

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of December 2

All School

Parent Workshop This Wednesday: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work

Join us to learn about “Behavior Modification: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work” this **Wednesday, December 5, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room**. Led by Dr. Crystal Collier of Pathways, this social-and-emotional-learning parent workshop will explore the following:

- How children learn, including the philosophy of learning theory
- How behavior is shaped over time
- The components of an effective behavior-modification contract, along with examples

Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios—and go home with new ideas!

On Thursday, December 6, Dr. Collier will present to all Middle and Upper School students (in grade-level assemblies) on the topics of alcohol and drug abuse and vaping. This should provide the basis for some meaningful conversations at home.

Sign-ups for Gala Parties Close Wednesday

We have one word for your response to the St. Francis Gala sign-up parties last week: EPIC. Many of our auction items sold out within the first hour!

Thank you for supporting St. Francis, and thank you to all of the amazing teachers and parents for hosting these fun and unique events.

Sign-ups close this Wednesday, December 5, at noon, so don't miss your chance to bid on the remaining spots. [Click here](#) to sign up!

Haven't purchased your Gala tickets yet? Don't let the bell ring before you get your seats—we have sold over half of the Gala tables already. Get your tickets [here](#).

Admissions Application Deadline for New K-10 Students Is December 12

Here's a friendly reminder that the application deadline for new students in kindergarten through tenth grade is **Wednesday, December 12**. This deadline is for the application only. All other supporting documents (teacher recommendations, transcripts, etc.) are due Tuesday, January 15, 2019. Again, this is only for new students for 2019-20! [Click here](#) to apply now.

Show Your Care With the Christmas Collection

The Parent Association invites you to make a contribution to the annual Christmas Collection.

- This monetary gift is handed out each year at the Teacher Appreciation Cookie Party, and your contribution goes to EVERYONE—faculty, staff, sextons, Dining Hall personnel, police officers, full-time and part-time coaches, and Explore and Extend after-school teachers. Each employee will receive an equal distribution of the collection, with adjustments made for part-time staff and coaches.
- These contributions honor our *School Handbook* policy that prohibits the purchase or solicitation of individual gifts for faculty/staff.
- If you'd like to contribute by check, please make it payable to the St. Francis Parents Association, with "Christmas Gift" noted in the memo section. Mail it to the school to the attention of the Parents Association, or place it in the Parents Association box in the school reception area.
- You may also contribute via [MySchoolAnywhere](#).
- We hope you will join us in showing our appreciation for our tremendous faculty and staff! All contributions must be received by **Friday, December 7**.

Help Us Celebrate Our Teachers!

Whether you are a baker or a buyer, we need your help! We need cookies—and lots of them—for our annual Teacher Appreciation Cookie Party on **Wednesday, December 12**. Homemade goodies are always appreciated, but store-bought goodies are loved, too. [Click here](#) to sign up to bring cookies on December 12. Thank you for helping our much-loved teachers have a sweet holiday!

Nominations for the 2019-20 PA Board Are Now Open

It's really hard to believe, but it's time to start thinking about the 2019-20 Parents Association executive officers!

- If you are interested—or know someone else who is interested—in serving the St. Francis community on the Parents Association Executive Board, please contact Past-President [Jennifer Stringer](#).
- Using the names you submit, the Nominating Committee will assemble the slate of officers.
- Nominations are currently underway for the following board positions: president-elect, treasurer, communications officer, parent education, curriculum support, and at-large officer.
- The deadline to submit names is **Friday, January 11, 2019**, using [this form](#).

Blown Away! (+ Pics From the Sporting Clays Classic)

St. Francis joins Sporting Clays Classic Chair J.J. Oshins in expressing deep gratitude to all the participants, sponsors, volunteers, and committee members who came together to make the fourth annual Sporting Clays Classic presented by Gordy & Sons Outfitters a resounding success, netting **\$100,000!**

The week's first glimpse of sunshine and the crisp fall weather made for a perfect day of fun and fundraising on October 26. One hundred twenty-four shooters (on 31 teams) enthusiastically arrived at the Greater Houston Gun Club for breakfast provided by leading sponsor Shipley Do-Nuts, followed by the clay shoot and flurry competition, games for prizes, a silent auction, and lunch by Black's Market Table.

