

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of April 26

All School

Tuition Deadline Extended + Additional Payment Options

We know the uncertainty of these times is causing new kinds of stress for families, and we want you to know we hear you and are working to support our community throughout this process. The school's leadership team and board of trustees continue to work behind the scenes to review actionable steps we can take to assist families while ensuring continuity of operations for the school.

In an effort to provide flexibility, we will be making the following changes to our tuition deadline and fees:

TUITION EXTENSION

We have extended the deadline for tuition payments to **Sunday, May 31**, for all families.

ANNUAL PAYMENT OPTIONS

We want to offer our families who chose the annual payment option the opportunity to spread out payments. Therefore, **families making annual payments can choose to pay their tuition in three equal installments on May 31, June 30, and July 31, 2020**, without incurring any additional fees.

MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS

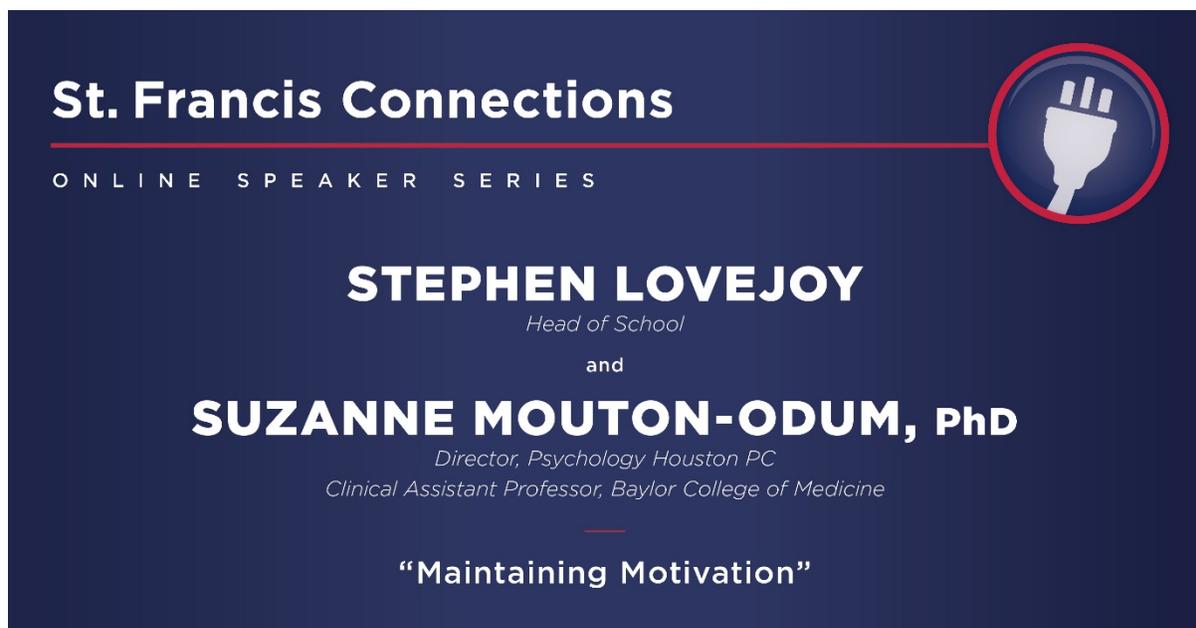
For families that use the monthly installment option for tuition payments, **St. Francis will be lowering the payment plan fee from 4.5 percent to 3 percent**. ACH drafts will begin on June 1, 2020, and continue through February 2021 instead of through January 2021.

The school will make documentation updates related to the change in tuition payment terms available for families in the coming days. If you have questions about these payment options or wish to make adjustments to your payment selection, please contact Chanda Hutton, accounts receivable specialist, at 713.458.6179 or [via e-mail](#).

Summer on the Point Camps Are Moving Online

For the safety of our community, we have made the difficult decision to cancel on-campus Summer on the Point camps in June and July. Instead, we will be offering distance-learning camp options for all divisions. [Please click here for further information.](#)

Join Us Thursday for 'Maintaining Motivation'



The graphic is a dark blue rectangular banner with white and red text. At the top left, it says 'St. Francis Connections' in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Below this, in a smaller white font, is 'ONLINE SPEAKER SERIES'. A thin red horizontal line runs across the banner. On the right side, there is a circular icon with a red border containing a white silhouette of a hand holding a lit lightbulb. Below the line, the name 'STEPHEN LOVEJOY' is written in large, bold, white capital letters, followed by 'Head of School' in a smaller, italicized white font. Below that, the word 'and' is centered in a small white font. Then, 'SUZANNE MOUTON-ODUM, PhD' is written in large, bold, white capital letters, followed by 'Director, Psychology Houston PC' and 'Clinical Assistant Professor, Baylor College of Medicine' in smaller, italicized white font. At the bottom, the title '“Maintaining Motivation”' is centered in white.

