



CARDINAL WEEKLY

News for the Week of November 30, 2023

All School

Last Chance to LEVEL UP: Please Give Today!

The Cardinal Fund is St. John's MOST important philanthropic effort. When you give to the Cardinal Fund, it directly impacts the SJES student experience this year. This week is Gratitude and Giving Week, and that means we are inviting our families to LEVEL UP their philanthropic engagement in the Cardinal Fund with some fun and exciting challenges!

Starting the week at 37% parent participation, we have now passed the halfway mark of unlocking our first challenge with 48% parent participation! Remember—**if we can get to 57% parent participation by TOMORROW, every grade level will earn a Free Dress day.**

In addition, **the first grade level to reach 100% this week will also receive a Pizza Party!** Here are the current standings:

GRADE LEVEL PARENT PARTICIPATION	
ECD	49%
K	53%
1	37%
2	35%
3	42%

GRADE LEVEL PARENT PARTICIPATION	
4	59%
5	38%
6	45%
7	41%
8	38%

Are you ready to Level Up? [Click Here to Give!](#)

Hours Left! Early Sibling Application Deadline Is TODAY

If you have another child in your family who does not yet attend St. John's and you are considering applying for the 2024–25 school year, please note that today (Thursday, November 30) is the deadline to **submit a sibling application**.

- This early application does not guarantee admission, but **it will place you in a priority position** should your child be accepted and there be space available in your desired grade.
- For grades with a waitlist, accepted siblings who applied by November 30 will have priority on the waitlist.
- With limited spaces available, we strongly encourage you to **apply by today's deadline!**

[Click Here to Complete Your Online Application.](#)

Students Receive Advent Calendars Today

The season of Advent is the four weeks prior to Christmas. According to the church year/church calendar, the season of Advent begins the New Year and tells the story of Jesus's life all over again. The Advent season is dedicated to the hopeful anticipation of the arrival or "advent" of Jesus. During the season, the themes of hope, peace, love, and joy are explored through prayer and Scripture readings.

Today, each St. John student will receive an Advent calendar/activity as we anticipate the Christmas celebration.

- The activity for Early Childhood is to simply color each day.
- Pre-K and Elementary students have a daily task to complete (with a little assist from their grown-ups).
- Our Middle Division students' Advent calendar consists of daily prompts to get them thinking—or doing—in anticipation of the coming celebration of the birth of Christ. Their calendar includes prompts for the entire month of December.

Whether Christmas is a spiritual or secular experience in your family, the daily prompts of both calendars provide activities that reflect hope, peace, love, and joy—all things that transcend faith practices and honor the dignity of all.

Two New Youth Sweatshirt Arrivals in the Student Store

Surprise your Cardinal this holiday season with a new St. John's spirit sweatshirt! We have received a new youth [crew and hooded sweatshirt](#) style in the St. John's Student Store this week. Shop in person or [online](#) today for the best selection.

Candy Cane Lane: Deadline to Create Your Child's Budget Is TOMORROW

Tomorrow is the LAST DAY to add funds to your child's spending account for Candy Cane Lane—a beloved annual student event that allows students in PK–8 to practice financial planning and money management while holiday shopping for their family and friends.

- This year, the event will take place **Tuesday, December 5, through Friday, December 8.**
- Be sure to provide your child with their spend amount in advance. [Click here](#) to fund your child's budget by tomorrow—Friday, December 1.
- For additional details, please [view the email](#) about Candy Cane Lane that was sent earlier this month.
- Questions? Please [email Chrissy Hennings](#).

Student Actors and Narrators Needed for Church Christmas Pageant

St. John's Episcopal Church is seeking children from four years old through fifth grade to serve as narrators and actors in its Christmas Pageant, which will be held on Saturday, December 23, at 5:00 p.m.

- [Sign up online here.](#)
- With questions, please reach out to Chrissy Hennings via [email](#) or at 949.291.6141.

Mother-Son Outing Is January 21: Buy Tickets Now

[Click here to buy tickets](#) to the annual Mother-Son Outing, which will take place on Sunday, January 21, 2024, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at John's Incredible Pizza. We hope you will join us for this fun event filled with games, rides, pizza, music, and more!

Father-Daughter Dance Is January 27: Tickets Now on Sale

A magical "Night in Paris" awaits with the Father-Daughter Dance on Saturday, January 27, 2024, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Enjoy an unforgettable evening in Paris featuring a live DJ, photo ops, tasty treats, and delightful crafts! Tickets are on sale now—[click here to purchase](#).