Taking home the individual Highest Overall Score awards were Dan Sugulas (with a 75) for the men and Mary Armintor (with a 57) for the women. The reigning High Overall Champions—Cutt Abelson, Will Stacy, David Esslinger, and Cooper Cogdell—claimed victory again and took home the Silver Cup with a score of 367 hits. In second place was Spark Energy’s team—Nathan Kroker, Mel Parks, Pernel Davis, and Scott Slater—with a score of 289. And Wyatt McCulloch, Murrah Mayberry, H.C. Grimet, and Walter Aguilar won the Team Flurry Award with a score of 81 out of a possible 100.

Participants enjoyed the event’s challenge and camaraderie while shooting for a lofty goal: raising money for the Patrick Nicosia C.A.R.E. Fund, which supports cultural, academic, and recreational enrichment opportunities for St. Francis students who otherwise might not be able to participate. Established in 2013, the fund honors the memory of Patrick Nicosia, a passionate outdoorsman and school volunteer whose dedication to providing students with the finest enrichment opportunities was a true inspiration to the St. Francis community.

A big-hearted salute goes out to our generous Sporting Clays Classic participants and sponsors, especially our presenting sponsor, Gordy & Sons Outfitters, and leading sponsor, Shipley Do-Nuts, without whom the event would not have been possible.

PRESENTING TEAMS

Gordy & Sons Outfitters

PLATINUM TEAMS

GHI Energy
Shipley Do-Nuts
Spark Energy

GOLD TEAMS

Cadence Bank
MC Management & Development Inc.
The McKenzie Family
The Oshins Family
Tex-Trude

SILVER TEAMS

The Ableson and Stacy Families
Beau Bellow/Dan Cotuno/Nick Meserve
Ray Black/Jimmy Hinton/Jonathan Plumhoff/James Woldert
Fred Brazelton/Billy Iglesias/Steve Herod/Webb Jennings
Elliott Bridger/Brian McShane/Chad Meacham/Daniel Moore
Brooks Despot/Jeff Horton/Matt Mays/James Wallis
The Chapman and Moore Families
The Chisholm Family
The Conner Family
The de la Mora Family
West Gotcher/Ryan Savoie/Greg Schilling/Blake Shaver
Stedman Grigsby/Mark Stringer/Stephen Thompson/Jeff Williams
Murrah Mayberry/H.C. Grimet/Steve Guinn/Wyatt McCulloch
The Hantak/Lyons Families
Ty Hoffer/Chris Hutcheson/John Schissler/Dan Sugulas
Stacy and Jason Johnson/Memorial City
The Lovejoy Family
The Pace Family
Derek Myers/Kenny Owen/Philip Price/Stephen Smith

YOUNG ALUM TEAM

The Cravens Group at Morgan Stanley

INDIVIDUALS AND TWO-PERSON TEAMS

Josh Hancock
Jamie Taussig
Bega Design + Construction
Wade Edington/Ryan Fitzpatrick

SPONSORS

Golf Cart: Shipley Do-Nuts
Gun Sleeve: Universal Plant Services
Ball Cap: Derrick Equipment
Faculty Team:
The Lane Family
The Little Family
Shipley Do-Nuts

Lunch:

Riverbend Oil & Gas

Cadence Bank

Double Down Game: Thompson & Horton LLP

Mixed Target Game: Shipley Do-Nuts

Team Flurry Competition: The Lovejoy Family

Professional Instructor: Dale Construction Services

Beverage Carts:

Fortuna Resources LLC

The Peden Family

Sowers & Co. LLP

Mulligan Station:

The Peden Family

Zabel Freeman

Stations:

Bega Design + Construction

Ellen "Mimi" Oshins

Gala Gals

Hat Services LLC

The Lyons Family

Wyatt McCulloch/CBRE

Dr. Mike Mizell, Orthodontist

The Rosser Family

Morgan Stanley PWM

Surprise Valley Resources

Contributors:

Bayou City Anglers

Bega Design + Construction

Bud Light/Silver Eagle Distributors

Houston Trust Company

Wyatt McCulloch/Flyways

The Pace Family

Pegg Products

R. Rose Clothier

Shipley Do-Nuts

Sowers & Co. LLP

Surf Air/RISE Air

Donors:

The Clair Family

The Iglesias Family

The Lovejoy Family

The Perea Family
The Walton Family/Goldman Sachs

Click [here](#) to view pics from this year's Sporting Clays Classic!

