

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of May 3

All School

Swing By and Show Your Pack Pride!

We are missing our Wolves and would love to see you (from six feet away)!

On **Saturday, May 9**, families are invited to drive through Main Campus to pick up a St. Francis yard sign and wave to some of our amazing faculty and staff.

- **Families With New Students Starting in the Fall:** 9:00–11:00 a.m.
- **Current Primary School Families:** 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- **Current Lower School Families:** 12:45–1:45 p.m.
- **Current Middle (grades 5-7)* and Upper School Families:** 2:00–3:00 p.m.
 - *Eighth graders have a separate time (details will be e-mailed soon)

Join Us Thursday for 'Tips and Tricks for Staying Ahead of the Game'



St. Francis Connections

ONLINE SPEAKER SERIES



STEPHEN LOVEJOY
Head of School

and

EVAN WEINBERGER
President and CEO, Staying Ahead of the Game

“Tips and Tricks for Staying Ahead of The Game”

Please join us (*virtually*) for the third session of our online speaker series, St. Francis Connections, this **Thursday, May 7, at 5:00 p.m.** [Click here to access the session when it starts.](#) Head of School Steve Lovejoy and Evan Weinberger, founder and president of Staying Ahead of the Game, will be discussing "**Tips and Tricks for Staying Ahead of the Game.**" Learn more about Mr. Weinberger [here](#).

And don't forget to join us on May 12 for a special session with board chair Kate Denham and Head of School Steve Lovejoy.

CATCH THE REPLAYS

A big thank-you to everyone who has tuned in for our previous sessions.

- View the recording of our second session, with Dr. Suzanne Mouton-Odum, [here](#).
- View the recording of our first session, with Dr. Crystal Collier, [here](#).

Virtue of the Month: Excellence

During the month of May, the St. Francis community is focusing on excellence. Our virtue verse is Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." Try to memorize it as a family. You can watch [this short video](#) to learn the ASL for "excellent."

Table Talk: *What is the first image or story that comes to mind when you hear the word "excellence"?*

Introducing Live Digital Chapels

Chapels are going live! Each division will have one live grade-level Chapel each week, with each grade level participating in one live Chapel by May 18. Live Chapels will be recorded and made available later in the day. Prerecorded Chapels will still be made available on Wednesdays.

This week, we will be holding live Chapels for the following:

- **Sixth Grade:** Monday, May 4, at 10:30 a.m.
- **Primary II:** Monday, May 4, at 12:00 p.m.
- **Second Grade:** Monday, May 4, at 1:00 p.m.
- **Upper School:** Wednesday, May 6, at 12:15 p.m.

Zoom links can be found in grade-level communications. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Register Now: Koru Mindfulness Class Starts Wednesday

If you are interested in learning more about mindfulness, please consider joining Head of Upper School Cara Henderson, PhD, and Primary I Lead Teacher Annie Ferguson for Wellness Wednesdays. They will be teaching a **Koru Mindfulness class** for four consecutive weeks, as follows:

- **Wednesday, May 6, 4:00–5:00 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, May 13, 4:00–5:00 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, May 20, 4:00–5:00 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, May 27, 4:00–5:00 p.m.**

The course is for parents who wish to learn breathing techniques and guided meditations that are scientifically proven to lower stress and anxiety. Dr. Henderson and Ms. Ferguson were both trained in Koru Mindfulness at the University of Georgia. This class will take place in a live, interactive Zoom meeting. Class size is limited; please sign up today if you are interested.

Please register [here](#).

PA Reimbursement Requests Due June 1

Please be sure to turn in all check requests for any reimbursement related to the Parents Association no later than June 1, 2020. You can [e-mail Karen Rash](#) with the [request form](#) and receipts. Then, please mail a hard copy with original receipts to:

Karen Rash
5481 Lynbrook Dr.
Houston, TX 77056

Thanks to all the parents for helping the PA provide programs to our school community.

Calling All St. Francis Business Owners

Does your family own a business, restaurant, or retail store? We would like to feature your company on our website! Please contact Sandy August [via e-mail](#) or at 713.458.6129 with the following information by **Friday, May 8**:

- Name of business
- Type of business
- Brief history of the company
- Business contact information (website, phone number, social media information)
- Current promotions/specials

Summertime Notes From the Chaplains

Fr. Wismer and Rev. Heinemann want to stay in touch with the Wolves this summer. If you would like your child to receive a note from a Chaplain, please complete [this form](#).

Tuition Deadline Extended + Additional Payment Options

As a reminder, tuition deadlines have been extended. In an effort to provide flexibility, we have made 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.

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 Will Be Online

For the safety of our community, Summer on the Point camps in June and July will be offered online. [Please click here for further information.](#)

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**. With questions, please [e-mail Martha Chavez](#).

