



# St. John's School

## *Eagle Newsletter*

November 2021

### Important Dates

11/15	Advent Begins
11/24	Cookie Decorating
11/25-26	<b>No School</b> - Thanksgiving Break
12/05	Great Vespers for St. Nicholas
12/12	Akathist for St. Herman
12/16	Last Day of School - 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester
12/17-01/02	<b>No School</b> - Christmas Break
01/03	School Resumes

Hello St. John's Families,

November is upon us as we march towards Thanksgiving, the end of the first Semester, and Christmas. The next several weeks will be busy! Please read this Newsletter to get caught up on all of the latest news at St. John's School.

Mrs. Streff

## **Other News and Upcoming Events**

### **Winter Topics: Clothing, Weather, School Closures**

Winter has certainly found its way to Eagle River, AK! In light of that, here are our yearly reminders about the winter season:

- Make sure your students in K-5 have the proper outerwear and footwear for the weather Monday – Friday. This includes snow pants, winter jackets, hat, gloves, and snow boots.
- **Students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade will need full winter gear on the days that they have PE.**
- If your students live in the neighborhood and walk to school, please make sure some piece of their outerwear is reflective (a parent who drives their student to school called the office to remind us about this important safety tip).
- Unless the temperature dips below -10, recess will be outside. 😊
- If the weather is bad (snow, ice, wind etc...) and ASD cancels school we will do the same. We will send out a school email and post our school closure on our Facebook page.
- If ASD doesn't cancel but it is too dangerous to travel to school from your house, please don't risk it.

### **Lunch: Fruit and Veggies**

If you would like to help with keeping our Lunch Program healthy, please consider donating fresh fruits or vegetables to be served with our daily lunch program. All students are encouraged to eat fruits and vegetables and enjoy a glass of cold milk with their lunch every day. When you donate these items, don't forget to stop by the school and apply 1 hour of volunteer time to your family's total required hours.

### **Schoolwork Requests**

If your family has travel plans that will require your student to miss school, out of consideration for our teachers, we would ask that you give the teacher 2 weeks notice when requesting work. It is a lot of work for teachers to put together assignments with little to no warning.

### **Advent begins on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>**

Advent will begin on Friday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> for Orthodox Christians. I wanted to let you know how we, at St. John's School, will observe this season of preparation for Christmas. Because Orthodox Christians observe a 40-day period of fasting (usually from meat and dairy) before the Christmas celebration, our hot lunch program will be altered to serve meatless lunches between Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> and Christmas Break.

We will participate in an all-school almsgiving project because we feel that the spirit of giving to those in need is such an important part of the Advent season and preparation for Christmas. This year, we have chosen to sponsor 2 children who participate in the St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund, by raising \$300- per student to help them with their education and home life for an entire year.

Your students will be bringing home more information in the coming weeks about this great cause. If you would like to learn more about the St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund now, please visit their website [www.ugandachildrensfund.org](http://www.ugandachildrensfund.org) to see how the program works. This project will begin on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> and will conclude on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>, before we begin our Christmas Break.

In observance of the Advent season, we will reserve our celebratory Christmas parties and gift exchanges until we return from Christmas Break. Classroom teachers will each organize their own parties so look for notes from them.

Each year during the month of December we take time to celebrate and remember the lives of three special Orthodox saints. All students and families are invited to join us as we do this. On **Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:15**, we will have a special Vespers Service in the Cathedral to remember St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, lived in the 300's and was known for his great generosity, giving gold coins to those in need. Everyone is invited to join us for this service. Don't forget to leave your shoes in the church basement; after the Vespers Service come downstairs and see what was put in them! 😊

Next, we will remember St. Herman of Alaska on **Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>** with a short Akathist prayer service starting at **6:15 p.m.** in the Cathedral. St. Herman was a Russian monk who came to Alaska in the late 1700's. He devoted much of his life to serving the native peoples of Alaska. Following the service there will be a **bonfire** in the church parking lot. To keep the cold at bay, hot tea and cookies will be served and singing of seasonal songs..

Finally, on **Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>** we will remember St. Ignatius with a special Vespers Service at **6:15 p.m.** As Bishop of Antioch, St. Ignatius was one of the great early martyrs of the Church, being killed by lions in a Roman arena on this day in 107 A.D. I hope that you will be able to join us for these special events that we have planned for the month of December as we prepare ourselves for the arrival of the Christ child on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Charlie Brown and the Pumpkin Cookies-Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>**

In keeping with school tradition, we will frost, decorate and eat pumpkin cookies washed down with a glass of milk on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving in the church basement, all while watching a classic – **A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving**. Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help. Volunteers who are helping with set-up should plan to arrive at 1:30. Cookie festivities with the students will begin at 2:00.

### **Thanksgiving Break – Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>**

There will be **No School** on Thursday, Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> and Friday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> in observance of Thanksgiving.

### **Last Day of the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester**

The last day of the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester will be Thursday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>. Our Christmas Break will begin on Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup> and we will return to school on Monday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>.