Important Upcoming Dates

Early Childhood Division

Friday, December 1

- *Gratitude and Giving Week—"Celebrate Support for St. John's!":* Students will enjoy popsicles during the day, plus free dress if we've met the week's fundraising goal!
- *Deadline to Fund Your Pre-K Child's Budget for Candy Cane Lane:* [Click here for details](#)

Monday, December 4

- *Kindergarten Preview for Current Pre-K Parents:* 8:00–9:15 a.m.; meet in the courtyard

Tuesday, December 5–Friday, December 8

- *Candy Cane Lane for Pre-K Through Eighth Grade:* Create and [fund your child's budget](#) by December 1

Sunday, December 10

- *Preschool and Pre-K Students Sing at Church Service:* If interested, please [email Katie Scott](#)

Wednesday, December 13

- *Special Dress Day:* Wear Christmas accessories

Thursday, December 14

- *Special Dress Day:* Wear Christmas accessories

Friday, December 15

- *Minimum Day:* Dismissal at 11:45 a.m.
- *Christmas Celebrations*
- *ECD Christmas Performance:* 11:15 a.m. in the gym

Monday, December 18–Tuesday, January 2

- *Christmas Break:* No school

Elementary Division

Friday, December 1

- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *Gratitude and Giving Week—“Celebrate Support for St. John’s!”:* Students will enjoy popsicles during the day, plus free dress if we’ve met the week’s fundraising goal!
- *Deadline to Submit Completed First-Grade Health Examination Form to Health Office*
- *Deadline to Fund Your Child’s Budget for Candy Cane Lane:* [Click here for details](#)

Monday, December 4

- *Formal Uniform for K–8*
- *First-Grade Preview for Current Kindergarten Parents:* 2:00–2:40 p.m.; meet in the first-grade classrooms in Sillers Hall

Tuesday, December 5–Friday, December 8

- *Candy Cane Lane for Pre-K Through Eighth Grade:* Create and [fund your child’s budget](#) by December 1

Friday, December 8

- *Spirit Wear Friday*

Monday, December 11

- *Formal Uniform for K–8*

- *Flag-Raising Ceremony/Cardinal Character Recognition Ceremony*: 8:00 a.m. in the courtyard

Thursday, December 14

- *ED Christmas Concert*: 6:00 p.m. in the Gym

Friday, December 15

- *Minimum Day*: Dismissal at 12:00 p.m.
- *Christmas Celebrations*
- *Spirit Wear Friday*

Monday, December 18–Tuesday, January 2

- *Christmas Break*: No school

Middle Division

Friday, December 1

- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *Gratitude and Giving Week—"Celebrate Support for St. John's!"*: Students will enjoy popsicles during the day, plus free dress if we've met the week's fundraising goal!
- *Deadline to Fund Your Child's Budget for Candy Cane Lane*: [Click here for details](#)

Monday, December 4

- *Formal Uniform for K–8*

Tuesday, December 5–Friday, December 8

- *Candy Cane Lane for Pre-K Through Eighth Grade*: Create and [fund your child's budget](#) by December 1

Wednesday, December 6

- *Grade 7 Information Night for Grade 8 Washington, DC, Field Studies Trip*: 6:00 p.m. in Sillers Hall, Room 25

Friday, December 8

- *Spirit Wear Friday*

Monday, December 11

- *Formal Uniform for K–8*

Tuesday, December 12

- *MD Christmas Concert*
 - **Band/Choir:** 6:00 p.m. in the Gym
 - **Dance/Drama:** 7:00 p.m. in the Gym

Wednesday, December 13

- *Registration Deadline for MD Spring Musical, Shrek JR.*

Friday, December 15

- *Minimum Day:* Dismissal at 12:15 p.m.
- *Christmas Celebrations*
- *Spirit Wear Friday*

Monday, December 18–Tuesday, January 2

- *Christmas Break:* No school

Early Childhood Division

From the Division Principal

I was delighted this week as children returned from Thanksgiving Break happily running into school to greet their friends and teachers. At this young age, preschool children are learning to connect and build relationships with others. As part of this process, they learn to share, cooperate, and resolve conflicts. A big focus is problem-solving using our words, courtesy, and respect for others.

The next few weeks will be busy and exciting as we approach Christmas. Teachers have planned many activities and projects to engage students and nurture a sense of community in their classrooms and on the playground.

Please check the school calendar for dates of important events taking place this month. We encourage families to participate in school activities and to talk with their children about gratitude, the importance of kindness, and the joy of giving.

Wishing everyone a joyful holiday season!

Carole Magaldi
Interim Early Childhood Division Principal

Pre-K Parents, Join Us for Kindergarten Preview This Monday

Current Pre-K parents are invited to join us for a glimpse into the St. John's kindergarten experience this Monday, December 4, from 8:00 to 9:15 a.m. We'll meet in the courtyard and move on from there.

