

# HURRICANE WATCH

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FIRST BAPTIST SCHOOL

December 2021

Monthly Newsletter



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

- Head of School Update
- December 2021 Calendar
- School Happenings
- "Friendship in the Finish Line"
- Charleston Animal Society
- Health & Wellness

## Head of School Update

*By Dr. Justin Mitchell*

Greetings, First Baptist Community!

Isaiah 9:6 proclaims the prophecy regarding the coming Messiah, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

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As we enter into this season of Advent, we shift our gaze to focus on the birth of Jesus, the reason we are here, and the reason we do what we do, to honor and glorify Him.

Our Downtown Campus maintains their momentum as we close in on the conclusion of 2021. Our teachers and students continue to work hard to deliver outstanding results. Some highlights since the last newsletter include the presentation of "Cinder-Really!?", which was a success. We also enjoyed returning to some time-honored traditions with Thanksgiving presentations from our first-graders, as well as our K3 and K4 classes. Our middle school students enjoyed a performance of The Nutcracker at the Gaillard Center on Monday, November 29th, in which our own, Mrs. Susan Cram-Smith, directed many of the scenes that featured some of our FBS students, Adalyn Cummings, Samantha Cram-Smith, Lia Paulatos, and Sophia Paulato. Emma Kate Brackin will be performing in the Stoille production of The Nutcracker. Our 6th graders participated in a service learning opportunity packing shoeboxes and listening to a missionary for Operation Christmas Child at St. Andrews Episcopal on November 16th.

The James Island Campus also has much to celebrate. We had a tremendous turnout for parent/teacher conferences at the beginning of November. We look forward to continuing this effort in order to holistically support our students through strong school/home relationships. Our student-athletes are doing a tremendous job as we finished up volleyball and football in October. We play our first home JV basketball game on December 2nd and first Varsity game on December 3rd. Our high school students dropped off 281 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child that will be shipped to children all over the world bringing Christmas gifts and the Good News of The Gospel.

On Sunday, December 6th, our choral arts department will present the annual Lessons and Carols performance. The presentation begins at 5:00 pm in the First Baptist Church sanctuary. We invite you and your family to attend this very special event.

As a reminder, Christmas Break begins December 20th and school resumes on January 4th. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve our students, families, each other, and you, our First Baptist community. Have a blessed Christmas season!

We invite you to stay up-to-date with current events by following First Baptist School's social media and our school webpage. #WeAreFB

Be blessed,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and "M".

# DECEMBER 2021

## School Calendar

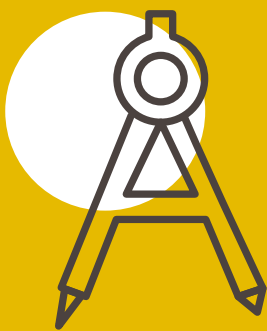
5	Lessons & Carols	5:00 PM
9	Band Concert	6:30 PM
14-16	Exams	
16	Last Day of School	
17	Exam Make-up Day and Teacher Workday	
20	Christmas Break Begins	
Jan 4	School Resumes	

[Click here](#) for Athletic Schedule





## DOWNTOWN CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS



## FALL 2022

We can't wait to begin classes in our new education building next school year!

### Making Progress!

If you've been downtown lately, you've seen the education building making great strides toward completion.

Construction is still slated to wrap up in Spring 2022 with plans of receiving the Certificate of Occupancy around the end of April.



# IN THE KNOW

## school happenings



### CHRISTMAS CAMP (K2-4TH GRADE)

Our Thanksgiving camp was such a hit that we will be offering a Christmas camp! December 20th-22nd from 7:30am-2:30pm! We will bake cookies, make slime, decorate trees, and more! If you would like to sign your child up, please use [this link](#) to register. Once you have registered, more information about pick-up and drop off will be sent out.

### KINDERGARTEN CHRISTMAS PLAY

Our Annual Kindergarten Christmas Play (K3-K5) will take place Wednesday, November 15th, at 9:00 am in the Sanctuary. We look forward to this annual tradition!



### FIRST BAPTIST SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow along with our daily happenings on our social media pages! Below are the official school social media pages.

#### SCHOOL



#### FINE ARTS



#### ATHLETICS



WANT TO SHARE YOUR PHOTOS WITH US? BE SURE TO TAG US AND USE OUR SCHOOL HASHTAG!