Christmas Wolf Wear Sale Is December 7

The Athletics Booster Club will host a Christmas Wolf Wear Sale in the People Place on **Friday, December 7, from 7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Stock up on sweatshirts, hoodies, Christmas ornaments, and more!

Primary School

From the Division Head

A few weeks ago, I went to a leadership lab on a Saturday morning. I was rushing to arrive by 9:00 a.m. and found myself running through the parking lot in fear of being late because there were no people walking in with me. I began to panic and think that I would stand out as being late to everybody in the room of approximately 500 people. I questioned whether I had my car keys and whether I had locked the door. I felt stressed because I hadn't had breakfast, and now probably wouldn't have time to pick up a donut or coffee from the usual breakfast refreshment table. This was not how I wanted to start my morning.

When I got to the registration table, which no other people were around, I smiled nervously and asked, "How late am I?" The person checking me in said loudly, "You are early!" And my whole morning changed completely. Suddenly, I felt calm. It turned out I was an hour and a half early. I had time to have a couple of cups of coffee and a donut. I got to mentally take in all that was around me and receive all that was waiting for me. I also got to meet some really wonderful leaders.

I share this personal experience with you as a reminder of the benefits of bringing your child to school on time. Being on time helps ensure they don't feel panicked or left out of the classroom bonding time that happens first thing in the morning. This time is valuable because it gives children time to settle in, connect with their peers and teachers, and have free-play time with their classmates. Being on time allows your child to take in all that is around them and prepares them to be an active participant in the school day. Being on time also teaches your child that it is important to be on time or early to events. If

you are already getting your child to school on time, thank you! As my pastor says, "Being on time honors God."

All the best,

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Explore and Extend Registration Opens Tomorrow

Registration for spring 2019 Explore and Extend enrichment classes, including private music instruction through the School of Music, opens this **Monday, December 3, at 8:00 a.m. CT**. Courses and descriptions are available on our Explore and Extend page [here](#). To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT REGISTRATION:

- Program registration through My BackPack is most effective when accessed on a desktop computer. Some mobile browsers experience a delay. If you have any problems with registration, please contact the Explore and Extend office at 713.458.6467. They will be available to assist with this process beginning at 8:00 a.m. tomorrow, December 3.
- Registration will be completely unavailable through the end of today (December 2), since registration pages are being updated. Those wishing to register for the Winter Break camps with Coach McMillian and Coach Settle will not be able to do so today, but registration for those camps will resume tomorrow, December 3.
- Some courses are designed with a yearlong curriculum, and returning students are automatically re-enrolled so that they can continue their current progress. Spaces in Primary School dance and woodworking classes may be limited for this reason. (The Explore and Extend office is working to add more sections to these classes in future, as well as to bring in new classes with the same caliber of excellence.) All other courses are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Our Primary School students enjoy their after-school activities, but please bear in mind that our students have already been in structured activities for six hours by the time enrichment classes begin in the afternoon. To avoid burnout, we recommend that Primary I students stick with one or two extracurricular activities, and that Primary II students enroll in up to three activities. For students who need a little

extra time before pickup and who would prefer playtime with friends over structured classes on some days, drop-in care is available daily until 6:00 p.m.

We are looking forward to a great spring semester of growth and learning with all of our students!

Parent Workshop This Wednesday: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work

Join us to learn about “Behavior Modification: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work” this **Wednesday, December 5, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus**. Led by Dr. Crystal Collier of Pathways, this social-and-emotional-learning parent workshop will explore the following:

- How children learn, including the philosophy of learning theory
- How behavior is shaped over time
- The components of an effective behavior-modification contract, along with examples

Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios—and go home with new ideas!

Makeups for Hearing and Vision Screenings Are Thursday

The makeup day for hearing and vision screenings is **Thursday, December 6**.

- Screenings are required for Primary I students who turned 4 years old before September 1, Primary II students, and ALL students who are new to St. Francis.
- If your child is required to have a hearing and vision screening and missed the screenings held in October, please make sure he or she attends school on Thursday, December 6.
- With questions, please contact Debbie Toler, South Campus nurse, at 713.458.6167.

