Religion at Collegiate School

Since 1915, Collegiate School has balanced our commitment to be a diverse and inclusive school with our foundations in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Above all else, we seek to serve people of all faiths and beliefs in a community that holds respect as a core value. Collegiate is non-denominational and not affiliated with any religious group, yet we affirm the central role that faith may play in the spiritual development of our students.

Over time, several traditions associated with religious holidays have become important events for the School community. These traditions, along with a curricular focus on world religions that begins in Kindergarten, provide key milestones in our program and our student experience.

Below are the primary traditions and where they occur in our K-12 continuum.

**Lower School**

**Kindergarten Christmas Chapel:** Preparation for and presentation of Christmas songs and readings at River Road Presbyterian Church.

**Lower School Chapel:** Classes take turns preparing and presenting a chapel program in River Road Presbyterian Church or Collegiate’s Estes Multipurpose Room. Chapels may focus on values or diverse religious holidays and will include a variety of speakers. They occur five times each year.

**3rd Grade Concert of Carols:** Preparation for and presentation of a Christmas Pageant and songs at River Road Presbyterian Church.

**3rd Grade Seder:** A Passover Seder featuring all of the symbolic foods and a group reading of the story of the Jewish people’s Exodus led by
Moses out of Egypt and into their Holy Land. All students are engaged by sitting at a table with their class learning about Jewish traditions surrounding the meal, while also learning to appreciate the universal message of freedom.

**Middle and Upper School**

**Pageant:** Traditional Christmas pageant at All Saints Episcopal Church, with girls in Grades 5-12. Since the School’s founding in 1915, students have performed some version of the nativity with music only.

**Lessons and Carols:** A Christmas religious service at Second Baptist Church with music and readings for boys in Grades 5-12. For 40 years, 5th Grade boys have sung in the service as choristers. The nine lessons are traditional and are read in succession, by 6th through 12th Grade readers, a faculty member and Collegiate’s Head of School. The master of ceremonies is typically a member of the ordained clergy.