



Sioux Falls Lutheran School

# EAGLES NEWS



[Mrs. Tia Esser](#)  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

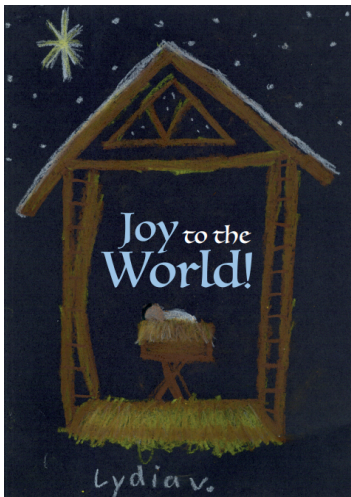
[Mr. James Stubkjaer](#)  
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL  
ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

[Dr. Kristen Newell](#)  
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL  
ELEMENTARY STEM DIRECTOR

[Mrs. Brenda Bernard](#)  
PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Dec. 19, 2025

## A Christmas Blessing to Our SFLS Families



As we approach Christmas, gratitude fills my heart for our beautiful school community and the many ways God has been at work among us this year.

Throughout Advent, we've been reminded to **walk by faith**—to keep our eyes on Christ even in the midst of full calendars, big decisions, and a world that doesn't always slow down. That faith has been visible across our campus: in music and performances that felt like living Christmas cards, in students growing into confident and caring leaders, in teachers and staff who give their very best each

day, and in families who partner so faithfully in this shared calling.

God continues to do far more than we could ask or imagine through this community—not because of our own strength, but because hearts and minds are being shaped by His truth and renewed by His grace. As we look ahead to the new year, that same faith carries us forward, including into a new chapter when students return **after Christmas break and our middle and high school wing opens**—another reminder of God's faithful provision.

As you celebrate Christmas with family and friends, may your home be filled with peace, rest, and joy. **May the light of Christ steady your hearts and remind you that God is with us—always faithful, always present.**

On behalf of the entire SFLS Faculty and Staff, Merry Christmas and God's richest blessings to you and your family.

With Deep Gratefulness,

Mrs. Tia Esser, Executive Director  
Romans 12:2

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## **\*\*OFFICE HOURS OVER BREAK\*\***

NEW

The school office will be closed over the Christmas/New Year's break. Voice messages and emails will be answered upon our return to school on **Monday, January 5**. Have a blessed Christmas. See you next year!

## **GIVING TUESDAY UPDATE!**

NEW

Praise the Lord! Through His faithfulness, we have now reached our \$30,000 Giving Tuesday goal. Every gift, every prayer, and every shared message played a part in this incredible moment. Thank you to all who contributed and to our entire SFLS community for linking arms with us in support of our students and mission—today and every day.



## **Launching This Spring: The SFLS K–12 Mentor Program**



This spring, we'll begin a new Mentor Program for our Kindergarten through 12th grade students—something rooted deeply in Scripture and inspired by the way Jesus walked so lovingly with His disciples. He taught them, listened to them, encouraged them, and reminded them again and again that they were loved.

Our Mentor Program is designed to pair one caring adult with a student for a simple weekly lunch-time visit. Students are recommended by their classroom teacher, who first connects with parents for permission. From there, our team thoughtfully matches each child with a trained mentor whose gifts and personality fit well. Mentoring isn't about having all the answers—it's about showing up, listening, and helping a child feel valued and seen.

We are now seeking [applications](#) from individuals who feel called to pour into a young person in this meaningful way. If you feel even the slightest nudge, we encourage you to **read the FAQs below** and prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to invest in a child through this meaningful ministry.

Questions may be directed to Mrs. Aker or Mrs. DeVos at [mentoringcoordinators@sflutherschool.com](mailto:mentoringcoordinators@sflutherschool.com).

**[Apply to be a mentor!](#)**

### **FAQs**

#### **What is a mentor?**

To put it simply, a mentor is an adult willing to spend time with a student. The mentor shows interest in and cares for the student, listens intently, asks questions, and lets the student know he or she has an extra adult who supports them. All of this is done by simply being present with your student during their lunch break once per week.