Primary School

From the Division Head

Your children are learning that they can do hard things.

Not being able to go to school; play with friends; visit grandparents and cousins; or go to parks, museums, or the zoo has been a big change for young children. Reimagined birthday celebrations, cancelled vacations, and postponed life passages have been the source of many disappointments for families in the last month. But children are also seeing what it looks like when adults model resilience. How we respond to challenges, stress, and adversity impacts how children will develop the capacity to practice creative problem-solving, flexibility, and perseverance.

Doing hard things defines us. Few of us remember the easy decisions we've made, or the skills or accomplishments in life that came easily for us. One of those rites of passage for young children is learning to ride a bike without training wheels. I actually remember my father teaching me, and I remember my own children conquering that huge milestone. My daughter was reticent about trying things that she thought she couldn't do without perfection. Never willing to try a new playground skill at school, she waited until the weekend to practice at a park. She didn't want to fail. She approached learning to ride a bike with the same hesitancy. My son got on, fell off, got on, fell off ... until it worked. I can remember being in a Blockbuster (remember those?) with my daughter looking for a particular movie. As we stood at the counter, she insisted that I ask the sales clerk about the movie. That was hard for her. Her little brother boldly approached anyone that he thought could help him, and comfortably communicated what he wanted or needed.

My children approached new challenges differently then, and they still do today. The problem-solving skills that they learned at a young age continue to help them navigate situations that are hard. It's not always easy as a parent. We are inclined to protect our children from things that are hard.

In the article [**"4 Life Skills Parents Can Teach Kids Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic."**](#) psychologist Ron Stolberg, author of *Teaching Kids to Think*, says, "It's a terrible time that we are in, but it's also an opportunity for kids to learn they have tremendous capacity to overcome adversity."

Thank you for the ways you are modeling creative problem-solving, humor, motivation, resilience, and perseverance to do hard things as we work together through our last month of school. We miss you!

Take good care,

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Swing By and Show Your Pack Pride!

We are missing our Wolves and would love to see you (from six feet away)! On **Saturday, May 9**, families are invited to drive through Main Campus to pick up a St. Francis yard sign and wave to some of our amazing faculty and staff.

- **Families With New Students Starting in the Fall:** 9:00–11:00 a.m.
- **Current Primary School Families:** 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Primary II: Live Digital Chapel Is Tomorrow

Chapels are going live! Primary School will have one live grade-level Chapel each week, with each grade level participating in one live Chapel by May 18. Live Chapels will be recorded and made available later in the day. Prerecorded Chapels will still be made available on Wednesdays.

This week, we will be holding **live Chapel for Primary II on Monday, May 4, at 12:00 p.m.**

Zoom links can be found in grade-level communications. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Looking Forward: Life in Lower School

Primary II parents, please join us via Zoom meeting on **Thursday, May 14, at 10:30 a.m.** to learn about various organizations and volunteer opportunities in Lower School.

- **Topic:** Life in Lower School
- **Time:** May 14, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. CT
- **Zoom Meeting Link:**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85218337393?pwd=R25QdFRpOVhocnpSZCtrSmJwSUNvZz09>
- **Meeting ID:** 852 1833 7393
- **Password:** 3PHS1g

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, May 4–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning:* Campus closed

Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for PS*

Lower School

From the Assistant Division Head

We have made it through six weeks of online learning! That is quite an accomplishment considering that things happened so fast, and we all had little time to prepare and plan. In the beginning, students and parents were on a learning curve to establish a new routine and adapt to a new way of learning. At the same time, everyone was adjusting to a new “normal” with staying at home, students entertaining themselves, and parents continuing to work at home or at their place of business. Most have been successful at these adjustments, and things have been going well until ...

... We found out the end of online learning isn't coming as soon as we wanted. The novelty of this structure is beginning to wear off, children miss playing with friends, everyone is tired of staying home, and parents are becoming exhausted with managing school at home. Additionally, *life* is still happening. There are meals to cook; there's laundry to wash; the house still needs to be cleaned; etc. Allow yourself to take a breath, step back, and take in what has been accomplished so far. We have done a lot, and for that, we should stand proud. For the remainder of the year, we need to establish some realistic expectations so we can finish the year calmly and contentedly.

Parent burnout occurs as much as student burnout does. Being an effective parent can feel daunting and overwhelming when faced with the reality of having to juggle so many tasks simultaneously. When families have too much to juggle, the household becomes stressed. Children begin to push back; parents start feeling frustrated; and everyone feels like giving up. If this sounds like your household, you may have on your “teacher hat” longer than your “parent hat.” Those two relationships are very different, and your child needs the parent relationship with you.

