



CARDINAL WEEKLY

News for the Week of December 19, 2024



Surprise Caroling with Mr. Stephens

Lower Elementary students enjoyed a fun activity in the Learning Commons this week! Once teachers dropped off their students at the Library, Mr. Stephens brought out his guitar and rehearsed two Christmas songs with each class. Students then got to surprise their teachers when they returned to the Learning Commons with a joyous bout of "Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Our Cardinals have enjoyed embracing the Christmas spirit in a variety of ways throughout the week.

All School

To Help You Plan: Important School Calendar Dates for 2025-26

As we welcome the New Year, we are excited to share the 2025-26 academic calendar. [Click here](#) to access the full one-page calendar and start planning for the year ahead.

Christmas Break Begins Next Week

Tomorrow, Friday, December 20 is a minimum day for all divisions. Please plan to pick up your child(ren) at their designated dismissal times noted here:

Early Childhood Division: **11:45 a.m.**

Elementary Division: **12:00 p.m.**

Middle Division: **12:15 p.m.**

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

Please Claim Lost & Found Items

Please stop by the Lost and Found, located just in front of Hunsaker Hall to check for those items your child(ren) have been missing! Items not claimed by Friday, December 20 at 12:15 p.m. will be donated. Thank you.

Calling all Carolers for Christmas Eve Service

Kindergarten through 8th Grade students are invited to join us for caroling at the St. John's Church Christmas Eve family church service on Tuesday, December 24 at 4:00 p.m. Please plan to arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the event in your Formal Uniform. Questions? Please contact [Ms. Naulls](#).

It's the Season of Giving: Give a Gift That Makes an Impact

As the year draws to a close, your support of St. John's can have a lasting impact on student success and educational excellence. Contributions help bridge funding gaps, enhance academic programs, and provide vital resources for students and faculty. Every gift, large or small, strengthens our mission and ensures continued growth and opportunity for the entire community. In this season of giving, we invite you to support St. John's [Cardinal Fund](#) where your dollars will make a difference.

P.S. Remember, your gift to the Cardinal Fund is 100% deductible on your 2024 taxes as long as you make your donation by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, December 31, 2024!

School Uniform Reminders

Sizing Reminders

As we head into the second half of the school year, please remember to replace uniform items that are becoming too small. Uniforms need to be size-appropriate, not form fitting, and midriffs must not show when arms are raised above the head. Skorts and dresses must come to at least the students' fingertips while their arms are resting naturally at their sides. Solid-colored black leggings, or bike shorts must be worn under all dresses. White polos are required to be tucked in on Mondays for All School Chapel.

Used Uniform Donations

Used uniforms and spirit wear that are no longer needed can be donated in the Student Store. Please note the following dates that pertain to Used Uniforms in the coming year.

- Dennis used uniforms will be available for sale in the Student Store until **January 31, 2025**.
 - If you think that your student may need a Dennis used uniform item to get you through the remainder of the school year, be sure to purchase it before January 31. Students are permitted to wear Dennis uniforms throughout the 2024-2025 school year.
- Beginning **February 1, 2025**, only Tommy Hilfiger *used* uniforms will be available.
- Dennis used uniform donations will be accepted until **January 15, 2025**. For more information, [click here](#) for a copy of the email that was sent in November. Questions? Please reach out to Student Store Manager, [Cheryl Boesch](#).

Save the Date! Join Us Thursday, January 23 for State of the School

We hope you will join us for State of the School on Thursday, January 23, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

- This annual event will include important school updates for the 2025-26 school year. Dinner and wine will be served along with a presentation. [Click here](#) to RSVP.
- While you're at State of the School, your kids are invited to join us for pizza, games, and fun! Please [click here](#) to RSVP for childcare to help us plan.

Save the Date: Grandparents & Special Friends Day is February 14

We hope our Grandparents and Special Friends will join us for a joyful morning of activities and fellowship on **Friday, February 14, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.** A detailed schedule and additional information will follow in the new year, along with a formal invitation to grandparents. In the mean time, please make sure to update your grandparent contact info on the [Parent Portal](#). To do this, follow these steps on the Parent Portal:

- Click the **Update Your Information** button
- Click **Contacts for My Child**
- Click **+Add New**
- Add their **First and Last Name**
- Add their best **email address** - this will help us make sure they receive the invite!
- Mark their relation as *Grandparent* or *Friend*

Important Upcoming Dates

Early Childhood Division

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*

Thursday, January 23

- *State of the School: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Click here](#) to RSVP by January 16*

Elementary Division

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*

Thursday, January 23

- *State of the School: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Click here](#) to RSVP by January 16*

Middle Division

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*

Thursday, January 23

- *State of the School: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Click here](#) to RSVP by January 16*

Early Childhood Division



Christmas Tree Process Art

Ms. Melissa's Preschool class has been hard at work making a Process Art Christmas Tree. Students had to follow instructions by using glue, stickers, ribbon, washi tape, pom poms, and glitter. The tree was placed out every day for two weeks to allow children to work on it as they pleased. Some students glued one pom pom on while others spent time each morning adding to it. This project challenged children in their decision-making, fine motor, teamwork, language, self-advocacy skills, and fostered sensory exploration and creative expression.

