



CARDINAL WEEKLY

News for the Week of December 12, 2024



Head of School for the Day

Yesterday, Aya Zalzali lived out her Kids Cardinella Teacher Experience and took over as Head of School for the Day with Mrs. Grogan. Aya started off the day by greeting students at the front gate. Her day also included:

*A read aloud of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas in the ECD
Pulling the fire alarm for the fire drill
Delivering part of a sermon in MD Chapel
Emailing an important update to teachers and staff
Calling an Executive Leadership meeting into order
In-N-Out lunch in the Head of School's office with two friends*

Students were so grateful for her leadership. Thank you, Aya!

All School

Join Your K-8 Student for Spirit Lunch TOMORROW

TK Burgers will be on campus TOMORROW for Spirit Lunch. All orders must already have been placed online by Monday, December 2. If you did not place your order online, please plan to pack your child(ren) a lunch tomorrow, as no Choice Lunch will be served.

K-8 Parents are welcome to attend during their child(ren)'s designated lunch time. We ask that all parents adhere to check-in protocol at the front office upon arrival and depart campus after their child(ren) finish eating their lunch. Students and parents are encouraged to wear Spirit Wear on this day (with uniform bottoms for K-8 students).

- K-1-2: 11:30 a.m.
- 3-4-5: 12:00 p.m.
- 6-7-8: 12:35 p.m.

Wine Wall - Thank You Keil Family!

Thank you again to the Keil Family for generously opening up their home and hosting St. John's annual Wine Wall event! Thank you to everyone who attended and helped us kick off Cardinella with a donation of wine or whiskey.

- [Click here](#) to view photos from this memorable evening
- [Click here](#) to access the 360 photo opportunity photos

If you would still like to support the fundraising efforts Cardinella, [click here](#) to check out our Underwriting and Sponsorship opportunities offered at Wine Wall.

New Arrivals: Check Out the Student Store This Week!

Accomplish two things at once - pick up your kids from school and finish your Christmas shopping in the Student Store! We have received many new arrivals this week, from new **Youth Puffer Jackets**, **Toddler** and **Youth** Long Sleeve Tees, to a **Youth Girl Sweatshirt** and a **Ladies Sweatshirt**. Stop by the Student Store today after school and see what gift ideas we have for everyone on your list! Or [click here](#) to shop online.

Last Call for Carolers K-8!

Kindergarten to 8th Grade students are invited to go caroling in the community this Holiday Season!

- Friday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m. at the Rancho Mission Viejo Holiday Event
- Saturday, December 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at RSM Lake
- Tuesday, December 24 from 4:00 p.m. at St. John's Family Church Service

Please plan to arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of each event in your Formal Uniform.

Questions? Please contact [Mrs. Naulls](#).

Save the Date: Christmas Concerts are Next Week!

Mark your calendars! Here are the upcoming dates for our annual Christmas performances for each division:

- Early Childhood Division: Friday, December 20 at 11:15 a.m.
- Elementary Division: Thursday, December 19 at 6:00 p.m.
- Middle Division: Tuesday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Break is Around the Corner

School will be closed Monday, December 23 through Monday, January 6. School will resume on Tuesday, January 7.

Important Upcoming Dates

Early Childhood Division

Friday, December 13

- *Spirit Lunch (K-8 Parent Lunch): No ChoiceLunch*

Wednesday, December 18

- *Wear Christmas accessories*

Thursday, December 19

- *Wear Christmas accessories*

Friday, December 20

- *Early Childhood Christmas Concert at 11:15 a.m.*
- *Minimum Day: Early Dismissal at 11:45 a.m.*

Monday, December 23 - Monday, January 6

- *Christmas Break: NO SCHOOL*

Tuesday, January 7

- *School resumes*

Elementary Division

Friday, December 13

- *Spirit Lunch (K-8 Parent Lunch): No ChoiceLunch*
- *Christmas Caroling: 6:00 p.m. at Rancho Mission Viejo Holiday Event*

Wednesday, December 18

- *Free Dress Day: Celebrating Giving Week goal*

Thursday, December 19

- *Elementary Division Christmas Concert at 6:00 p.m.*

Friday, December 20

- *Wear Christmas pajamas and accessories*
- *Minimum Day: Early Dismissal at 12:00 p.m.*

Monday, December 23 - Monday, January 6

- *Christmas Break: NO SCHOOL*

Tuesday, January 7

- *School resumes*

Middle Division

Friday, December 13

- *Spirit Lunch (K-8 Parent Lunch): No Choice Lunch*
- *Christmas Caroling: 6:00 p.m. at Rancho Mission Viejo Holiday Event*