Please join us (*virtually*) for the second session of our online speaker series, St. Francis Connections, this **Thursday, April 30, at 5:00 p.m.** [Click here to access the session when it starts.](#) Head of School Steve Lovejoy and licensed psychologist Suzanne Mouton-Odum, Ph.D., will be discussing **"Maintaining Motivation."** Learn more about Dr. Mouton-Odum [here](#).

CATCH THE REPLAY OF OUR FIRST SESSION

A big thank-you to everyone who tuned in for our first session with Dr. Crystal Collier. If you were unable to join us, you can [view the recording here](#).

At Home With Chef Bryce: Hush Puppies

Chef Bryce and helpers show us how to make hush puppies! [Click here for the video](#).

PA Spring Luncheon Rescheduled to October 14

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](#).

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!

Join Us for 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: *It’s family challenge time! Challenge each family member to live out the virtue of servanthood within the family. Take turns sharing about times when you saw other family members being people for others.*

Primary School

From the Division Head

Hearing the news that we wouldn’t be returning to campus to complete the school year with our students was hard for all of us. But, we remain focused on what we believe to be most important in our work with young children—that is, caring about the whole child. Even though *where* this is happening is different now, we have not lost our focus on your child.

To be focused on the whole child means that we recognize that cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual development are crucial to a student’s growth. These are woven into our program for an integrated approach, rather than taught as isolated skills in specific content areas. For example, students playing a math game have opportunities to take turns, learn about rules, practice losing and winning with grace and, of course, practice a new mathematics skill.

Several weeks ago, we outlined our [distance-learning goals](#) for Primary School students. Along with what your child’s teacher is doing each day, our motor development and physical education faculty have provided [ways for your child to participate in physical activity](#) when it is convenient for your family.

If you have not joined one of our [weekly Chapel services](#), I encourage you to do so. Being together as a community is a cherished time in the life of our school. Our chaplains have done an excellent job bringing Chapel to you in your home. Familiar and favorite songs and prayers are part of these joyful services. Helping to sustain our spiritual development while we are away from campus is important to us.

We want to support parents during this time, too. The [St. Francis Connections Speaker Series](#) is designed to address the challenges families are facing during our Stay-at-Home directive.

If you are interested in guidance on talking about the novel coronavirus with children, on working from home, or on other parenting topics, you may find [this web page](#) of helpful resources beneficial. On this page, you will also find enriching, age-appropriate activities for students; links to virtual zoo tours, museum visits, and animal webcams; and more.

In our faculty meetings, we always pray for you and your children. This is a challenging time for families, and we want you to know that we are here to support you. We miss you!

Take good care,

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 27–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
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Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for PS*

Lower School

From the Division Head

I hope everyone has been able to squeeze in a bit of rest and relaxation this weekend. It's hard to believe that the last week of April is here! With the final month of school upon us, I want to remind everyone that we are all in this distance learning adventure together. In all four of our divisions, continuing to

educate the whole child academically, spiritually, and physically remains our highest priority.

Over the past weeks, so many families have taken the time to share personal anecdotes about how they are engaging in remote learning together. We've heard about parents acting as camera operators so their children can share their learning with their teachers; how families set aside time to watch and enjoy Lunch Bunch read alouds together; and even how some families have taken it upon themselves to stay healthy together, using videos shared by the PE coaches for motivation and inspiration!

Today, I wanted to reshare some of the resources we have posted in the past weeks. Below, you will find links to helpful family resources, to our updated third-trimester Scope and Sequence documents, and to our collection of PE videos.

- [Click here](#) for family resources.
- Scope and Sequence documents (Click on the appropriate grade level.)
 - [Kindergarten](#)
 - [First Grade](#)
 - [Second Grade](#)
 - [Third Grade](#)
 - [Fourth Grade](#)
- [Click here](#) for PE videos.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can be of help in any way!

Have a blessed week,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

A Note From Our Learning Specialists

We know the past month has been nothing like any of us could have ever expected, but we are truly impressed by the way each of our Lower School families has worked so hard to embrace distance learning! Even though we are apart, all of us are still committed to helping students build their reading skills and cultivate a genuine love of reading.

Students at each grade level are assigned appropriate books throughout the week that are chosen to target specific skills, strategies, or content covered by their teachers. Teachers are checking in with students in small groups, providing feedback and discussion around these texts. We know that, from time to time, you will need to help your reader when he or she gets stuck in a text. [Click here](#) for tips and questions to keep your reader going. As always, let your child's teacher know if he or she becomes frustrated or does not understand something when working on assigned reading.