- Elementary Division Principal Ryan Bourke and our kindergarten teachers look forward to meeting you and to sharing about our nurturing, innovative kindergarten program.
- The morning will include a tour of the kindergarten and of the many wonderful enrichment classes that await your student next year!
- If you haven't already, please [click here](#) to RSVP so we know you will be joining us.

Calling All Preschool and Pre-K Students

St. John's preschool and Pre-K students have been invited to sing two of their Christmas concert songs on Sunday, December 10, at the 10:00 a.m. St. John's Episcopal Church service. If interested, please [email Katie Scott](#).

Special Dress Days: Wear Christmas Accessories on December 13 & 14

To help our Cardinals get into the holiday spirit, all students are encouraged to wear their favorite Christmas accessories on Wednesday, December 13, and Thursday, December 14.

Save the Date: ECD Christmas Performance Is December 15

Don't miss this year's Early Childhood Division Christmas performance on Friday, December 15. The performance will begin at 11:15 a.m. and will take place in the newly renovated gym. Children are asked to wear their Christmas best. This is a special event for the whole family!

Elementary Division

From the Division Principal

I hope that everyone had a great Thanksgiving! It was nice to be able to spend an entire week with family and friends! Even though a week off of school is fun, our students were excited to be back on campus on Monday. There is a lot going on and now that we have officially entered the Christmas season, things will fly by. Before we know it, it will be 2024!

As you may have heard, this week a group of St. John's teachers spent two days at an independent school in Houston. This trip was designed to give our teachers a chance to see other classrooms, meet with teams of educators, and learn some new practices.

We all walked away with new ideas! It was a very informative professional learning experience, and the team is excited about the impact it will have on our Cardinals. Students aren't the only ones learning at St. John's!

Warmly,

Ryan Bourke
Elementary Division Principal

Kindergarten Parents, Join Us for First-Grade Preview This Monday

Current kindergarten parents are invited to **join us for a sneak peek into St. John's first-grade experience this Monday, December 4, from 2:00 to 2:40 p.m. We'll meet in the first-grade classrooms in Sillers Hall.**

- Your child's "geography" will change for the 2024–25 school year as your student moves into a new building. We know that for some of you, this will be your first time in that part of the campus, and we wanted to provide you with an opportunity to check it out.
- Come meet our wonderful first-grade teachers, Mrs. McLennan and Mrs. Shuy. They have so much to share with you!
- If you haven't already, please [click here](#) to RSVP so we know you will be joining us.

ED Christmas Concert Is December 14

The Elementary Division Christmas Concert will be held on **Thursday, December 14, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.** in the gym. Our students are very excited to be able to kick off the Christmas holidays by singing to their family and friends. Please join us for this festive event!

Vision and Hearing Screenings Are January 5

On Friday, January 5, Elementary Division students in grades K, 2, and 5—as well as all new ED students—will have their vision and hearing screened by Southern California Sensory Screening. In addition, first-grade boys will be checked for color vision.

- There is no charge for this screening.
- If your child wears glasses, please make sure they bring their glasses to school the day of the screening.
- Should you have any questions regarding the screening, please [contact St. John's Health Office](#) directly.

Tomorrow: First-Grade Physical Form Due

California law requires that first-grade students have a health examination form on file at school no later than 90 days after the start of school. This completed form is due to the Health Office tomorrow—Friday, December 1. If you have already turned in the form, please disregard this notice. If you are unsure whether you have turned the form in, please [email the Health Office](#).

Middle Division

From the Division Principal

In honor of Gratitude and Giving Week and as a follow-up to last week's article on Service-Learning and Veteran's Day, I would like to share the value of expressing gratitude to others. Three weeks ago, our Middle Division students wrote letters to veterans near and far to thank them for their service to our country. This was a simple yet meaningful way to express gratitude to others.

For the veterans serving as docents at the National Museum of the United States Army during our eighth-grade field studies visit to DC, the letters they received from our eighth-grade students had a profound impact.

Below is the email sent from the volunteer coordinator at the museum to Mrs. Walsh, eighth-grade history teacher. I know you will appreciate these words of kindness and gratitude as much as I did!

Thank you to you and all the students visiting from St. John's Episcopal School! Your letters were amazing, and our volunteers truly appreciated it more than you can know. We have about 300 volunteers here, and they provide 90% of the visitor experience. Over the course of a year, their efforts amount to the equivalent of 13 full-time employees, which provides a service our Department of Defense budget couldn't allow, but they also bring a passion and expertise that can't be bought.

I have to admit, I read the notes in batches because I kept tearing up. The volunteers at the National Museum of the United States Army all truly love coming here and talking with our visitors, and having students eager to learn and grateful for the interaction is worth more to them than any paycheck could be. I loved the thought and detail put into the notes—it is clear your students were not filling out a form letter. The notes were polite and beautifully written.