While supporting your child in distance learning, here are some tips for maximizing motivation and minimizing struggle:

- **Establish and maintain a routine** for your children and the family. Use the class distance-learning schedule as a baseline, and assign time to attend online groups, work, take a break, rest, play, read, go outdoors, and have family time. Be sure to include a reasonable bedtime and mealtime. Adding structure creates security and stability and reduces stress and anxiety. However, remain flexible to changes that come up.
- Teachers work with students in small groups, so they can learn skills and strategies appropriate for their level of academic development. **Provide a quiet place**, away from the distractions of siblings, TV, pets, parents, and toys. The only assistance you need to provide is help to log in, if necessary. Parents are

encouraged not to be present during these small-group lessons so that children have the freedom to take risks, make mistakes, and ask questions. Teachers have provided a safe space for those things to happen, so we need to keep that in place.

- **Set aside an area stocked with supplies** where your child can work on their independent tasks. Using **headphones** is recommended, especially during online group work, as they both help students focus in on the discussion and also provide a sound filter as students are working on their independent tasks.
- Students may need more support in the area of **executive functioning** (getting started on tasks, managing materials, planning their time, checking for completion, and submitting work). Your teachers can give you an acceptable time frame in which your child can complete assignments.
- **Checklists** help students know what to accomplish each day. They can check items off as they finish to feel a sense of accomplishment.
- Using a **timer** will help your child avoid the “never-ending assignment” feeling.
- Provide **frequent brain breaks** to reduce mental fatigue and improve your child’s ability to work through challenges. These breaks can involve a physical activity, reading, getting a snack, drawing a picture, or coloring. Try to make these brain breaks happen away from technology or TV.
- Assigned work should be **completed independently**. Parents only need to provide loving accountability, which is making sure the child is accomplishing the work and getting it submitted.
- **Step away from helping**. If your child gets stuck, give them a few minutes to try to solve the problem on their own. After a few minutes, parents can provide support by answering specific questions your child will have. If they still have trouble completing the assignment or understanding what should be done; if they need more support than just having a question or two answered; or if they show resistance, please contact your child’s teacher so he or she can help.
- Any **academic help** should come from the teacher, who can also engage our specialists. Setting up a conference with the child, teacher, specialist, parents, and/or administrator can help students get back on track. It is important, as a parent, to provide appropriate support that leads to independence. In other words, your role as a parent is to be your child’s cheerleader. Cheerleaders encourage from the side but never jump onto the field to complete the play. Let us be the coach to help them finish the game.
- **Don’t expect perfection**—just expect best effort. Your child’s teacher will reach out to you if your child is not performing at his or her best or if your assistance is needed.
- **Do what you can**. Work with your child’s teacher to help your child prioritize tasks if he or she gets behind.
- **Spend time outdoors**. Fresh air helps to rejuvenate our brains.

We all care deeply about your child and want what is best for them now and in the future. Every family situation is unique. If your family is struggling, we are here to provide support not only for your child, but also for your family. Please reach out if there

is anything we can do to assist you. You have permission to let your child grow and learn so they can be strong, independent, self-reliant, lifetime learners.

For more information, you might find [this article](#) useful.

Now, take a break and do something fun as a family. For the next few weeks, remember: We've got this! We've got you!

Sincerely,

Debbie McColloch, MEd
Assistant Head of Lower School—Academics

Swing By and Show Your Pack Pride!

We are missing our Wolves and would love to see you (from six feet away)! On **Saturday, May 9**, families are invited to drive through Main Campus to pick up a St. Francis yard sign and wave to some of our amazing faculty and staff.

- **Families With New Students Starting in the Fall:** 9:00–11:00 a.m.
- **Current Lower School Families:** 12:45–1:45 p.m.

Second Grade: Live Digital Chapel Is Tomorrow

Chapels are going live! Lower School will have one live grade-level Chapel each week, with each grade level participating in one live Chapel by May 18. Live Chapels will be recorded and made available later in the day. Prerecorded Chapels will still be made available on Wednesdays.

This week, we will be holding **live Chapel for second grade on Monday, May 4, at 1:00 p.m.**

Zoom links can be found in grade-level communications. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, May 4–Friday, May 22

- *Distance Learning:* Campus closed

Friday, May 22

- *Last Day of School for LS*

Middle School

From the Admin Team

It is hard to believe that the end of the school year is rapidly approaching. Our team has been planning behind the scenes to ensure that we conclude the 2019–20 school year with a sense of closure and celebration. While our circumstances have required many event cancellations, we are moving ahead with plans for a Middle School Awards Ceremony and Graduation for the eighth-grade class of 2020. We are finalizing a number of details on these events, and we will share our completed plans with you as soon as we can.