Tuesday, December 17

- *Middle Division Christmas Concert*

Wednesday, December 18

- *Free Dress Day: Celebrating Giving Week goal*

Friday, December 20

- *Wear Christmas pajamas and accessories*
- *Minimum Day: Early Dismissal at 12:00 p.m.*

Monday, December 23 - Monday, January 6

- *Christmas Break: NO SCHOOL*

Tuesday, January 7

- *School resumes*

Early Childhood Division



'Twas the week before Christmas, and throughout Room 6, the class was having fun decorating the classroom. Mrs. Evensen's class had fun decorating trees and painting candy canes with peppermint paint. Students also enjoyed going for a walk around St. John's to see all the Christmas decorations, including Mr. Robot with his candy cane! This adventure around campus ended with a visit to say "hello" to the chickens.

Get Into the Holiday Spirit with Christmas Accessories

To get into the holiday spirit! All ECD students are encouraged to wear their favorite Christmas accessories next Wednesday, December 18 and Thursday, December 19.

Early Childhood Christmas Concert is next Friday, December 20

Don't miss this year's Early Childhood Division Christmas performance on Friday, December 20. The performance will begin at 11:15 a.m. and will take place in the gym. This event is a wonderful opportunity for our Preschool and Pre-K students to share their talents and what they have been learning in our music program with their family and friends. Children are asked to wear their Christmas best. This is a special event for the whole family!

Christmas Break is Around the Corner

School will be closed Monday, December 23 through Monday, January 6. School will resume on Tuesday, January 7.

Elementary Division



Pioneer Free Play in the OEC

Last week, 2nd grade students visited the Outdoor Education Center (OEC) and participated in some free play. Although it took the 2nd grade students a few minutes to

*engage with the vast amount of materials, after becoming comfortable with unstructured play, students began to recreate a unit of study from their classroom: **[the Pioneer Unit](#)**.*

In the picture, the boy pouring water is pouring fuel in the furnace to keep them warm in winter. Another student explained to fellow classmates, “You could have the pillows inside the house, because we can lay on the floor outside, we are gentlemen!” This experience is one small example of how students naturally appropriate their learning when given the opportunity to explore, imagine, and engage in free play.

Congrats to our Cardinal Character Winners!

During the Elementary Division Flag-Raising Ceremony this week, **[these students](#)** were recognized for displaying Cardinal Character traits. **[Click here](#)** to view a photo of our winners. Congratulations, Cardinals!

Elementary Christmas Concert is December 19

We're pleased to invite you to our K-5 Christmas concert is next **Thursday, December 19 at 6:00 p.m.** This event is a wonderful opportunity for our Elementary Division students to share their talents and what they have been learning in our music program with the entire school community. We are looking forward to a memorable and festive evening! **[Click here](#)** for details.

Middle Division



Engineering for the Holidays!

In Engineering class, this 7th Grade Team (Josephine Hellinga and Kayla Wabs) were the first to complete the gearbox-flywheel assembly—what a meaningful achievement! They’ve set the bar high for all of 7th grade with this proud moment for everyone.

"It’s incredible to see how far our students have come. At the start of the trimester, some didn’t fully grasp the power of gears, and now they’re learning, growing, and accomplishing amazing things. I couldn’t be prouder of them!" - Dr. Li

Spring Musical: *The Little Mermaid, Jr.* Informational Meeting

We are so excited to be putting on *The Little Mermaid, Jr.* as our Middle Division Spring Musical! Thank you to those of you who attended this week's meeting. [Click here](#) for a copy of the email that was sent earlier this week with more information on how to register and participate. Questions? Please contact [Mr. Tiatia-Garaud](#).

Mark Your Calendars: Middle Division Christmas Concert is December 17

We are so excited to welcome Middle Division families to our Christmas concert on Tuesday, December 17. Mr. Roberts (Band), Ms. Naulls (Choir), Ms. Stebbins (Dance), and Mr. Tiatia-Garaud (Drama) are so proud to showcase what the students have been working on in their respective classes. The event is divided into two separate shows, occurring on the same night but at different times:

- If your child is in *Band or Choir*, your portion of the show will begin at 6:00 p.m.
- If your child is in *Dance or Drama*, your portion of the show will begin at 7:00 p.m. More information will be communicated by your child's Performing Arts teachers. We look forward to seeing everyone for a wonderful evening put on by our Middle Division Performing Arts students.

