

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of January 10

All School

From the Head of School

I hope that the first week back to school was a good one for your children. It was certainly wonderful to hear and see our students in the hallways, classrooms, and other spaces, enjoying their peers and being with their teachers once again.

While we have not been able to gather in person as a community, I hope to help you feel as connected and informed as possible as we start the second half of the school year.

Please join me, along with Board Chair Kate Denham, on **Tuesday, January 26, at 7:00 p.m.** as we hold another St. Francis Connections virtual town hall. We'll cover our ongoing response to COVID-19, tuition for the 2021–22 school year, progress on our strategic initiatives and campaign, and more.

We want you to have an opportunity to be part of the conversation, so please submit your specific questions ahead of time [via e-mail](#).



St. Francis Connections

ONLINE SPEAKER SERIES



STEPHEN LOVEJOY
Head of School

and

KATE DENHAM
Chair, Board of Trustees

“Community Update”

Tuesday, January 26 | 7:00 p.m.

You can access the live session on Tuesday, January 26, at 7:00 p.m. by clicking the image above or [this link](#).

We are looking forward to a great week ahead.

In partnership,

Steve Lovejoy, MEd
Head of School

St. Francis Fund Update

We are so grateful to each and every family who made a gift to the St. Francis Fund during the first half of the school year! **The St. Francis Fund supports critical areas of the school's operating budget, including our hardworking faculty, the increased need for tuition assistance, and the large expense of our newly adapted health-and-safety equipment and protocols that have kept our students safely learning on campus.** To date, 45 percent of families have made a gift. Be on the lookout for some fun, competitive participation contests later in the spring. The last day to give to the 2020–21 St. Francis Fund is June 30.

Primary School

From the Division Head

We hope you had a wonderful time with your family this Christmas season. We missed seeing all of our students. It is exciting to see the ways they have grown and matured over the holiday!

As teachers and parents, we want to be purposeful in helping develop the “whole child.” This means we need to be cognizant of all the facets of child development: **physical, linguistic, intellectual, social-emotional, cognitive, and creative.**

When planning activities and creating emergent curriculum, we are mindful of these different areas of development as we communicate with your children and provide them with invitations to play. Our goal is to support the development of children who are well-rounded in all the aforementioned areas.

At home, a great way to support the growth of the whole child is through play. For example, if your child is playing with playdough, you can touch on all the different components of the developing child:

- The act of molding and manipulating the playdough enhances a child's **physicality**. You can encourage them to form different shapes, such as snakes or balls, with their fingers.
- Having your children talk about what they are doing as they are playing with the playdough—whether they are describing their playdough as a “ball” or whether they are creating a pretend cookie shop—will improve and enhance their **language skills**.
- **Academic skills** can be easily incorporated. Whether they're making homemade playdough using measuring cups, counting the number of playdough pieces they have, or discussing the sounds in the word “cookie,” children are able to build upon science, math, and language skills.
- Children have the opportunity to practice their **social-emotional skills** as they work and interact with others. They gain **confidence and problem-solving skills** as they observe others and share playdough tools.
- Working with playdough provides endless possibilities to create anything a child can imagine. **Creativity** can flourish. Encourage your child to think outside the box!

The use of playdough is just one of many ways we support student development in all the components of learning. As you interact with your child at home, remember the idea of developing the “whole child.”

Warmly,

The Pre-Primary Team

Susan Meriwether, Jane Oteiza, Hannah Zuniga, and Maggy Britton

Cozy Up: Pajamarama Is January 22

On Friday, January 22, St. Francis will celebrate its annual Barker's Pajamarama Day Ingathering. On this day, **children in Primary School and Upper School are invited to wear their pajamas to school to celebrate the weeklong ingathering of pajamas, books, and other items**. Named after Dianne Barker, head of Primary School from 1992–2008, Pajamarama continues the tradition she introduced of wearing pajamas to school one day a year in conjunction with collecting books for donation.

All donations will benefit [Arms Wide Adoption Services](#), an organization that supports foster children awaiting permanent homes. A few guidelines to remember:

- *What should you donate?*
 - **Primary School**—Place one pair of new pajamas and one new book in the zipper-lock bag sent home with your child.
 - **Upper School**—Choose from the following personal items, in travel size or regular size: brushes and combs, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, shower gel, toothbrushes and toothpaste, socks, underwear, baby wipes, pull-ups, and diapers.