Help Us Spread the Word About St. Francis

Do you know any friends or neighbors who could be future St. Francis Wolves? St. Francis's scheduled Primary School group tours have concluded, but anyone interested in setting up a tour may e-mail [Margaret Yerkovich](#).

Primary School Dining Hall Menu

To view the Primary School Dining Hall menu, please click [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, December 3

- *Registration for Spring Explore and Extend Classes Opens*
-

Tuesday, December 4

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, December 5

- *St. Nicholas Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Pathways Assembly for Parents: 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus*
 - *Chapel Dramatization (Blades)*
-

Wednesday, December 7

- *St. Nicholas Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Wolf Wear Sale: 7:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the concessions area near the gym on the Main Campus*
-

Tuesday, December 11

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, December 12

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Monday, December 17

- *PI Christmas Parties*
-

Tuesday, December 18

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Ferguson's T/Th Pre-Primary Christmas Party: 1:30 p.m.*
-

Wednesday, December 19

- *Lessons and Carols Chapel for PS and US: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Pre-Primary Christmas Parties: 1:30 p.m.*
-

Thursday, December 20

- *PII Pageants and Parties*
 - *Staller: Pageant at 9:00 a.m. and party at 9:30 a.m.*
 - *Owens: Pageant at 9:40 a.m. and party at 10:10 a.m.*
 - *Blades: Pageant at 10:20 a.m. and party at 10:50 a.m.*
 - *Wiener: Pageant at 11:00 a.m. and party at 11:30 a.m.*
 - *Hughes: Pageant at 11:40 a.m. and party at 12:10 p.m.*
-

Friday, December 21-Monday, January 7

- *School Holiday*
-

Tuesday, January 8

- *School Resumes*
 - *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, January 9

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Thursday, January 10

- *Epiphany Celebration (Mrs. Ferguson's Class)*
-

Friday, January 11

- *PS Epiphany Celebration*
 - *Wolf Wear Sale*
-

Monday, January 14

- *Spring Explore and Extend Classes Begin*
-

Tuesday, January 15

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*

Wednesday, January 16

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*

Thursday, January 17

- *Parent Step-Up Visit: Parents of Mrs. Ferguson's students visit Primary I*

Friday, January 18

- *Parent Step-Up Visits*

Lower School

From the Division Head

We had a great week last week getting back into the swing of school. We hope you enjoyed seeing some of your child's work and progress through the report card and portfolio.

This week's letter focuses on our recent third- and fourth-grade standardized testing data. While students in K-2 are not tested, this information will help everyone understand how our students are performing throughout our academic program. This testing data is a compilation of years on the learning journey.

Each fall, our third and fourth graders take the standardized assessment used by almost every independent school in the world. The Comprehensive Testing Program (CTP) written by the Educational Records Bureau (ERB) is a series of subtests administered over the course of several days. By administering this test in the fall, we are essentially assessing students' knowledge of the prior year's curriculum.

The subtests include both achievement and reasoning tests, which are intended to provide comparisons between what the student is learning at a

particular point in time (the achievement tests) and how well the student uses what he or she knows to solve problems or deal with more abstract concepts (the reasoning tests). We use this data to inform our programming and instruction, as well as to tailor each child's educational experience.

We utilize two norming pools:

- **National Norms** (NN) compare how our students would do in a public-school setting.
- **Independent School Norms** (IN) compare our students to the students in independent schools across the world.

Our **third graders'** mean (average) scaled scores are in line with the independent school norms in all categories, with the exception of auditory comprehension (which I explain at the end of this letter). The scores consistently fall on the bell curve, which is what we would expect for an inclusive school such as St. Francis. While other independent schools may teach one to two grade levels ahead and have more selective admissions requirements, we, at St. Francis, teach students where they are developmentally, with some working slightly below grade level and others performing grade levels ahead. We also welcome our friends from Primary School with no testing requirements. This facet of the St. Francis culture is what makes our community so inclusive.

We are happy to report that our **fourth graders** performed almost exactly in line with IN in *writing concepts/skills, writing mechanics, reading comprehension, and quantitative reasoning*. The scores were slightly below IN in *verbal reasoning*. Our *math* scores were slightly above the IN. Yay!