My compliments to all the students—their notes truly made a positive impact on all the volunteers who work to keep soldier stories alive. We have the letters in plastic page

protectors in a binder in our volunteer lounge. I expect it will be a point of pride for our team for a long time, and a touchstone for when they wonder if they make a difference. You have also made a difference, Mrs. Walsh, by showing the value in thanking veterans and those who support them.

Please accept wishes for a wonderful Thanksgiving (and Holiday Break! YAY!) to you and all the students. Again, thank you, and I hope more students from St. John's are able to visit us in the future.

With gratitude,

Sheryll Grogan
Middle Division Principal

Congratulations, Students of the Week!

Congratulations to our Student of the Week winners! Click on each student's name below to learn a little more about him or her:

- [Kasey B.](#), Eighth-Grade Student of the Week
- [Elizabeth S.](#), Seventh-Grade Student of the Week
- [Makynna B.](#), Sixth-Grade Student of the Week

Yearbook Dedication Pages: Price Goes Up Tomorrow!

Looking for a creative way to show your children how proud you are of them? Purchase a dedication page in the 2023–24 school yearbook! There are four different sizes from which to choose: 1/8 page, 1/4 page, 1/2 page, and full page.

- [Click here for instructions and prices.](#)
- **The first price increase is tomorrow (Friday, December 1)**, so purchase your dedication page today for the lowest price!
- Questions? [Email Beth Sarachman.](#)

Seventh-Grade Families: Washington, DC, Field Studies Info Night Is December 6

All current seventh-grade families are invited to join us on Wednesday, December 6, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 25 of Sillers Hall to kick off the 2024 Washington, DC, Field Studies trip. We will go over the basic trip details, including dates and cost, as well as how to register for the trip. We hope to see you there!

MD Spring Play: Register by December 13 for *Shrek JR.*

Thank you to those who were able to join us on Tuesday for our information meeting for this

year's spring musical, ***Shrek JR.*** If you were not able to attend, but would still like to register, don't fret! You will be able to find most of the information that was discussed on the registration form.

- [Click here](#) to start the registration process if your child would like to participate, whether as part of the cast, part of the crew, or as a stage manager.
- Please see the [rehearsal schedule](#) to view the dates/times of each rehearsal.
- The deadline to submit registration and payment is **Wednesday, December 13, at 3:30 p.m.**
- If you have any questions, please [email Mr. Tiatia-Graud](#).

We can't wait to get started!

Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis Screenings Are January 5

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS FOR EIGHTH GRADERS + NEW MD STUDENTS

On Friday, January 5, eighth graders—as well as all new Middle Division students—will have their vision and hearing screened by Southern California Sensory Screening. There is no charge for this screening. If your child wears glasses, please make sure they bring their glasses to school the day of the screening. Should you have any questions regarding the screening, please [contact St. John's Health Office](#) directly.

SCOLIOSIS SCREENING FOR SEVENTH-GRADE GIRLS AND EIGHTH-GRADE BOYS

On Friday, January 5, seventh-grade girls and eighth-grade boys will be screened for scoliosis by Southern California Sensory Screening. Please note that girls may prefer to wear a sports bra or bathing suit top for this screening. If your child is absent, we recommend that you contact your physician to do this screening. If your child is already being treated for scoliosis or you do not want them to participate in this screening, please [notify the Health Office via email](#).

Church

Join Us for Holiday Worship!

We hope you'll join us for holiday worship in December! Service times are as follows:

- **First Sunday in Advent:** Sunday, December 3, at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- **Second Sunday in Advent:** Sunday, December 10, at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- **Third Sunday in Advent:** Sunday, December 17, at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- **Children's Christmas Pageant:** Saturday, December 23, at 5:00 p.m.
- **Fourth Sunday in Advent:** Sunday, December 24, at 10:00 a.m.
- **Christmas Eve Worship:** Sunday, December 24, at 7:00 p.m.

- **Christmas Day Worship:** Monday, December 25, at 10:00 a.m.

Student Actors and Narrators Needed for Church Christmas Pageant

The 2023 St. John's Episcopal Church Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday, December 23, at 5:00 p.m. The theme is "Stellar Christmas," so those who attended VBS this year will be very familiar with the songs and characters.

- **[Sign up online here.](#)**
- We need children from four years old through fifth grade to serve as narrators and actors.
- If older siblings would like to participate, we could also use help motioning the songs and directing the children.
- With questions or for additional details, please reach out to Chrissy Hennings via **[email](#)** or at 949.291.6141.

We will sing, act and—most of all—have fun and SHINE JESUS'S LIGHT!