Calling All 8th Grade Baby Photos

"Guess Who?" It has been a recent tradition to include a page in the yearbook of all our 8th grade graduates' baby photos. Students and families love trying to guess "who is who" in each of the pictures. Please [click here](#) for more information and contact [Mrs. Sarachman](#) with any questions.

Eighth-Grade Parents: Important Drug-Awareness Meeting on Tuesday, January 7

We look forward to sharing important information on our drug-awareness program with all eighth-grade parents on Tuesday, January 7, at 8:00 a.m. in the Learning Commons. Our drug awareness student sessions will begin on Thursday, January 9. For more information, please click [here](#) to view the parent letter emailed home on Tuesday, December 3.

Seventh-Grade Parents: Washington, D.C. Field Studies Info Night is January 9

All current seventh-grade families are invited to join us on **Thursday, January 9, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 25** of Sillers Hall to kick off the 2025 Washington, D.C. Field Studies trip. We will go over basic trip details including date, cost, and registration procedures. This informational meeting is for parents only. We hope to see you there!

Church

Pass the Pack: Christmas Donation Drive

This holiday season, join St. John's Church in spreading warmth and care to those in need! We're hosting a Christmas Donation Drive to support our local homeless community - and we need your help! All donations will be distributed to those in need in collaboration with Welcome Inn at Doheny State Beach.

What We're Collecting:

- Hygiene Products: Toothbrushes (individually packaged), toothpaste, soap, deodorant, feminine hygiene items, wipes, and more
- New or Gently Used Warm Weather Items: Gloves, hats, scarves, and socks
- New or Gently Used Backpacks and Duffle Bags: To help individuals carry their belongings

Bring donations to the St. John's Church by TOMORROW, December 13. Your donations will make a direct impact, helping our homeless neighbors stay warm, healthy, and hopeful this season. Let's come together to show the true spirit of giving. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference! For more information or questions, contact **[Rebecca Swartz](#)** or **[Lisa Naulls](#)**.

Save the Date! Christmas Pageant at St. John's Church

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 22, at 5:00 p.m.**, and get ready to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with joy and laughter! Our annual Christmas Pageant is a heartwarming and adorable retelling of the birth of Jesus, brought to life by the children of St. John's. ***All children are welcome to join the fun on stage the night of!*** This beloved tradition is sure to fill your heart with the spirit of the season. Bring your family, invite your friends, and join us for an evening of faith, fun, and festive cheer. We can't wait to see you there!

Join Us for Christmas Worship Services!

This Christmas season, come celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with us! Whether you are a long-time member, a first-time guest, or someone seeking the joy and hope of the holiday season, our doors are open to welcome you and your family.

Christmas Eve Worship, Tuesday, December 24

- **Family Service, 4:00 p.m.**
This special celebration is designed for all ages to experience the joy and wonder of the season together. Through carols, the reading of the Christmas story, and a message of hope, we'll honor the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ.
- **Music of Christmas, 8:30 p.m.**
Arrive early on Christmas Eve and let the sounds of the season fill your heart with joy! Before our worship service begins, enjoy a special time of Christmas music featuring beloved carols and beautiful instrumental arrangements. This peaceful and uplifting time is the perfect way to prepare your heart for worship as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Come and let the music set the tone for a truly meaningful evening!
- **Christmas Eve Eucharist, 9:00 p.m.**
Celebrate the birth of Christ and partake in Holy Communion. In this reverent and joyful gathering, we will reflect on the miracle of Emmanuel—God with us—and receive the bread and cup as a reminder of His love and grace.

Christmas Day Worship, Wednesday, December 25 10:00 a.m.

Rejoice in the true meaning of Christmas with uplifting carols, a special message, and communion as we celebrate the gift of Jesus together. Let this season of light and love remind us of God's incredible gift to the world. Bring your loved ones and join us as we come together in worship and fellowship. We can't wait to celebrate with you. Merry Christmas!

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14)

St. John's Church Sunday School Program (every Sunday at 10 a.m.)

Hey kids! Have you ever wanted to learn cool Bible stories, sing awesome songs, and make new friends? Sunday School at St. John's is the perfect place for you! We'll have fun as we play games and discover how God loves us all. Sunday School is taught by Andrew Hammond, a member of the St. John's congregation. Don't miss out – join us on Sunday and bring a friend along too! Nursery care is also available for children aged 0-4 on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.