#WeAreFB





## Friendship at the Finish Line

*By Dr. Kupersmith, High School Principal*

Christmas summons memories, often modified through the lens of nostalgia. It's a fixed point; milestones and ephemera cluster around Christmases in our personal history. Conforming to the perennial standard, the featured players in my Christmas screenplays are family members. However, my running buddies vie for star billing. Runs on Thanksgiving, New Year's Day, and Christmas were staples of the holidays. The chilly weather usually accelerated our pace—thirty seconds faster than our normal pace with a few thin layers of clothing and our hands and head clothed, and we were comfy. The central ingredient that emerges in this collage of images is friendship. People who enriched my life and continue to be close, even as I have moved away from them or they from me

For decades my day began before daylight with a run, usually five to six miles, with other

runners. In Wichita, when I was much younger and obsessive about running, three or four buddies and I ran from 6 to 7 a.m. at a brisk pace, getting in about eight miles each morning during weekdays. We would gab and laugh for the entirety of the run. Even when a couple of us broke away to pick up the pace, we renegades would still chatter. At the first dusting of snow, I communicated spiritually with Mike Burns, to welcome the gift from Mother Nature, with a downtown run as the sprinkles became flakes, and the flakes stuck.

The same themes recurred wonderfully in Joplin—morning runs, holidays devotions, and marathon trips. From 1992 to 2006, when we moved to Greenville and Christ Church Episcopal School, running was a consistent axis on which my friendships grew. In the months leading up to the opening of our new day school, I gained a foothold in the community through meeting guys (mostly, though an occasional woman joined us) for a run from the Y or the construction site that was to become our campus. It's amazing how much you can learn about a person and a community through a succession of five-mile jaunts. Since Wichita Collegiate was the model for a school from which our founding board chair and I drew our blueprint for Thomas Jefferson Independent Day School, we deliberately replicated many processes, policies, and practices from Wichita Collegiate at this bold new school in Joplin,

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Missouri. In fact, we organized a Thanksgiving 5K bagel run on the model of a race that we designed at Wichita Collegiate that became a community event. The constant for me was my cadre of running partners who are my friends to this day. We trained for marathons together, traveled to the races, often with our families, and easily brought new partners into the fold.

From my first marathon through my last, at Kiawah in 2012, running was a vital social connection. At the finish line in Tulsa on a cold late morning, two seniors, Meg Flynn and Liz Blood made the three-hour drive from Wichita to cheer for their favorite English teacher, and at my 150th, at Kiawah, in 2011, my buddy Billy Webster, from Spartanburg, who could have run the marathon more than an hour faster than my 4:23 pace, ran every step of the way with me, carrying the conversation when my stamina ebbed. We were greeted at the finish line by several guys from Greenville with whom I ran at home. When my son Andrew ran his first marathon, in San Francisco in 1998, I had the pleasure and privilege of running with him all the way; thereafter, we ran five more marathons together. Ten years ago, we traveled to Virginia Beach to run in the Shamrock Marathon. My daughter Taylor, an undaunted soul, ran her first marathon. I ran in the race, though she was always way ahead of me, and my wife and her finance cheered at multiple intervals, meeting her at the finish line. She was so fast and I so slow that at mile marker 14, I turned around and ran three miles to the finish so that I could cheer for her at the finish line as she crossed at

3:26. When ton doubled its entrants (40,000) to celebrate the centennial run, I ran my 100th, and at the finish line (though some distance from the actual finish I found my steadfast companion, Nancy, my wife, and a former student then finishing law school at Harvard, I feel fortunate that this recreational thread that I casually began in 1976, in fact at the instance of a faculty friend, a head coach who was on a weight reduction regimen, has built a network of relationships that I cherish.

I can't pass up an opportunity to put in a plug for FBS. Our school, like the others that I have been privileged to serve, is all about relationships among teachers, students, and parents. These relationships frequently are lifelong. They emerge out of a school culture and a scale that nurtures strong bonds. The school is a blessing that pays boundless dividends beyond the education it provides.

Happy holidays. I wish all of our families a blessed time to appreciate the redemptive value of friends and family.





# Around Campus





# ADVANCEMENT OFFICE NEWS

*Sustaining Academic Excellence with a Christian Perspective  
for generations to come*

## Season of Giving

**Beth Switzer**, [switzerb@fbschool.org](mailto:switzerb@fbschool.org)

*Director of Advancement  
& High School Admissions*

As we near the end of the calendar year, I invite you to make a year-end gift to make a difference for First Baptist School students in the year ahead. The FBS Loyalty Fund, our annual giving campaign, exists solely for the betterment of our students. It helps bridge the gap between tuition income and the actual costs of the education our students receive. Your gift truly is an investment in the future of every student at First Baptist School.

Some sponsorship levels are still available for the FBS 10th Biennial Live and Silent Auction, and the deadline has extended to January 7, 2022. If you are interested in being a sponsor for our event, please email Beth Switzer at [switzerb@fbschool.org](mailto:switzerb@fbschool.org).

ADVANCEMENT EVENTS

SILENT AUCTION  
SPONSOR INFORMATION

**DONATE ONLINE**

Season  
of Giving

Donate to the FBS Loyalty Fund  
during this season.