What is also crucial to examine is the **growth** of the grade level from **third to fourth grade**.

- The IN scores were significantly improved in *reading comprehension* and *math*. Keep in mind that there are only five subtests in third grade and eight in grades 4-8, so *quantitative reasoning, verbal reasoning, and writing concepts and skills* are new tests for fourth graders.
- Many students moved from the lower tier of scores (stanine 1, 2, 3) to the middle tier (stanine 4, 5, 6), and several jumped to the highest tier of scores (stanine 7, 8, 9). That is fantastic improvement.

Our current **fifth graders**, who were assessed on fourth-grade material, performed above IN in all areas and made unbelievable growth since their third-grade scores. Scores in *verbal reasoning*, *vocabulary*, *writing mechanics*, and *math* showed marked growth.

From **third to fifth** grade (the same group of students), these improvements were made in the mean scaled scores. A scaled score is a representation of the total number of correct questions a candidate has answered (raw score) that has been converted onto a consistent and standardized scale—this is not percentage or percentile data. When comparing the mean scaled score of our grade level to the mean scaled scores of IN over a three-year period, the following observations were made:

- *Reading comprehension*: Up 26 points
- *Writing mechanics*: Up 73 points
- *Math*: Up 100 points

From **fourth to fifth** grade (the same group of students), the following improvements were noted in these subtests, which are administered only in fourth and fifth:

- *Verbal reasoning*: Up 5 points
- *Writing concepts/skills*: Up 51 points
- *Quantitative reasoning*: Up 9 points

New to **fifth grade**:

- *Vocabulary*: 19 points above IN

This is great evidence that our Lower School program/curriculum and amazing faculty are making a difference; our teachers excitedly report that they see this on a daily basis. Being immersed in a research-informed, developmentally appropriate, rigorous, engaging, and differentiated curriculum, while also recognizing the social-emotional component of learning, promotes academic success for all learners.

One of the ways we use this data is to determine and evaluate **what we can do better**. As a whole division, our weakest area is *auditory comprehension*—active listening and retention. We were 16 points below the IN in third and fourth grades. This test is not given past the fourth-grade year. We have been thinking so much about this data and what it means. While I think everyone can say our kids are being shaped by a world of instant gratification,

technology, and TV, so are other kids in other independent schools. That is what caused us to think critically about this data. The teachers have said that this is evident not just on this standardized assessment, but in the classroom, as well. We are continuing to examine this and are having insightful discussions with our teachers.

After the holidays, we will be providing some professional development with the teachers on teaching active listening in order to improve the listening skills of our students. This will be a focus for the remainder of the year. I will also be providing you with some great tools to promote active listening and accountability at home. Our students are responsive and eager to learn, so with teamwork, we can help them improve in this area.

Remember, standardized testing is ONE snapshot of our students—there is SO much standardized tests do not assess: creativity, tenacity, collaboration, kindness, problem-solving, and the list goes on.

Thank you for taking the time to read *Wolf Watch* and for helping us spread the great news about St. Francis to your friends and family!

Cheers,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Explore and Extend Registration Opens Tomorrow

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Makeups for Hearing and Vision Screenings Are Thursday

The makeup day for hearing and vision screenings is **Thursday, December 6**.

- Screenings are required for students in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 5, and 7, plus ALL students who are new to St. Francis.

- If your child is required to have a hearing and vision screening and missed the screenings held in October, please make sure he or she attends school on Thursday, December 6.
- With questions, please contact Nicki Newell, Main Campus nurse, at 713.458.6128.

School of Music Recital and Lesson Notes

St. Francis's fall School of Music recital will be held on **Sunday, December 9, beginning at 1:30 p.m.** (This recital will not include vocal performances.) Please see the e-mails from Emily Boyle regarding the times for each studio to arrive and perform.

Voice students of Callie Denbigh will perform on **Tuesday, December 18, at 5:30 p.m. on Main Street.**

The last regular day for lessons is **Friday, December 7**, with any rescheduled lessons set for the week of December 10-14. Spring semester lessons begin on January 14, 2019.

'Tis the Season for Music! Join Us for Our Christmas Concerts

We are excited to bring you songs of the season in our upcoming Christmas Concert Series, *The Joy of Christmas!* There will be three Lower School concerts taking place in the FAC:

- **Grades 1 and 2:** Monday, December 10, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- **Grades 3 and 4, Joyful Sounds Choir:** Tuesday, December 11, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- **Kindergarten:** Wednesday, December 12, from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m.