#### **Why should you consider being a mentor?**

The best reason is that you'll make a lasting impact on the life of a young person. Your consistent presence will mean the world to your student, and he or she will remember what you did for their lifetime.

### **How do I mentor a student?**

There are an endless number of ways to do this, but we would encourage you to utilize the many different games we have available to play together. During the game time, you can get to know each other through natural conversations. Your time, presence, interest, and care are the key elements you are offering when you mentor.

### **When would I meet with my mentee?**

Once you are assigned to a mentee, you will be informed of the time of their lunch break. Looking at your schedule for the week, you then determine which weekday works for you to meet with the student every week at that time.

### **Where would I meet with my student?**

Mentors and mentees will meet in the reading area at SFLS. Games and books are provided for your use.

### **How do I become a mentor?**

Simply complete the [mentor application](#) and authorize a background check. Once approved, you'll be invited to a training session that walks through the program, answers questions, and helps you feel confident and prepared. After training, our team will thoughtfully match you with a student who will benefit from your care.

Thank you for considering this wonderful opportunity!

**SIOUX FALLS LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

*Ribbon Cutting*  
&  
**DEDICATION**

**YOU'RE INVITED!** Middle & High School Wing Ribbon Cutting & Dedication

Tuesday, January 20 • 4:30 p.m.  
Sioux Falls Lutheran School

6715 S. Boe Lane  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

**Celebrate this milestone with our SFLS community!**



 **SIOUX FALLS LUTHERAN SCHOOL**  
World Ready. Faith Secure.

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## SAVE THE DATE!

**Annual Trivia Night: Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 6:00 in the SFLS commons.** Support the current 7th grade class for their Black Hills Leadership Trip in the fall! Dessert and drink concessions will be available for purchase. Thanks for helping make this wonderful opportunity possible! Register with Ms. Ockander ([mockander@sflutheralschool.com](mailto:mockander@sflutheralschool.com))



**KIDS NIGHT OUT RESCHEDULED** to February 7, 2026.



Please register here: <https://forms.gle/S2GG6PScfDbNQkDu5>



**2026-27 SCHOOL CALENDAR:** please find the new calendar [here](#).





It's hard to believe re-enrollment season is just around the corner! As we've listened to ParentPulse survey feedback this fall, a clear theme has emerged: **families see SFLS as a Christ-centered "second home" where children are known by name, loved as God's children, and surrounded by a caring village of teachers and staff.**

One parent put it this way: ***"In a city where a person could be treated more like a number than a name, Sioux Falls Lutheran is a place where our children are truly known—and that is priceless."***

It's a joy to partner with you in this kind of community, and we want to ensure you return from Christmas break ready to complete re-enrollment for the 2026–27 school year. **Specific instructions will be emailed in January.** For now, please mark your calendar with these important dates and contact our admissions or business offices with any questions.

### [2026-27 Re-Enrollment Overview](#)

**Re-enrollment window:**

**Monday, January 12 - Friday, January 23**

As a current SFLS family, you receive the *highest enrollment priority*. Because several classes are near capacity and many early childhood classes have large wait pools, **reserving your child's (and any siblings') spot promptly is critical.**

### [New Student Admissions Applications](#)

If you have a child who is not currently enrolled or in our wait pool, please follow the instructions below to submit a new student admissions application for 2026–27:

1. [Log into your FACTS account.](#)
2. Click "Apply/Enroll" in the lefthand navigation bar.
3. Click "Application" in the dropdown menu (a new window will open where you can click "create a new student application").

**Application processing for new students begins the week of January 26**, after our re-enrollment window for current students closes.

Our deepest thanks for entrusting us with the care and education of your children. It is a joy and honor to serve your family at SFLS, and we encourage you to contact our admissions or business offices with any questions.

Megan Baedke  
[mbaedke@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:mbaedke@sflutheranschool.com)  
Director of Community Engagement  
Preschool & Kindergarten  
Admissions

Vania Asmus  
[vasmus@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:vasmus@sflutheranschool.com)  
Admissions & Marketing  
Coordinator  
1st-12th Grade Admissions

Monica Johnson  
[finance@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:finance@sflutheranschool.com)  
Finance & Business Director

## ART



Do you buy/eat ice cream by the pail??? Please don't throw your pail or lid away! The art department can use them!!! 6-8 more are needed. Thank you!