- *Where should you donate?*
 - **Primary School**—Boxes in the pods
 - **Upper School**—Boxes in Crum Gym Lobby
- *When can you bring your donation?*
 - **Tuesday, January 19–Friday, January 22**

Pajamarama Day promises to be a lot of fun, and your support in helping our children become *people for others* is truly appreciated. Remember, all Primary and Upper School students may wear appropriate pajamas to school on Pajamarama Day—Friday, January 22.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, January 18

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

Tuesday, January 19

- *Pajama Ingathering Begins*
-

Friday, January 22

- *Pajama Ingathering Ends*
 - *Pajamarama*: Students only; PS students may wear pajamas to school
-

Thursday, February 4

- *Language and Literacy Series*: 12:00–1:00 p.m.
-

Monday, February 15

- *Presidents' Day*: No school
-

Wednesday, February 24

- *Teacher Inservice*: Student holiday
-

Thursday, March 4

- *Language and Literacy Series*: 9:00 a.m. via Zoom
-

Monday, March 15–Friday, March 19

- *Spring Break*

Lower School

From the Division Head

We had a fabulous first week back at school!

As you know, a major component of our literacy program is reading and writing workshops, a research-informed literacy approach developed at Teachers College, Columbia University decades ago. Several of our teachers have traveled to New York over the summer to attend either the reading or the writing institute (and many have attended both). These institutes are led by the renowned researchers and educators at Teachers College—including Lucy Calkins, the founder, developer, and director of the program. Each year, our teachers apply for admission to the summer institutes, and despite the worldwide demand, we are usually fortunate enough to have three or four teachers accepted. We believe attending these amazing weeklong training sessions is critical in order to implement this curriculum most effectively. In addition, our learning specialists have attended specialized institutes for curriculum coaches and specialists. This enables them to coach and support our teachers and to stay abreast of current research.

Teachers College recently developed a parent resource site, so I will be sharing some information and videos with you to help you join in the learning journey with your child.

As we embark on the new calendar year, we often ask our students to set goals and shift priorities as needed. They work so hard to accomplish these goals, both personal and academic.

The best way we can support our students in working toward these goals is to allow them to struggle in a productive manner. This may sound odd, so [here is a video](#) of

Lucy Calkins describing this process and showing a video of a teacher modeling this process. While the video is about an emergent writer, the content is relevant to all levels of students in the learning process and to all content areas. We have to let our students “grow their own muscles.”

As always, thank you for all you do for our community and for your children. Partnering with your child’s teachers is the best way to provide the most effective learning environment for your child!

Have a great week, and enjoy your conferences on Wednesday!

Cheers,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, January 13

- *Student Holiday*
 - *Parent Conferences via Zoom*
-

Monday, January 18

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

Monday, February 8

- *100th Day of School!*
-

Friday, February 12

- *Valentine's Day Parties: Teacher-led in the classroom*
-

Monday, February 15

- *Presidents' Day: No school*

Middle School

From the Division Head

I hope that you had a joyful break and that the return to an academic schedule has been smooth for your family. My message this week has two parts. The first relates to school-home partnership with COVID-19 cases on the rise, and the second is about conferences next week.

SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIP

As we have been hearing over the past week, COVID cases in Houston are rising. Please remember to do temperature checks at home and to communicate with us if your child is sick. Our remote option remains available to all students and families who choose or need it. When students return to campus after attending school remotely, we need at least two full days to make sure we are fully prepared to welcome a student back to campus. In cases of mandatory quarantine, we are able to communicate dates of return to faculty in advance, but in other cases, we rely on your help to know expected dates of return. Your continued and proactive communication with us is appreciated and helpful in getting your child back to school.

As a reminder, the remote option is offered for students who cannot come to school for three or more days. Students who are out for a day or two are welcome to Zoom into classes, but we are not able to fully support these students. In the case of a short-term absence of a day or two, we encourage students to rest and recover so that they can be at 100 percent when they return.