For the evening concerts, students should report to their homeroom classrooms at 5:30 p.m. Teachers will be supervising, so once students arrive, they will remain in their designated areas.

ATTIRE

Students will be asked to perform in festive Christmas outfits. *Girls* may wear dresses or blouses and skirts with dress shoes. *Boys* may wear dress shirts, sweaters, and/or vests with dress pants and dress shoes. (Please, no jeans, shorts, or hats). Outfits may be one color or may include a festive color

combined with neutral colors (white, black, or khaki). Suggested colors are as follows:

- **Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2:** Red and/or green (Kindergarten students will wear their Christmas outfits to school on December 12.)
- **Grades 3 and 4:** White, black, silver (gray), and/or gold (beige or khaki)

We look forward to seeing you at the concerts!

Help Us Spread the Word About St. Francis

Do you know any friends or neighbors who could be future St. Francis Wolves? St. Francis's scheduled Lower School group tours have concluded, but anyone interested in setting up a tour may e-mail [Kathryn Spinelli](mailto:Kathryn.Spinelli@stfrancis.org).

Sports Clinics Offered for Christmas Break

Explore and Extend is offering sports clinics in volleyball and baseball during our Christmas break. To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

BREAK THE WINTRY BLUES VOLLEYBALL CAMP (JANUARY 2-4)

This three-day adventure will catapult us into tournament mode as we break the wintry blues by sharpening our game-play skills. Instructors will send you on a rollercoaster of group and team scenarios (both on and off the court) as we work to improve our leadership skills, team chemistry, game play, and true understanding of how to play against the ball. Spaces are limited and are open to boys and girls in grades 2-9. (Register online to enjoy an early bird discount. Registration prices increase at the door to \$175 for grades 2-4 and \$195 for grades 5-9.)

- **Grades 2-4:** 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym; \$150
- **Grades 5-9:** 8:30-10:30 a.m. in the Crum Gym; \$175

WOLVES BASEBALL IDENTIFICATION SERIES (JANUARY 3-4)

Join us for the first edition of our Wolves Baseball Identification Series! The two-day event will be held on our Main Campus Baseball Field. We have a large number of students in our St. Francis family who love, play, and/or have an interest in the game of baseball. This series is meant to bring all Wolves

together as a group according to age (grades K-2, grades 3-5, and grades 6-8) for skills training and evaluation.

Regardless of skill and experience level, every single Wolf is welcomed! This can be as much an opportunity for individuals to determine their true interest in baseball as it is an opportunity for us to identify all of the baseball-playing Wolves in our community. Participants will receive an Identification Series shirt and a participation/evaluation certificate.

- **Grades K-2:** 8:30-10:00 a.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125
- **Grades 3-5:** 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125
- **Grades 6-8:** 1:00-3:00 p.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, December 3

- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between December 2-8 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
 - *Registration for Spring Explore and Extend Classes Opens*
-

Wednesday, December 5

- *Dress Uniform Day*
 - *St. Nicholas Eucharist:* 8:05 a.m.
 - *Pathways Assembly for Parents:* 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus
-

Friday, December 7

- *Wolf Wear Sale:* 7:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the concessions area near the gym on the Main Campus
-

Monday, December 10

- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between December 9-15 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
 - *Christmas Concert for Grades 1 and 2:* 6:00 p.m. in the FAC
-

Tuesday, December 11

- *Christmas Concert for Grades 3-4 and Joyful Sounds Choir:* 6:00 p.m. in the FAC
-

Wednesday, December 12

- *Chapel:* 8:05 a.m.
 - *Christmas Concert for Kindergarten:* 9:00 a.m. in the FAC; kindergarten students will wear their Christmas outfits to school
-

Monday, December 17

- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between December 16-31 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, December 19

- *NO Chapel*
 - *Christmas Parties*
-

Thursday, December 20

- *Dress Uniform Day*
- *Polar Express Day:* Students may bring a robe and slippers to wear at school

- *Lessons and Carols:* 9:00 a.m.; students only
 - *Sing-along:* 2:00 p.m.; students only
-

Friday, December 21-Monday, January 7

- *School Holiday*
-

Tuesday, January 8

- *School Resumes*

Middle School

From the Division Head

Happy Sunday, Middle School families! I hope this finds you well.