## CAREER CORNER



We're hiring a 5th Grade Teacher for the 2026–27 school year, as well as Preschool Educational Assistants and Eagle Care Workers for the current school year. Learn more and apply:

[siouxfallslutheran.com/careers](https://siouxfallslutheran.com/careers).

## CELEBRATE HIS GIFTS GALA

### ✨ **In His Spotlight Drawing** ✨



In anticipation of the upcoming Celebrate His Gifts Gala, we're getting ready to host a drawing for the ***In His Spotlight Table***—a reserved table for 8 guests in a premier location with special perks at the 2026 Celebrate His Gifts Gala!

 **\$75 per ticket** |  **Only 75 tickets available**

 **One winner receives:**

 **Reserved table for 8** (a \$525 value!)

 **4 front-row parking spots on Gala night** (*February comfort matters!*)

✨ **One additional surprise revealed Gala night**

Strong odds. Incredible value. A night to remember. **Keep an eye on your inbox on December 22 for drawing tickets to go on sale!**

The **In His Spotlight Drawing** will take place on **Saturday, January 10**, at **SFLS** between the varsity girls and boys home basketball games (approximately 3:30pm). You do not need to be present to win.

Grab your drawing ticket, gather your favorite people, and prepare to enjoy an unforgettable event that shines a light on the transformative power of faith, creativity, and community at SFLS!

To learn more about the Celebrate His Gifts Gala, visit [www.siouxfallslutheran.com/celebrate-his-gifts-gala](http://www.siouxfallslutheran.com/celebrate-his-gifts-gala).

## CHAPEL

**Campus Chaplain** the week of January 5 is Pastor Slavens from Memorial Lutheran Church.

**Chapel on Wednesday, January 7**, will be led by Pastor Slavens from Memorial Lutheran Church, in the Meyer Chapel & Performing Arts Center.

This year's theme is Walk by Faith, and this week we focus on Faith in Jesus' Ministry; Peter Walks on Water: Faith in Storms.

Chapel Times:

- 6-12: 8:05
- K-5: 8:50

**Preschool chapel** will be held on **Thursday, January 8**, led by DCE Liz Peters from Memorial Lutheran Church, in the Early Childhood wing, beginning at **8:40 AM** and **9:00 AM**. The theme is **"Jesus as a Boy"**.

**Chapel Offerings:** Our second quarter offerings have come to a close. We have collected \$987.10 that will go to [FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA](http://FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA). FYI: Every \$1 provides 3 meals!

**We honor God by serving others!**

THANK YOU for Supporting



Together we can  
end hunger.



## COUNSELING SERVICES

**NEW** December brings opportunities for celebration, connection, and fun! But it can also bring stress, grief, and added pressure, especially for families juggling busy schedules or coping with loss. The holidays are an important time to focus on protective factors such as routines, communication, and connection. These small practices help families manage stress, prevent substance misuse, and support mental wellness!

**Tips for the Holiday Season:** **Strengthen Routines:** Keep meals, sleep, and downtime as consistent as possible. Predictability helps children and adults stay regulated during busy weeks.

**Practice Open Communication:** Talk honestly about expectations, finances, schedules, and boundaries. Communication creates a calmer environment.

**Reduce Substance-Related Risks:** Offer appealing nonalcoholic drinks and reinforce family rules around youth substance use. Plan for safe transportation. Modeling moderation helps keep celebrations safe.

**Acknowledge Grief:** For those missing loved ones, traditions can feel heavy. Encourage people to honor memories, adjust expectations and seek support when needed.



## Merry Christmas from

Barb DeVos, Contracted School Counselor, is available to support your child's well-being. Barb is at Sioux Falls Lutheran School Tuesday through Friday.

[bdevos@carrollinstitute.org](mailto:bdevos@carrollinstitute.org) or [bdevos@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:bdevos@sflutheranschool.com)

### PTF (PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP)

#### No December Meeting

See you in January!

