**Grace Episcopal**

 

 **School**

October 1, 2020

Dear Parents,

 School

Well, September sure seems like it was a whirlwind of learning new people, new routines, new guidelines, and new places! We had a lot of fun, and now things seem to have settled into a nice, steady routine. Our hallways are once again filled with laughter and the voices of children, and things seem right in my world again. ☺

Thank you to everyone for signing up for our various committees. This year with all the added cleaning and disinfecting and check-in procedures, our parent committees are going to be more important than ever! We will be reaching out to several of the committees soon to help get them organized. I know Kelly Brewer-Smith has already gotten the Hospitality Committee up and running! You have all been great! Thank you! This month we plan to get the Snack Cart Committee, Directory Committee, School Photos Committee, and the Fall Basket Fundraiser Committees organized and running. Thank you in advance for your help!

October is Fire Safety Month! Here are some suggestions on what to discuss with your child at home: Talk about your home's fire exit route. Draw up a plan that includes at least two ways out from every room. Make sure your children know the procedures "Stay low and go" when exiting during a fire and "Stop, drop, and roll" if clothes catch fire. Teach your children how and when to use 911 for emergencies after safely exiting a burning structure. Unfortunately the Georgetown Fire Department will be unable to visit us at school this year due to their COVID protocols.

In honor of St. Francis Day this Sunday, Grace Episcopal Church will have a drive-through pet blessing Sunday, October 4. Fr. Bertie writes, “*Feel free to bring dogs, cats, lizards, emus and any other animal that can hop in a back seat or be loaded into a trailer to* ***Grace Church on October 4th from 1pm-2pm for the blessing of the pets.****Drive up, roll down the window, and prepare for your pet to be blessed!*“ We hope to see you and your furry, feathered, or scaly friends there!

Mr. Dabbs will be here on Wednesday, October 7th for picture day. He will be taking individual and class group pictures. Parents will see ONLINE PROOFS with ordering instructions after picture day. If you would like siblings to be photographed together, please email me at headofschool@graceschool1992.org to arrange for that. There is no sitting fee required for sibling photographs.

We will be holding our first intruder/lockdown drill on Wednesday, October 14th, and our October fire drill will be on the following Wednesday, October 21st. We must hold a fire drill every month, and we must hold 4 severe weather and 4 intruder drills over the course of the school year as required by childcare licensing.

We hope to have the order of Grace t-shirts in soon! We will have our first school-wide Grace t-shirt day near the middle to end of the month. We will let you know the date once the shirts arrive. If your child does not have a red Grace t-shirt, have him/her wear any red shirt on this day.

Our big fall fundraiser, the Grace School Annual Golf Tournament has been cancelled for this year due to COVID-19. In addition, our Thanksgiving Feast with Grandparents at the Community Center has been cancelled for this year. We will, however, still hold our Fall Holiday Gift Basket silent auction. Throughout the month of October, each class will create a themed basket to be auctioned. We will open the auction to our Grace School Families, church members, and anyone you wish to include. These make great gifts for Christmas! We are looking into a way to hold the auction online for bidding and will be sending out a link through email when the auction gets closer. What we need right now is a contact person for each classroom who can help coordinate the theme for the basket and then assemble the basket with the donated items into its final presentation. We will display the final products on our website. We plan to have the collection bins for each class outside in the mornings and afternoons for dropping off the donated items. Unfortunately, we only had two people sign up to be on this committee (one from Ms. Debra’s class and one from Ms. Kim’s class).

We will need one volunteer for each of the other four classes, so if you think you would like to help Grace School in this way, please contact me or your child’s teacher as soon as possible.

The time frame to get the baskets ready is as follows:

October 5 - October 8 Parent coordinator chooses theme for class basket

October 13 - 29 Collect items for baskets (three weeks)

November 2 - 5 Work on basket assembly

November 9 and 10 Drop completed baskets off at school

November 11 - 18 Online auction

November 18 Auction closes at noon

Basically, each family donates or acquires donations from businesses for the items to go into each basket. If you choose to solicit businesses, I have a business letter you can deliver to the businesses with our tax exempt information. If you have a connection to a business in the area, please think about contacting them.

If you have items to donate to one of the other baskets (not your child’s), please feel free to donate items to them. It all benefits the school in the end.

It takes all of us to make this fall fundraiser a success. Remember, only 80% of our operating expenses are covered by tuition. We must raise the rest through fundraising efforts to keep our class ratios low, tuition low, and to attract and retain high-quality teachers. Our budgeted goal this year for all fundraising efforts is $12,000! Let’s work together to make this the most successful basket auction EVER!