Trimester 2 is underway! This week, we welcome back Dr. Crystal Collier, founder of the Pathways program for at-risk behavior prevention and coping. Dr. Collier will meet with parents on **Wednesday, December 5, at 1:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room** to discuss this session's topic, "Creating Behavior Contracts That Work." Understanding how children learn can shape the way we parent. In this second in our series of social-emotional parent workshops, parents will explore the philosophy of learning theory and how behavior is shaped over time. The components of a behavior-modification contract will be taught, and examples will be created. Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios, and go home with new ideas! The Pathways student assemblies on Thursday will feature the topic of "Drug, Alcohol, and Vaping Prevention."

On the Mind, Brain, and Education science front, I wanted to share this [article](#) about cognitive psychologist Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Based upon reflection and current practice, educators and learning scientists have new evidence that clarifies Gardner's original intent and the theory's most recent effects. If nothing else, it is wonderful food for thought. Our MS faculty members have begun their piloting of [Neuroteach](#)

[Global](#), and we will have more feedback upon completion of the pilot in the next few weeks.

Happy Hanukkah to our Jewish families! It's a beautiful day, and we are Wolves!

Sincerely,

Connor Cook, EdD
Head of Middle School

Explore and Extend Registration Opens Tomorrow

Registration for spring 2019 Explore and Extend enrichment classes, including private music instruction through the School of Music, opens this **Monday, December 3, at 8:00 a.m. CT**. Courses and descriptions are available on our Explore and Extend page [here](#). To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT REGISTRATION:

- Program registration through My BackPack is most effective when accessed on a desktop computer. Some mobile browsers experience a delay. If you have any problems with registration, please contact the Explore and Extend office at 713.458.6467. They will be available to assist with this process beginning at 8:00 a.m. tomorrow, December 3.
- Registration will be completely unavailable through the end of today (December 2), since registration pages are being updated. Those wishing to register for the Winter Break camps with Coach McMillian and Coach Settle will not be able to do so today, but registration for those camps will resume tomorrow, December 3.
- Some courses are designed with a yearlong curriculum, and returning students are automatically re-enrolled so that they can continue their current progress. Spaces in certain classes may be limited for this reason. (The Explore and Extend office is working to add more sections to these classes in future, as well as to bring in new classes with the same caliber of excellence.) All other courses are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis.

We are looking forward to a great spring semester of growth and learning with all of our students!

Parent Workshop This Wednesday + MS/US Student Assemblies

Join us to learn about “Behavior Modification: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work” this **Wednesday, December 5, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room**. Led by Dr. Crystal Collier of Pathways, this social-and-emotional-learning parent workshop will explore the following:

- How children learn, including the philosophy of learning theory
- How behavior is shaped over time
- The components of an effective behavior-modification contract, along with examples

Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios—and go home with new ideas!

On Thursday, December 6, Dr. Collier will present to all Middle and Upper School students (in grade-level assemblies) on the topics of alcohol and drug abuse and vaping. This should provide the basis for some meaningful conversations at home.

Join Us for Coffee Following the Pathways Workshop

Middle School parents, please join us for coffee immediately following the Pathways workshop this **Wednesday, December 5, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room**. We hope to see you there!

Makeups for Hearing and Vision Screenings Are Thursday

The makeup day for hearing and vision screenings is **Thursday, December 6**.

- Screenings are required for students in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 5, and 7, plus ALL students who are new to St. Francis.
- If your child is required to have a hearing and vision screening and missed the screenings held in October, please make sure he or she attends school on Thursday, December 6.
- With questions, please contact Nicki Newell, Main Campus nurse, at 713.458.6128.

School of Music Recital and Lesson Notes

St. Francis's fall School of Music recital will be held on **Sunday, December 9, beginning at 1:30 p.m.** (This recital will not include vocal performances.) Please see the e-mails from Emily Boyle regarding the times for each studio to arrive and perform.

Voice students of Callie Denbigh will perform on **Tuesday, December 18, at 5:30 p.m. on Main Street.**

The last regular day for lessons is **Friday, December 7**, with any rescheduled lessons set for the week of December 10-14. Spring semester lessons begin on January 14, 2019.