Thank you also for your continued partnership and feedback. Your positive messages and helpful suggestions have assisted us in shaping our practices this spring, and we would not be where we are without you! Your families remain in our thoughts and prayers.

Best regards,

The Middle School Admin Team

Swing By and Show Your Pack Pride!

We are missing our Wolves and would love to see you (from six feet away)!

On **Saturday, May 9**, families are invited to drive through Main Campus to pick up a St. Francis yard sign and wave to some of our amazing faculty and staff.

- **Families With New Students Starting in the Fall:** 9:00–11:00 a.m.
- **Current Middle (grades 5–7) and Upper School Families:** 2:00–3:00 p.m.
 - Eighth grade will have a separate time—details will be e-mailed soon

Sixth Grade: Live Digital Chapel Is Tomorrow

Chapels are going live! Middle School will have one live grade-level Chapel each week, with each grade level participating in one live Chapel by May 18. Live Chapels will be recorded and made available later in the day. Prerecorded Chapels will still be made available on Wednesdays.

This week, we will be holding **live Chapel for sixth grade on Monday, May 4, at 10:30 a.m.**

Zoom links can be found in grade-level communications. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, May 4–Thursday, May 21

- *Distance Learning: Campus closed*
-

Tuesday, May 19

- *Middle School and Community Service Awards (Virtual Ceremony)*
-

Thursday, May 21

- *Last Day of School for MS*
- *Eighth-Grade Graduation (Virtual Ceremony)*

Upper School

From the Division Head

Happy first Sunday of May 2020! I hope you are well and enjoying your weekend. Today's message is a reminder of the importance of self-care, especially during a global epidemic. Are you making time to care for yourself? This is something that I find challenging, so please know that I am using this week's message as an opportunity to give myself a pep talk.

Right now, caring for myself means waking up early for a walk around my neighborhood before breakfast. It means moving away from my computer and phone screens and carving out time for lunch with my husband and daughter, my quarantine housemates. It means spending part of my work day in the front yard, with my dog nearby on her long leash. It means practicing gratitude and self-compassion.

What does self-care look like for you right now? If you are interested in learning more about developing gratitude and self-compassion practices, I encourage you to take 3–4 minutes to watch [this](#) video clip from University of Houston professor and researcher Brené Brown, and to read resilience expert Linda Graham's mindful.org article [here](#).

If these resources pique your interest, please consider joining Annie Ferguson (my friend and St. Francis colleague) and me for a four-week online Koru Mindfulness class. The class is limited to 12 participants and is open to all St. Francis parents via [this link](#). I hope you'll consider joining us for the first class this Wednesday (May 6) from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Looking to the week ahead, please find the Week 7 Distance Learning Schedule below:

WEEK 7 (May 4-8) of Distance Learning in the Upper School at SFES:

	Time	May 4 (EVEN)	May 5 (ODD)	May 6 (EVEN)	May 7 (ODD)	May 8 (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	Arts Electives	Clubs	Advisory	Advisory	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

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

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. Here's to a great week!

Sincerely,

Cara Henderson, EdD
Head of Upper School

Swing By and Show Your Pack Pride!

We are missing our Wolves and would love to see you (from six feet away)!

On **Saturday, May 9**, families are invited to drive through Main Campus to pick up a St. Francis yard sign and wave to some of our amazing faculty and staff.

- **Families With New Students Starting in the Fall:** 9:00–11:00 a.m.
- **Current Middle (grades 5–7) and Upper School Families:** 2:00–3:00 p.m.

Upper School: Live Digital Chapel Is Wednesday

Chapels are going live! Upper School will have live digital Chapel **this Wednesday, May 6, at 12:15 p.m.** Live Chapels will be recorded and made available later in the day. Prerecorded Chapels will still be made available on Wednesdays.

Zoom links can be found in grade-level communications. All things Chapel can be found [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, May 4–Wednesday, May 20

- *Distance Learning:* Campus closed
-

Thursday, May 21

- *Distance Learning (Student-Created Last Day Schedule)*

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!

Reading of Narnia With Fr. Wismer

Join Fr. Wismer on Mondays through Fridays at 4:00 p.m. on the [St. Francis Episcopal Church Facebook page](#) as he reads from *The Chronicles of Narnia* on Facebook Live! (He has received special permission from the estate of C.S. Lewis to do this, but it

cannot be recorded or rebroadcast—just the live version!) **He will begin on Monday, May 4, and go through the end of the month.**

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=dTdSVFIQ2xrRS9kMEhpWDJ6NUlwQT09>
- **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=VHJTTDVYem8zMWVJakprZzFqUjBLUT09>
- **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