We had so much fun making this Christmas Tree!

Early Childhood Christmas Concert is TOMORROW, December 20

Don't miss this year's Early Childhood Division Christmas performance tomorrow, 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 for family members to hear what they have been learning in our music program.

Children are asked to wear their Christmas best. We look forward to having you at this is a special event for the whole family!

Christmas Break Starts Next Week

Tomorrow, Friday, December 20 is a minimum day with early dismissal at 11:45 a.m. School will be closed Monday, December 23 through Monday, January 6. School will resume on Tuesday, January 7.

Elementary Division



The Season for Empathy

Tis the season...to think of others! Fourth-grade students in Mrs. West's class had the opportunity to deck their classroom walls with acts of empathy. One way to think about empathy is, "understanding and connecting with other people's feelings." Their Christmas lightbulbs reflect ways they can help grow strong relationships and build connection with others.

A Note from Mr. Bourke and Mrs. McLennan:

As we conclude 2024 and prepare to break for Christmas, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for all who make St. John's the wonderful place it is. We truly are a community blessed with many gifts and talents that we share daily with one another, and most importantly, with our students.

Our children's faces best express the spirit of the holiday season. They radiate enthusiasm, joy, and hope for the opportunities that await them. In the spirit of the season, we want to extend our gratitude for all you do for our school. It is also a time for us to reflect on our own good fortune to serve as principals of St. John's Episcopal School.

Wishing the St. John's community a joyous and blessed Christmas holiday.

Warmly,

[Ryan Bourke](#) and [Danielle McLennan](#)

Elementary Christmas Concert is TONIGHT

We're pleased to invite you to our K-5 Christmas concert TONIGHT, December 19 at 6:00 p.m. Students should be dropped off in their classrooms between 5:30 - 5:45 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.

Rising Cardinals: Third- and Fourth-grade Basketball

We are excited to invite our third- and fourth-grade students to participate in the Rising Cardinals program, which provides an introduction to school sports and friendly competition. Led by members of the Physical Education Department, the program focuses on individual and team development in a fun environment. Our upcoming season will be basketball in the winter, followed by flag football in the spring. **The basketball program will begin on Tuesday, January 14.** Three weeks of basketball instruction will culminate in a mini basketball tournament for all students in the Rising Cardinals program. *Be on the lookout for an email the first week of January to sign up! Go Cardinals!*

Middle Division



Wax Museum

Last week, seventh-grade students showcased their knowledge of a selected individual from history in the annual Wax Museum experience. Students dressed up to bring their character to life, giving a brief overview of their impact on the world and recalling how they left a mark on history. Fellow students and staff had the opportunity to witness famous presidents, scientists, athletes, and activists come to life. Go Cardinals!

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Wishing the St. John's community a joyous and blessed Christmas holiday.

Warmly,

[Ryan Bourke](#) and [Danielle McLennan](#)

Congrats to our Middle Division Student of the Week Winners

Congratulations to our Student of the Week Winners! Click on each name below to learn a little more about each of them.

8th grade: [Abigail Freeborn](#)

7th grade: [Nathan Dawood](#)

6th grade: [Richard Li](#)

Cardinal Character Awards for December

Each month in Middle Division, we recognize a 6th, 7th, and 8th grader who exemplify a specific Cardinal Character Trait. The Cardinal Character Trait for the month of December is "Respectful". A respectful St. John's student demonstrates genuine integrity through responsible and considerate actions to self and others. They are humble, thoughtful, well-mannered, honest, and inclusive in their morals and values. In December, teachers in the Fine Arts department highlighted three students who showed the Cardinal Character Trait "respectful" in class. Students received their award during Cardinal Connection Time (CCT) Friday, December 13.

Congratulations to our respectful Cardinals: Ryan Meisenzahl, Julia Price, and Ella Crowel.

Cardinal Carrier Wave

The Cardinal Carrier Wave (Student News Broadcast) final broadcast will be ready on our Unlisted YouTube Channel later today, but an unpolished is available NOW, before the official broadcast date! [Click here](#) to check it out. Thank you to all of our students who worked hard all year long to rebuild the student-led streaming media production team. You've all done an incredible job!

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

Christmas Pageant at St. John's Church is this Sunday

Please join us this Sunday, December 22, at 5:00 p.m. and 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)