Most importantly, we want to give you and your child permission to have fun with reading outside of the school day! You may be feeling like you are starting to run out of ways to keep reading at home "fresh" and engaging for your child. Here's a brief list of things you might try to keep the magic of reading alive in your home:

1. Set up a reading playdate for your child. This could include connecting via phone, FaceTime, or Zoom with a friend, grandparent, or other special person in their life. Some children may feel more comfortable practicing their reading a couple of times before the playdate. For older students, a playdate could consist of discussing a book together or recommending favorite reads to one another.
2. Schedule a porch book swap. We know that having access to a wide variety of books can keep a child's motivation to read high. Being able to share favorite books with a friend or relative (while, of course, keeping appropriate social distance) can make a difference for readers. Instead of borrowing from a library, these books have been chosen by someone special just for your child!
3. Consider alternative forms of "reading." While there is no app that replaces a great book, there are many ways to enjoy a good story. Listening to an audiobook, podcast, or online read aloud allows students to access a wide variety of texts, practice their visualization skills, boost their vocabulary, and stretch their critical thinking skills. [Click here](#) for a list of great podcasts for kids and [here](#) for a list of authors who are reading their books online.
4. Go to the movies! Motivate your reader by having them first read a book that has been adapted into a movie. This could be a book that you read together! When you are done, watch the movie and compare. Ask your child if they liked the casting decisions and if they noticed anything that was different from the book. You can also discuss what the setting looks like. Was it how they imagined it?

We appreciate your continued partnership in learning and wish you all happy reading!

Ashley Stephenson, MEd, Literacy Specialist
Ali Salinas, EdS, Curriculum and Instruction Specialist

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 27–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
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Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for LS*

Middle School

From the Division Head

I took a moment this week to think about everything our community has accomplished in the last month. Mentally reliving the past few weeks was quite a ride, but I came out of my reverie feeling grateful and positive. (As an aside, you should check out [this week's Gratitude Chapel](#) if you haven't seen it yet!)

A few short months ago, there was no way to predict the situation we now find ourselves in. But when our community was called to transform our operation into something completely new, everyone at St. Francis stepped up to offer help and support.

Your children, with only one day of “training,” adjusted their schedules and practices to begin learning remotely; our teachers learned how to use online tools to conduct their classes; and you have altered the routine protocols of your personal, family, and professional lives to accommodate a new reality. The MS admin team has been visiting remote classes, conducting interviews, preparing for next year, and reimagining how we can close out this school year as positively as possible.

For all of us, personal and professional norms have been dramatically altered. These abrupt shifts have left me feeling disoriented from time to time, and I imagine many of you have experienced something similar. While it can be easy to focus on the challenges of our circumstances, my thoughts keep returning to how impressed I am that we have accomplished so much so quickly.

Of course, this time is also fraught with novel challenges. My biggest challenge is keeping track of the various interwoven threads of commitment, conversation, and progress I am navigating. You may be feeling this, too, and I also know that we have shared a great deal of information with you since spring break.

This week, **I invite you to read back through the Middle School segments of recent *Wolf Watch* newsletters** (scroll to the bottom of this page for the *Wolf Watch* Archives section). We have done our best to use those communications to share thoughts, plans, and ideas with you as we work through this time together.

Please also remember that **teacher bulletins in the Parent Portal provide everything you and your child need for schooling**. These pages are updated daily.

And, while I am hesitant to add to your plates, I thought you might enjoy these additional resources from Academic Independence:

- For Students
 - [Distractions worksheet](#)
 - [Instagram page with daily tips and tricks](#)
 - [Daily agenda worksheet](#)
- For Parents
 - [Parent resources page](#) (offers productivity tools, interactive virtual tours, and more)

In closing, thank you for continuing to offer feedback and ask questions. I invite you to keep our lines of communication open when you have praise or constructive thoughts to share. On behalf of the Middle School faculty and staff, we appreciate you and are thinking of you all!

Best regards,

Chris Bertha, MA
Head of Middle School

Stay in Shape With the PE Department

Join the Physical Education Challenge! Keep yourself in shape for the fall sports season with [this awesome video](#) from the PE department.

Congrats, GeoChallenge Regional Qualifiers!

Congratulations to our Team Challenger Plastic Busters for being selected as a National Geographic GeoChallenge regional qualifier! Judges remarked that “the teams’ hard work, creativity, and explorer spirit were evident in their Tackling Plastic! submission, and we want to celebrate these impactful students!” Our fifth-grade Team Challenger Plastic Busters are Declan B., William D., Kamren P., Nikolai S., and Sarah S.

Due to public health risks related to COVID-19, the National Geographic Society made the decision to shift plans and cancel the in-person events. The National Geographic GeoChallenge recognized all teams qualifying for regional competitions with a virtual program of recognition and inspiration held on Monday, April 20.