WELCOME TO THE DEN CONFERENCES

Conferences between students, parents, and advisors are this Wednesday, January 13. You should have received an e-mail from your advisor last week that included a sign-up link for a conference slot. During this conference, you can expect to engage with your advisor on a variety of topics, including your child's progress and growth in all classes and your child's goals and hopes for the second half of this school year. This is also an opportunity for you and your child to ask questions or offer feedback on your child's experience this year. Our advisors are looking forward to connecting with you, and I hope that your conference is informative and insightful.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy start to 2021!

Best regards,

Chris Bertha, MA
Head of Middle School

BSN Sports/PE Clothing Store Update

We began partnering with BSN Sports for our PE Clothing Stores this past fall. Unfortunately, we have not had a smooth experience in our first year. We are going to skip the January store that was originally planned so that BSN Sports can get caught up on all pending orders. If you still have an issue with an incorrect order, or if you have not received an item that you previously ordered, please [e-mail T Riley](#) with the order details—including name, items, sizes, quantity, and date ordered—so we can work with BSN to resolve the issue. We have been informed that BSN Sports has made some internal adjustments that will improve the quality of the team store experience moving forward.

Spring Sports Update for Middle School

Middle School spring sports are scheduled to begin on Monday, February 1, and run through Friday, April 23. We plan to offer the traditional Middle School sports this spring; however, due to COVID-19 and roster numbers, some sports will look different than in previous years or are still TBD. There is general information listed below regarding sports offerings, and sport-specific details will be shared in the coming weeks. You will receive an e-mail from Director of Athletics T Riley by this Wednesday, January 13, confirming the sport your student is currently signed up for.

We plan to offer the following sports this spring: baseball, softball, boys' lacrosse,* girls' lacrosse, coed golf, coed tennis,** and coed track and field.

** Boys' lacrosse numbers are very low this year, and we are working on options for interested players. Communications have already been sent to interested boys' lacrosse players and their parents. If your son is interested in boys' lacrosse and did not receive this communication, please [e-mail T Riley](#).*

*** Tennis details are still TBD, as many facilities either are not renting courts or are not committing to renting courts to outside groups at this time.*

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, January 11

- "D" Day
-

Tuesday, January 12

- "E" Day

Wednesday, January 13

- *Welcome to the Den Conferences via Zoom*
 - *Student Holiday*
-

Thursday, January 14

- *"A" Day*
-

Friday, January 15

- *"B" Day*
-

Monday, January 18

- *Martin Luther King Jr. Day: School closed*
-

Tuesday, January 19

- *"C" Day*
-

Wednesday, January 20

- *"D" Day*
-

Thursday, January 21

- *"E" Day*
-

Friday, January 22

- "A" Day

Upper School

From the Interim Head of Upper School

This Wednesday, January 13, student-led parent-teacher conferences will be held via Zoom. The day is a student holiday so that teachers can meet with students and their parents. Advisors will be working with students to help them prepare for these meetings. Students have been asked to evaluate their progress up to this point and to set goals for the second half of the year. We've asked them to reflect on what has gone well, where they have been successful, hurdles they've met along the way, and areas where they recognize more growth is needed. We've also encouraged them to think of all aspects of their progress this year, including their academic, social, and emotional development.

As we enter the second half of the school year, the time is right for students to look inward and to discern whether they are asking questions and for help when needed, working to their full potential, benefiting from opportunities they've been given, and contributing to their learning community. Personal responsibility and ownership of learning is foundational for our students.

If you have not already signed up for a meeting time with your child's advisor, please do so using the SignUpGenius links below. You will receive the log-in credentials the day before the conference. Please click on the name of your child's advisor below to select a time.

- [Dr. Leachman](#)
- [Dr. Black](#)
- [Mrs. Choi](#)
- [Mrs. Allub](#)
- [Mrs. Ellis](#)

Thank you for your support. We look forward to our student-led conferences.

Take good care,

Amy Whitley, MA
Assistant Head of School/Interim Head of Upper School

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Spring Sports Update for Upper School

Upper School spring sports are scheduled to begin on Monday, February 8, and run through mid- to late-April. We plan to offer coed golf and coed track and field again this year. We are also looking to add baseball, softball, and tennis. These new sports offerings will be dependent on the interested student's ability to commit to the season.