#### CONNECT WITH THE PTF ON FACEBOOK



Scan the QR Code with  
your camera app to go  
to the SFLS PTF  
Facebook Page



### RAISERIGHT (AKA SCRIP)

Order Dates by 10 AM	Pick-Up Dates after 11 AM
No Orders Week of December 22	No Orders Week of December 22
No Orders Week of December 29	No Orders Week of December 29
Monday, January 12	Thursday, January 15



**The RaiseRight program ordering process is changing.** The date of the next order will be January 12. Going forward, orders will be placed every two weeks rather than every week as previously done.

### EAGLE CARE

We wish you all a very Merry CHRISTmas and Happy New Year!

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Merry Christmas to you all! We hope everyone has a wonderful break and look forward to seeing you back on January 5.

Our Advent wreath had three candles lit this week. The third candle is pink, and symbolizes JOY. It is sometimes called the Shepherds' Candle. With this third candle, we remember the joy the shepherds had to go see the baby in Bethlehem.

On Sunday the fourth candle will be lit, which symbolizes LOVE. Jesus is love in human form, come down from heaven.

The white "Christ candle" in the center is lit on Christmas Eve. We will celebrate Christmas for 12 days starting on Christmas Day. So it will still be "Christmas" when we come back to school. 😊

## UPPER SCHOOL



Dear SFLS Families,

As we enter the Advent & Christmas Season, I pray that your homes are filled with the true joy and peace that come from our Savior's birth. In Luke 2:8–14, the angels proclaim the good news of great joy—that unto us is born a Savior, Christ the Lord—reminding us that Christmas is first and foremost about God's gracious gift of salvation through Jesus.

May this Advent & Christmas season be one of rest, worship, and renewed faith as you gather around Word and Sacrament, giving glory to God for the peace He has won for us in Christ.

From the whole educational staff at SFLS, we wish you a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

In Christ,

James Stubkjaer

MS/HS Principal & Activities Director

## ATHLETICS



**HS BB GAME VOLUNTEERS:** We are in need of 4 scoretable workers for each of the home JV (Boys and Girls) and C (Boys) games: book, scoreboard, clock and shot clock. (Adults only) Please sign up [HERE](#) for games your player WILL NOT be playing in to minimize conflict of interest. The times are approximate as we will have a rolling schedule on doubleheader game nights. Thank you everyone for your help.

## HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

### Games:

- **Girls:**

- December 20: Varsity @ River City Classic, Chamberlain
  - 11:30 AM vs Chamberlain. We are the away team.
- January 2: @ St. Mary's, Dell Rapids: JV: 3:30; V: 6:00
- January 6: @ Howard: JV: 6:15; V: 7:30
- January 9: HOME vs Canton: JV 4; V: 6:30
- January 10: HOME vs Sunshine Bible Academy: JV: 12; V: 2:30

- **Boys:**

- December 20: Varsity @ River City Classic, Chamberlain
  - 10 AM vs Lyman: We are the away team.
- January 2: @ St. Mary's, Dell Rapids: JV: 4:30; V: 7:15
- January 5: HOME vs Arlington: JV: 6:15; V: 7:30
- January 9: HOME vs Canton: JV 5:15; V: 7:45
- January 10: HOME vs Sunshine Bible Academy: JV: 1:15; V: 3:45

- Click the [LINK for the girls game schedule.](#)
- Click the [LINK for the boys game schedule.](#)

### POWER LIFTING:

- Practices: 6:15 - 7:30 AM: M/W/F
- First Meet: January 17 in Baltic

## MUSIC

### [JANUARY Middle School Ensemble Calendar](#)

## [Click or scan to take a look at the SFLS Strings Site!](#)



All glory and praise goes to God for our Elementary, Middle School, and High School students for sharing their talents and beautiful Christmas music with audiences throughout the month of December. You helped capture the real reason for this season: The birth of our Savior! We are proud of you all! Mrs. Birnstiehl, Mrs. Biteler, Ms. Goeller, Pastor Mike, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Nusser, Mrs. Prouty, Ms. Temple, and Mrs. Thornton

## FALL SEMESTER PHOTO GALLERIES

Our sincere thanks to Brian Hall for his work photographing SFLS events this fall. You can find links to his galleries below, and **parents are invited to download photos from these galleries at no charge** (please disregard the “buy photos” button on the gallery site). Simply click the download icon at the top of the album to download all the images. Or hover over an image and click on the download icon at the bottom right corner of the image to download the individual photos.