Breaking News: Wolf Weekly News Is LIVE!

Hello, Wolf Nation! Make sure you check out the latest version of [Wolf Weekly News](#) for the latest and greatest in laughs, fun, and happiness in the virtual MS world! 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 27–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 you are well. You're in for a treat with a message from ninth grader Rebecca J. this week (below). Please join me in extending a big thanks to this amazing St. Francis student, who has taken the time to share her experience and perspective with us. (And, if any other Upper School student is interested in submitting a written message for a future *Wolf Watch*, please let me know.)

Even during our remote learning experience, it remains our goal and intention at St. Francis to educate the whole child. We are committed to our students' academic, physical, spiritual, and social-emotional growth. We are also here (just an e-mail or a phone call away) as a resource for your families during this challenging time.

In the past few weeks, we have shared several resources with you through *Wolf Watch*. I am resharing links to some of these resources below for your easy access:

- [General resources for parents/students](#)
- [Distance-learning Chapels](#)
- [SFES Upper School Trimester 3: Spring 2020 Essential Knowledge & Skills](#)
- [St. Francis Connections Speaker Series: Session 1, with Dr. Crystal Collier](#)

In closing, the Week 6 Distance Learning Schedule is below:

WEEK 6 (April 27- May 1) of Distance Learning in the Upper School at SFES:

	Time	April 27 (ODD)	April 28 (EVEN)	April 29 (ODD)	April 30 (EVEN)	May 1 (ODD)
Block times = synchronous online sessions	8:30- 9:00	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1
	9:15-9:45	Block 3	Block 4	Block 3	Block 4	Block 3
	10:00-10:30	Block 5	Block 6	Block 5	Block 6	Block 5
Tutorial times = practice & teacher consults (by appointment, students join online call as needed and/or requested by teacher)	10:45-11:15	Block 7	Block 8	Block 7	Block 8	Block 7
	11:30-12:00	Clubs	Advisory	Advisory	Arts Electives	Councils
	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	ODD Block Tutorials (by appointment)	EVEN Block Tutorials (by appointment)	ODD Block Tutorials (by appointment)	EVEN Block Tutorials (by appointment)	ODD Block Tutorials (by appointment)
	4:00- 4:30				PE	

***Middle & Upper School Chapels accessible via link on Wednesdays.**

Sincerely,

Cara Henderson, EdD
Head of Upper School

A Note From Ninth Grader Rebecca J.

Before spring break, I was alerted that there was a chance we might not be coming back to school for an additional week once spring break was over. The thought of being at home and not having to leave my room for a while didn't sound too bad to me. That was before I realized I wouldn't actually be at home for that week. Our family was taking a trip to Montana. Three days into our trip, I heard that one week of distance learning had turned into three weeks. My parents then made the decision to stay in Montana until return to school on campus was possible.

Figuring out where to do remote school was difficult. Due to COVID-19, most places were closed. The only local spot that wasn't closed was the library, but it's not the safest. Our neighbors have a rental property, and they offered to let us use it for our work space up until April 12. The house had a kitchen, a living room, and two bedrooms. There wasn't a lot of room, but we were grateful for their generosity.

Then we had to figure out the time change. Montana is an hour behind Texas. Plus, we had a 20-minute drive into town, so we had to figure that out, too. The first day was kind of a test run. We got up at 6:20 a.m. and learned that it gave us enough time to pack food, get our school work, and drive to town, allowing 10 minutes to get our work spaces set up. In Houston, I usually would wake up at 7:10 a.m. because we live so close to campus. So, waking up earlier was definitely an adjustment.

We would only be able to keep the rental house for another week because our neighbors had someone moving into it on April 13. The week leading up to our deadline, we were searching for a place to stay. Many of the hotels were closed, and a lot of rental owners weren't very willing. A hotel that was a little newer was open for absolute emergencies. When we called and explained our situation, they found us a room.

Even in situations like our present reality, we can still share goodness and kindness with each other. During this pandemic, we've been given kindness from our neighbors and complete strangers. It's really shown me that even in the hardest situations, God will show His goodness through people. I think the hardest thing about long-distance learning for me is not being home. In Montana, there aren't a lot of people, so it feels lonelier here. Being far away from everybody is also hard. What has been helpful for me is seeing everyone in online school, and texting people regularly so I know they are still there. This whole situation is crazy, but I just try to stay hopeful and know that this won't be forever. Communicating with people makes it easier. Eventually everything will be back to normal.

Rebecca J.
Class of 2023

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 27–Thursday, May 21

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
-

Thursday, May 21

- *Last Day of School for US*

Church

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!

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=VHJTTDVYem8zMWVJakprZzFqUIBLUT09>
- 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

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](#).