Sport-specific information will be communicated directly to interested players and parents.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, January 11

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Tuesday, January 12

- *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Wednesday, January 13

- *Parent-Student Conferences: Student holiday*
-

Thursday, January 14

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Friday, January 15

- *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Monday, January 18

- *Martin Luther King Jr. Day: School closed*
-

Tuesday, January 19

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
 - *Pajamarama Donation in Crum Library*
-

Wednesday, January 20

- *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
 - *Pajamarama Donation in Crum Library*
-

Thursday, January 21

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
 - *Pajamarama Donation in Crum Library*
-

Friday, January 22

- *Pajamarama Day: Students may wear appropriate PJs*
 - *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Monday, January 25

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Tuesday, January 26

- *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Wednesday, January 27

- *Odd Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
-

Thursday, January 28

- *Even Day*
 - *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*
 - *Upper School Four-Year Plan Parent Discussion: 12:00 p.m. via Zoom*
-

Friday, January 29

- *Odd Day*
- *On-Campus and Remote-Learning Schedule*

Church

In-Person Worship

The Holy Eucharist is offered at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. We also offer an evening Eucharist on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. We look forward to seeing all those who are ready to return. For those who are not comfortable returning to in-person worship, we will continue to livestream our worship service on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Access the livestream via our church [website](#), [YouTube channel](#), or [Facebook page](#). Instructions for livestreaming are included at the bottom of this section.

- In-person worship guidelines are available [here](#).
- Only a limited number of participants can be safely seated according to the distancing guidelines. To ensure we comply with these guidelines, please sign up each week, indicating you would like to come to worship. To do so, go to the St. Francis Episcopal Church [website](#), click "Sign Up for In-Person Worship," choose the date, and sign up through the SignUpGenius app to attend the 9:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. service.
- Let It Shine! has resumed each Sunday for pre-K to middle school (see below).
- GLOW for our teens is held in person after the 9:00 a.m. service in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall (additional information below).

Join Fr. Wismer for *The Goodnight Show* on Tuesdays

Join Fr. Wismer for ***The Goodnight Show*** on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 7:15 p.m. on

the [St. Francis Facebook page](#). Preschoolers, younger school children, and the young at heart can enjoy music, stories, and prayers . . . and you can send in requests! It is the perfect way to relax and get ready for bed.

[Click here to watch on the St. Francis Episcopal Facebook page.](#)

Let It Shine! In-Person and on YouTube

Join us for in-person Let It Shine! Children's Bible Breakout: All children from Pre-K to middle school are invited to participate. Children will learn lessons from the Bible, act out Bible stories, memorize key verses from Scripture, and pray together outside following safe-distancing guidelines.

The Let It Shine! videos are available on the St. Francis YouTube channel, with a dedicated channel for Let it Shine! This is a great way for us to reach children everywhere with amazing Bible-based video teachings by Allison Devlin, our director of family ministry.

- Please share this channel with anyone you might know who has children and who is looking for entertaining, informative videos to help lead children to Jesus.
- [Click here to visit the channel.](#) **Be sure to like, subscribe, and turn on notifications!**

Teens, Join Us for GLOW!

GLOW is now meeting in-person after the 9:00 a.m. Family Worship Service. We meet, wearing masks and socially distanced, in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m. Middle and high school students are invited to participate in weekly lessons and discussions. A Zoom option is available for those who are unable to attend in person.

- In the current series, learn about the Nicene Creed—why we say it, and how it applies to our daily lives. You may purchase the book *Hope for Us* through Amazon.
- For further details, contact [Allison Devlin](#).

Moms, Join Us for Bible Study

The **SFES Moms' Bible Study** is on **Fridays at 11:00 a.m.**, led by **Allison Devlin**, director of family ministry. Please contact Allison via [e-mail](#) or at 713.882.0725 for more meeting details.

Moms in Prayer

Join other mothers for a time of prayer together on the first and third Thursdays of each

month. Please contact Allison Devlin via [e-mail](#) or at 713.882.0725 for more meeting details.