<https://www.fbschool.org/donate>



# First Baptist Coaches Shine

*by Graham Haley, Athletic Director*

As the Fall Athletics season has wrapped up I wanted to take the time to recognize our incredible coaches who worked so hard to keep our Fall Sports season together. I have witnessed several coaches at their absolute best at so many times, but there were particular moments where we should all be so proud to have them as coaches for our students. Coach Johnny Waters took in students who were looking for a place to fit in and gave them a place to excel. Coach Erin Jackson pushed her runners to be their absolute best and held them to high standards to make them the best they could be. We welcomed a First Baptist alumni, Lauren Langston, home to lead the First Baptist swim team with beaming pride. Coach White worked tirelessly against a busy schedule to push our girls golf team to one of their best finishes at the state tournament in school history. Coach Parker taught the cheerleaders to promote spirit at the highest level on the sidelines. Coach Wang and Coach Crawford showed how to beautifully blend JV and Varsity together as they lived the example of promoting a family environment across multiple teams. Coach Redner and Coach Gervais promoted a well-orchestrated mix of fun and hard work at the middle school level. I am always proud of the work our coaches put into their players, but these examples demonstrate the true devotion of our talented coaches! We are FB! Go Canes!

Graham Haley  
Athletic Director  
First Baptist Class of 2003



Hurricanes Making a Difference

# OVER \$500 RAISED FOR CHARLESTON ANIMAL SOCIETY

Ms. Salters' class raised over \$500 through  
their snack sale.



# Don't forget YOU this Christmas Season

*By Rose M. Cummings, LPC  
First Baptist School Counselor*



Christmas is the season of perpetual giving, so don't forget yourself! It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the holidays and forget to take care of our mental, physical and spiritual health. There are so many articles with relevant advice about setting boundaries, time management and not over-committing this time of year. No matter how many times you've heard it, unless you make a conscious effort to think ahead, it's very easy to get on that hamster wheel.

Stop and think for a moment about what truly gratifies you. For many, it is the spirit of giving and spending time with family and friends. Take some time to think about where you want to give this Christmas. Make a list on paper or on your phone and put your generosity where you believe it will best be used and feel good about it. You don't need to give at every opportunity that presents itself. That can cause resentment, which is the opposite of why you are doing it and can be financially irresponsible. If family and friend time is at the top of your list, write out the days of the holidays where you will be spending each and how much time you would like with each group. It's easy to get caught up in your schedule and be left with a feeling of dissatisfaction when you're speeding up your conversations and eating quickly because you know you have another stop to make.

Make it a point to do certain traditions that are special to you and talk about them as the days lead up. Maybe you make cinnamon rolls every Christmas morning or read Luke 2 on Christmas Eve. Whatever it is, make it special and make it a priority. Really highlighting those 2-3 things will bring an extra significance to them and will ensure that they happen.

Make things such as exercise, charity and gift wrapping a treat instead of a chore. To have the time to go on a 30-minute walk, the means to write a check or donate items to a charity or wrap

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your presents for a loved one are a gift of time, funds and joy. You may only have 10 minutes to walk, \$10 to give or have most of your presents in bags and a few to wrap. The goal is to take joy in these moments of opportunity.

The holiday season is about love. Don't forget that while you're loving everyone around you, to practice a little self-love too. Make a conscious effort to think about what makes you happy, devote a little bit of time to yourself, and do it with a joyful heart because you deserve it.

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## Flu & COVID Vaccine Reminders

This is a reminder that if it has been more than 6-8 months since your last Covid vaccine, or if you have never received one, now is a great time to get that handled! Local experts are still predicting a winter wave and a booster now, while the cases are low, will give your body time to build up immunity prior to the next peak. The flu is also alive and well in our community so please also consider a flu vaccine! Experts agree that both vaccines can be given at the same time. Follow [this link](#) for more information!



FIRST BAPTIST SCHOOL  
**Health & Wellness**

Rose Cummings, MA, LPC

Laura Lempesis, RN, BSN

Caroline Clum, RN, BSN



FIRST BAPTIST SCHOOL

# RESOURCES



RENWEB  
LOGIN



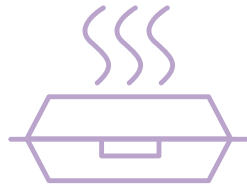
STUDENT  
HANDBOOK



COVID POLICY



SMART TUITION  
LOGIN



SCHOOLHOUSE  
FARE LUNCH



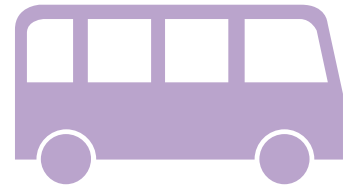
DRESS CODE



FACULTY/STAFF  
DIRECTORY



ACADEMIC  
CALENDAR



TRANSPORTATION

These resources can always be found on the [Resources](#) page of our website.