I did want to clarify something about fundraising at Grace Episcopal School. According to the National Association of Episcopal Schools, private schools rely on fundraising for general operating expenses. Tuition alone covers only about 80-85% of a school’s expenses, so we rely on fundraisers to cover the gap. We try not to have too many small fundraisers as we know that becomes wearisome. In a ***typical*** year, we have 4 set fundraisers – two in the fall and two in the spring: our golf tournament and our basket silent auction, and our annual giving letter and our book fair. We know we cannot have our largest fundraiser, the golf tournament, but we are not sure about the format of our book fair in the spring at this moment. These fundraisers help us pay the bills and ensure that we can pay our teachers and staff. We do not always earmark funds generated through fundraising for special projects, but rather use these funds to keep the school solvent. We appreciate our families’ understanding of and participation in these important events in the life of the school!

Since we are not having the golf tournament this October, I have decided to have a Firo Fundraiser on October 29th. Firo is a “build-your-own” pizza restaurant in Georgetown off FM 2338 on DB Wood Road. If you mention the attached flyer or bring it in any time between 10:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. on the 29th, Firo will give 25% of your bill to Grace Episcopal School. Tell your friends and family and let someone else do the cooking on this day/night!

There will be NO SCHOOL on Monday, October 12th due to the GISD school holiday for Columbus Day, and our staff meeting this month (early release) will be on October 27th.

Book orders will be due on Thursday, October 15th. Remember, you may pay online or with cash or check. If you are paying by check, you only have to write one check to ***Scholastic*** for all orders. You may also place your order online. Just visit www.scholastic.com. Our school code is GZ29K. Either way, orders will be due on the 15th.

Vision and hearing screenings by V.H.S.A. will take place at Grace on Tuesday, October 20th. Please remember that if your child is 4 (or when your child turns 4), I will need a copy of his/her vision & hearing screening results if performed elsewhere. These screenings are mandatory by Texas state law, and I have included a permission slip that needs to be returned by October 13th if the screenings will be performed here for your child. A copy of the results will be provided to you on the 20th. Please let me know if you have any questions about this. V.H.S.A. requires at least 10 screenings, or they will cancel our appointment.

We will celebrate fall and the fall holiday, Halloween, on Thursday, October 29th with our Fall Festival and parade. We will start our day with the Costume Parade beginning at 9:15 a.m. The parade route will take us out the main school door, around the perimeter of the building through the parking lot, and in through the church’s front doors, then through the administrative offices. Be sure to get a good vantage point somewhere along the

route in the parking lot for those priceless photo ops. And please remember to wear a mask and keep distanced from other families in the parking lot. After the parade, we will take costumes off of the children and put them in a bag in the students’ backpacks. If the costume is large, we will store it in an empty classroom until pick-up.

For the Fall Festival, each class will operate a " game booth" outside. We will need parents to sign up to volunteer to run the booths. Please look for emails from your child’s teacher to sign-up for a time if you wish to help. Each class will spend 30 minutes at the festival which will be held on the black top (weather permitting), and we will have a bounce house, too. We will disinfect the bounce house for 15 minutes between each class.

SCHEDULE FOR FALL FESTIVAL

10:00-10:30 Ms. Ellen’s class

10:30-11:00 Ms. Debra’s class

11:00-11:30 Ms. Kim’s class

11:30-12:00 Ms. Gigi’s class

12:00-12:30 Ms. Andrea’s class

12:30-1:00 Ms. Kara’s class

In addition, for the month of October we would like to create an interactive, hands-on pumpkin patch for the students on the playground. If you would like contribute a pumpkin, gourd, or bale of hay for recess, that would be great! These can be ***any size or shape***, and we like the smooth ones and the bumpy ones. The students will be able to play with and manipulate these when they are playing outside. They can carry them, build with them, compare them, weigh them, and stack them. Teachers will also use these pumpkins for some pumpkin math activities in the classroom. We really appreciate your contribution to the patch!

Housekeeping reminders:

* Lyrics of songs from music class can be emailed to you if you are interested. Simply email Ms. Evelyn at admin@graceschool1992.org for a copy.
* Please remember your drop-off and pick-up times. If you arrive to the school more than 5 minutes early, feel free to park in the other part of the parking lot until closer to your designated time. Our schedule is so tight, and we try to keep the children away from other children not in the same class. It’s amazing that 5 little minutes make a difference, but they do!
* Please remember to send your child to school in clothing that can get dirty. A dirty child at the end of the day is a sign that the child had a great day! ☺ Our mud/sand kitchen is now open on the playground.

***October Birthday Blessings to:***

*Jameson Pineda – 2*

*Elijah McCullough – 5*

*Greyson Bailey – 7*

*Bobby Wright – 22*

*Nolan Martinez – 25*

*Kara Temprovich – 26*

*Lucy Yarbrough – 31*

*Ms. Kay – 31*

I am looking forward to a great and busy month!

Sincerely,

Ginny Herbert, Head of School