Share Your Prayer Requests Online

Share your prayer requests with us using the “Prayer Requests” link on the [St. Francis Episcopal Church home page](#). Please feel free to submit prayer requests for yourself or for someone you know. All prayer requests are confidential and will not be added to the spoken prayer list, but will be prayed for by our staff and Pastoral Care Council over a two-month period.

Upcoming Events at St. Francis

St. Francis is hosting the following events on a regular basis via Zoom. To join an event listed below, please click the provided link or copy and paste it into your web browser’s address bar. Then, enter the meeting ID and passcode when prompted.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDIES

- Wednesdays at 9:00–10:00 a.m.
 - **Study:** Proverbs (Current study on the Gospel of Mark)
 - **Contact:** [Louise Richman](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/651248716>
 - *Passcode required to join; e-mail Louise Richman to participate.*
- Fridays at 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
 - **Study:** *Mom Set Free* by Jeannie Cunnion
 - **Contact:** [Allison Devlin](#)
 - *E-mail Allison Devlin for meeting location*

MEN’S BIBLE STUDY

- Tuesdays at 7:00–8:00 a.m.
 - **Contact:** [Lew Arend](#)
- Monthly on the second Tuesday at 8:00–9:30 a.m. (Next meeting is January 13)
 - The Men of St. Francis (TMOSF)
 - **Study:** The Gospel of Mark
 - **Contact:** [The Rev. Stuart Bates](#)
- Thursdays at 6:30–8:00 a.m.
 - **Contact:** [The Rev. Stuart Bates](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86423240761>
 - **Meeting ID:** 864 2324 0761
 - **Passcode:** sW9R20

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

- Sundays at 10:00–11:00 a.m.
 - **Contact:** [George Hippard](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81068388948>
 - **Meeting ID:** 810 6838 8948
 - **Passcode:** 767200

CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS—BIBLE STUDIES AND MEETINGS

- Sundays at 10:15–10:45 a.m.
 - **Meeting:** GLOW
 - **Contact:** [Allison Devlin](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4394746544>
 - **Meeting ID:** 716 183 992
 - **Passcode:** 476823
- Tuesdays at 7:00–7:15 p.m.
 - **Meeting:** The Goodnight Show
 - **Contact:** [Fr. Bob Wismer](#)
 - [Facebook Livestream](#)

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AND PRAYER

- Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m.
 - **Meeting:** Christian Meditation
 - **Contact:** [Fr. David Price](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/203726298>
 - **Meeting ID:** 203 726 298
 - **Passcode:** 05741
- Wednesdays at 7:30–8:00 a.m.
 - **Meeting:** Prayer Session (We read Scripture and go through a prayer cycle of praise, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession.)
 - **Contact:** [Heather Burkhart](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72098767051>
 - **Meeting ID:** 720 9876 7051
 - **Passcode:** 678123
- Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
 - **Meeting:** Contemplative Café
 - **Contact:** [Fr. David Price](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74432391081>
 - **Meeting ID:** 744 3239 1081
 - **Passcode:** 043097
- Thursdays at 8:00 a.m.
 - **Meeting:** Christian Meditation
 - **Contact:** [Fr. David Price](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/203726298>
 - **Meeting ID:** 203 726 298
 - **Passcode:** 057417

- Thursdays after carpool drop-off
 - **Meeting:** Prayer Session
 - **Contact:** [Allison Devlin](#)
 - *E-mail Allison Devlin to get meeting location*
- Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.
 - **Meeting:** Contemplative Café
 - **Contact:** [Fr. David Price](#)
 - **Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/74432391081>
 - **Meeting ID:** 744 3239 1081
 - **Passcode:** 043097

How to Watch Sunday Service Via Livestream

If you would like to join St. Francis Episcopal Church's **9:00 a.m.** or **11:00 a.m.** Sunday service via livestream, here's how to watch:

1. Open an Internet browser on your computer, laptop, or phone. Type in the St. Francis website—**sfch.org**.
2. Click on the “**Watch Live Stream**” button. Choose to watch from Facebook or YouTube.
3. Prelude music will begin on the livestream 10 minutes prior to the service to allow time for your connection and for your inspiration. If you miss the live video, a recording of the service will also be available on St. Francis's [YouTube channel](#).