- [December 11 - High School Christmas Program](#)
- [December 8 - Varsity Girls Basketball](#)
- [December 2 - 4th & 5th + 6th-8th Grade Christmas Programs](#)
- [November 18 - Middle School Girls & Boys Basketball](#)
- [November 11 - Veterans Day Chapel](#)
- [November 3 - Volleyball](#)
- [October 3 - Football](#)
- [September 30 - Volleyball](#)
- [September 26 - Football Game, Dance Team & Middle School Marching Band](#)

## ASSOCIATION CHURCHES

**Memorial** - Rev. Doug Slavens, DCE Hailey Jo Miller and DCE Liz Peters

**Faith** - Rev. Corey Aker and Rev. Jason Rensner

**Lord of Life** - Rev. Billy Newell



**Sounds Of The Savior: The Telling of the Christmas Story.** The Christmas season goes by so quickly, so we would love for you to spend some time with us remembering what the season is all about, Jesus! Join us on Sunday evening, **December 21 at 6:30 PM** as we recount the birth of our Savior! This will be a combination of the telling of the Christmas story along with

Christmas music incorporated to worship the new born King! There will be a Christmas sing along as well! We also plan to do a Christmas cookie potluck! Feel free to bring some Christmas cookies to share and also enjoy some hot chocolate! (Bringing Christmas cookies is not required!) We would love to have you there, and please invite your family, friends and neighbors!

<https://facebook.com/events/s/sounds-of-the-savior/1187927056340509/>

## Our Redeemer - Rev. Brett Simek

**NEW** The annual Luncheon will be on **Saturday, January 10, 2026, 11AM-1PM**. There will be a variety of soups and pies. This year your freewill donation will go toward future events sponsored by the Our Redeemer Discipleship committee. Signup is not required, but is appreciated:



## Soup & Pie Luncheon

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
2200 S Western Ave, Sioux Falls

**Saturday, January 10, 2026  
11AM-1PM**



Variety of Soups and Pies

Your freewill donation will go toward future events sponsored by the Our Redeemer Discipleship Committee.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F49ADAD2BA0F4CE9-59839066-soup>

## Resurrection - Rev. Chris Ascher

**\*\*Click this [link](#) for all church worship times!\*\***

Please take special note of the Advent, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day schedules. If you don't currently have a church home, we warmly invite you to visit one of these congregations.

## SUPPORTING MEMBER

## ZION - Rev. Greg Lehr

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit your FACTS family portal calendar or click this [link](#) to our website for upcoming events.

### Help is 3 Numbers Away

**211** maintains a comprehensive database of community resources and provides information and referrals for essential needs like:

- Food
- Housing and Shelter
- Utility Assistance
- Healthcare Services
- Government Services

**211** also can connect people with information and referrals for:

- Transportation
- Legal Services
- Support Groups
- Disaster Aftercare
- Everything Else

**988** provides crisis support for:

- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Health Crises
- Substance Use Crises
- Emotional Distress

**911** provides first responder dispatch for:

- Medical Emergency
- Fire
- Reporting a Crime
- Disaster Response
- Life Threatening Situation

**Call for Information and Community Resources**  
**211**

**Call for Suicide Intervention and Crisis Support**  
**988**

**Call for Emergencies**  
**911**

**Whole Person Care**  
Warm Handoff

**helpline center**

Safe2Say South Dakota is a statewide tip line that allows South Dakota students, school staff, and community members to safely and anonymously report sensitive information that concerns their safety, or the safety of others, including mental health concerns.

**SAFE 2 SAY**  
**SOUTH DAKOTA**

[safe2say.sd.gov](https://safe2say.sd.gov)

SUBMIT A TIP BY CALLING 1-844-373-7233

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A TIP](#)

Please contact [schooloffice@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:schooloffice@sflutheranschool.com) with any questions or concerns.



**SIOUX FALLS  
LUTHERAN SCHOOL**  
World Ready. Faith Secure.

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