coach, and administrator. We are also excited to announce Jamie Platt will be taking over as the head girls' lacrosse coach and associate athletics director in the fall of 2020.

We appreciate them and wish them the very best. They will be missed.

A Message for Students From Sra. Allub

Earlier in the school year, I was asked to write about my life, my travel experiences, and my cultural heritage so that you could know me better. Instead, I want to reflect on how lucky we all are. COVID-19 is a history-making event. It has literally changed the way we live our daily lives with the “new normal” of quarantine and social distancing.

Schools and businesses around the world have closed. We attend classes online. Your parents may be working from home, or facing new challenges. We cannot hang out with our friends, or get a coffee and have a conversation in a café.

Around the world, schools—including St. Francis—made the unprecedented decision to suspend face-to-face classes. Since spring break, your teachers, administrators, and many school staff members you may have never even met have worked with families to reinvent our entire school system. Teachers from all divisions and disciplines—in some cases with no experience in digital education—took their classes to the cloud. My amazing colleagues are exploring new, and sometimes challenging, ways to provide you with the same excellent education you receive on our physical campuses. While teaching the skills and content of course classes is important, the most important part of our jobs is *you*.

As a teacher, I want to ask that all of you help us. Wake up early in the morning; wash your face; eat your breakfast; and get ready to learn with us. Do your homework; reply to your e-mails; respect deadlines; be present in your virtual classes; and read your course materials. Please ask questions, share your ideas, and *make proposals, make proposals, make proposals*.

COVID-19 caught everyone off guard, and you may experience frustration because things are not as we would like them to be. But rest assured, dear students, that we are giving you our best. I am giving you my best teaching, the best teaching I have ever done. All your teachers are giving the best they've got, and we can't do this alone. We need our students, each and every one of you, to roll up your sleeves and help us plant the seeds of a new school for a new world.

It is important for your teachers to know that we can count on your patience, love, and collaboration to overcome what we must overcome. I know that COVID-19 is not what we had in mind, and it is unfair to you. It may have taken a lot away from you, but one thing that it will not take from you is your school—because schools are not negotiable!

Dear students, many years from now when this moment is reduced to a paragraph in a history textbook, some child may ask you what were you doing during the pandemic. When that moment comes, I want you to be proud to respond, “I was a student at St. Francis, and I helped keep my school open and thriving.”

Schools exist as a collaboration between teachers, administrators, staff, family, and *students*. Without you, we have no purpose. Without you, we have no school.

Fondly,

Sra. Allub
Upper School Spanish Teacher
(Edited by Dr. Jones, Upper School Humanities Teacher)

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 20–Thursday, May 21

- *Distance Learning*: Campus closed
-

Thursday, May 21

- *Last Day of School for US*

Church

Connect With Fr. Wismer on Facebook Live

Fr. Wismer will be live on Facebook on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. on the [St. Francis Episcopal Church Facebook page](#)! These sessions will be geared mainly toward children who are of Primary and Lower School age. Join Fr. Wismer for a couple of songs, a story, a prayer, and a check-in. (And watch for the occasional special guest!)

Join Fr. Price for Contemplative Café

Fr. David Price has a new offering available via Zoom: a 50-minute learning spot on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings called **Contemplative Café**.

Come experience a new kind of prayer practice. This is a chance to learn a few classic and creative practices of prayer rooted in the historic Christian tradition and widely

rediscovered today. Using them will greatly benefit the believer and devotee. Examples include the following:

- **Anglican Prayer Beads**—Like the rosary, but with a Celtic twist
- **Lectio Divina**—Using Bible verses as a deep focus for prayer
- **Holy Listening**—A way to form a small group for spiritual companionship and support

Join Fr. Price:

- **Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., or**
- **Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.**

Use this information to access the Zoom meetings:

- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74432391081?pwd=dTdiSVFIQ2xrRS9kMEhpWDJ6NUlwQT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 744 3239 1081
- **Password:** 043097

Join Us Online for Morning and Evening Prayer

Join us mornings at 9:00 a.m. and evenings at 5:00 p.m. for 20- to 25-minute prayer sessions from the Book of Common Prayer, comprising a flow of Psalms and other Scriptures, plus both traditional and extemporaneous prayer.

MORNING PRAYER (DAILY AT 9:00 A.M.)

- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74430393620?pwd=N2xoNnl4L1pUQndVZzB0UTHOWkdtdz09>
- **Meeting ID:** 744 3039 3620
- **Password:** 046258

EVENING PRAYER (DAILY AT 5:00 P.M.)

- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/986428707?pwd=M0ZaMTJzcVpldGswTE1kU3NmOEx3Zz09>
- **Meeting ID:** 986 428 707
- **Password:** 002711

Christian Meditation: Online on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Join us Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings for 30-minute sessions designed to help you cultivate the practice of praying with silence, stillness, and simplicity. Experience how this quiet prayer of the heart creates a much-needed space of peace—an experience of the Christ within—in the midst of a noisy and busy world.

TUESDAY AFTERNOONS (4:00 P.M.)

- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/203726298?pwd=VHJTDDVYem8zMWVJakprZzFqUjBLUT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 203 726 298
- **Password:** 057417

THURSDAY MORNINGS (7:30 A.M.)

- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/286636365?pwd=ekhsLzIMT25ibUVOVDNKcCtodGYzUT09>
- **Meeting ID:** 286 636 365
- **Password:** 070054

Join Us Online for Services

Visit the [church website](#) for more information on our Sunday streaming services. Fr. Wismer will give a children's homily, and Mrs. Devlin will offer the Let It Shine lesson. The service will begin at 11:00 a.m. Please join us!

Register for the GLOW/Youth Summer Mission Trip

All middle and high school students are invited to attend the **GLOW** mission trip to Galveston, TX, on June 4–7. [Register online here.](#)

- Additional information will be provided after registration is completed.
- This is a great way to earn service hours since we will not be having Week of Wonder (VBS) this summer due to construction!
- With questions, please [e-mail Allison Devlin](#) or [Joanie Kirksey](#).