November 2026 Parent Circle Meeting Notes

Admin Updates & Calendar

8th Grade Fundraising

The 8th grade class is fundraising for its upcoming New Mexico trip. With 14 students, it is the largest 8th grade class in Great Oak's history. Fundraising goal is $20,000.

- **Online merchandise fundraiser:** Open through November 27; orders are expected to arrive in January. https://mydesigns.teamthrows.com/f/8th-grade-trip-/
- **Bake sale:** November 20 @ half-day dismissal at the Grades Campus.

Martinmas Celebrations

This year's celebrations will emphasize the quiet, reflective nature of Martinmas and the spirit of giving.

- **EC Lantern Walk -** took place on November 6, 5:00 PM at EC campus.
- **Grades Lantern Walk — November 13, 5:15 PM:** Children will walk by class. Parents with multiple grades students are encouraged to walk with their youngest. Volunteers are needed for cider, setup, and cleanup; a signup will be shared.
- Family and friends are welcome. Children stay with their parents, except during the grades class walk when teachers also supervise. Play areas will be closed for safety and a peaceful atmosphere.

Food & Coat Drive | November 9–17: The annual food drive has moved from December to November to connect with Martinmas. Donation guidelines will be shared in the school newsletter.

- **Food donations:** Nonperishable food and needed household items will be collected on both campuses.
- **Coat donations:** New or gently used coats for children and adults will support Good Shepherd Church's coat drive.
- **Student involvement:** Children are encouraged to hand donations directly to teachers. Grades 3 and up will help deliver food donations on November 17.

Parent Education: Craft & Learn | November 10

A free parent gathering on "What Is Martinmas?" will include a faculty discussion and lantern-making activity. Childcare is available for enrolled students. RSVP by November 8 is required for materials and staffing.

Sixth Grade Play | November 20, 12:30 PM

The sixth grade will perform after the half-day dismissal. The play is open to the public.

Advent & Seasonal Traditions

Ms. Beatty shared how Advent traditions in Waldorf education can help families cultivate gratitude, reverence, and connection. Families can explore the four kingdoms—mineral, plant, animal, and human—through nature tables, candles, seasonal objects, handmade gifts, and simple moments of gratitude. Traditions can be adapted to each family's rhythm.

Advent Spiral

- **Grades Campus — December 11:** Students in Grades 1–8 will walk the spiral during school hours; families may reserve after-school times.

- **Early Childhood — December 14:** A smaller spiral will take place during the school day (students only).
- **Volunteers:** Needed to gather and prepare greenery, set up, and clean up. Signup details will follow.
- **Advent Assemblies:** Monday mornings at 8:20 AM on the Grades Campus after Thanksgiving break. Parents are welcome.

Parent Circle Committee Updates

- **Welcome Committee:** Sunni continues helping new families settle into the school community.
- **Care Committee:** Coordinating support for families facing significant life events, including new babies. Parents can share needs for meal trains or other help. Contact admin, teachers or Caitlin (Silas' mom PreK).
- **Parent Education:** The committee is collaborating with faculty and the Parent Enrichment Committee on additional opportunities for parents. More information will follow.
- **Gala:** Planning is underway, and save-the-dates have been mailed. The committee is seeking meaningful, experience-based donations—vacation stays, outings, and unique activities—as well as raffle baskets. Families with potential donations or connections can reach out to Analisa Pratt or Lindsay LaCour.
- **Women's Retreat | January 15–17:** The community-organized retreat returns to Golden Hill Retreat Center. Registration is open, with approximately 30% of spaces booked and private rooms nearly full. Standard enrollment continues through January 4. Friends and family are welcome; sharing through class chats and personal invitations is encouraged. Contact Anna Baugh (Zoe's mom K).
- **Craft Circle:** November gatherings are planned for the EC kitchen. Seasonal crafts will also support school events and the Pop-Up Shop.
  - **November 9, 8:30–10:30 AM:** Prepare luminaries for the Grades Martinmas celebration.
  - **November 16, 8:30–10:30 AM:** Create Advent Spirals and begin seasonal crafts.
  - **December 1, 7:00–9:00 PM:** Christmas tree painting craft night @ Paint & Bubbles.
- **Teacher Appreciation:** Faculty appreciated the recent Parent-Teacher Conference lunches.

Community Gatherings

- **Ladies Brunch:** Paused for now; volunteers interested in organizing future gatherings can reach out.
- **Guys' Night:** Continues to bring families together, with strong participation.
- **Family Park Day:** Tentatively November 12 at Burroughs Park; moving it to November 13 between dismissal and the Grades Lantern Walk was discussed.