Help Us Spread the Word About St. Francis

Do you know any friends or neighbors who could be future St. Francis Wolves? St. Francis's scheduled Middle School group tours have concluded, but anyone interested in setting up a tour may e-mail [Kathryn Spinelli](mailto:Kathryn.Spinelli@stfrancis.org).

Parents and Business Owners, Buy Your Yearbook Ads Today!

Each year, **eighth-grade parents are invited to place a full- or half-page ad** in *The Howler* yearbook to congratulate their student on eighth-grade graduation and to celebrate and reflect on the special times their child has shared with friends and teachers at St. Francis.

All parents are also invited to place ads for their local businesses. *The Howler* yearbook is an excellent resource for building professional relationships within the St. Francis community while supporting the entrepreneurial efforts of our yearbook staff. *The Howler* is also an excellent way to advertise a community business.

The deadline to create and purchase yearbook ads is Sunday, February 3, at 8:00 p.m.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR AD

There are four ways to create your ad:

- Meet with a yearbook staffer to design your full-page ad. You'll need to bring 10 to 15 of your high-quality digital photos on a USB or CD. Cost is \$450.
- Design your own full-page ad online using your photos, or upload a professionally created business ad. Cost is \$400.
- Meet with a yearbook staffer to design your half-page ad. You'll need to bring 5 to 10 of your high-quality digital photos on a USB or CD. Cost is \$250.
- Design your own half-page ad online using your photos, or upload a professionally created business ad. Cost is \$250.

To arrange a meeting with *The Howler* staff to create your ad, please e-mail Yearbook Instructor [Steve Johnson](#). You will need to bring your photos to the meeting, along with a check for \$450 for a full-page ad or \$250 for a half-page ad.

To design your own ad or purchase space for your professionally created ad, go to [Balfour.com](#) and enter "St. Francis Episcopal School Houston" in the school search. You can purchase the half- or full-page ad space after creating your ad.

Directions for creating your own ad online can be found [online here](#).

YEARBOOK AD GUIDELINES

- Ads designed by the yearbook staff must be paid for by check (made out to St. Francis Episcopal School).
- St. Francis reserves the right to edit ads per yearbook guidelines.
- St. Francis reserves the right to remove any explicit text, graphic photos, or copyright-protected imagery or photos.
- In keeping with the spirit of St. Francis, we ask that no hunting or fishing photos with deceased and/or captured game or weapons be used.
- Your ad must be completed and purchased by the order deadline of **Sunday, February 3, at 8:00 p.m.** for it to appear in the yearbook.
- If you build your own ad online, we will make every effort to use your layout and text as designed. A proof will not be provided, and no changes can be made after purchase.

NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Please e-mail Yearbook Instructor [Steve Johnson](#) with any questions.

Sports Clinics Offered Over Christmas Break

Explore and Extend is offering sports clinics in volleyball and baseball during our Christmas break. To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

BREAK THE WINTRY BLUES VOLLEYBALL CAMP (JANUARY 2-4)

This three-day adventure will catapult us into tournament mode as we break the wintry blues by sharpening our game-play skills. Instructors will send you on a rollercoaster of group and team scenarios (both on and off the court) as we work to improve our leadership skills, team chemistry, game play, and true understanding of how to play against the ball. Spaces are limited and are open to boys and girls in grades 2-9. (Register online to enjoy an early bird discount. Registration prices increase at the door to \$175 for grades 2-4 and \$195 for grades 5-9.)

- **Grades 2-4:** 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym; \$150
- **Grades 5-9:** 8:30-10:30 a.m. in the Crum Gym; \$175

WOLVES BASEBALL IDENTIFICATION SERIES (JANUARY 3-4)

Join us for the first edition of our Wolves Baseball Identification Series! The two-day event will be held on our Main Campus Baseball Field. We have a large number of students in our St. Francis family who love, play, and/or have an interest in the game of baseball. This series is meant to bring all Wolves together as a group according to age (grades K-2, grades 3-5, and grades 6-8) for skills training and evaluation.

Regardless of skill and experience level, every single Wolf is welcomed! This can be as much an opportunity for individuals to determine their true interest in baseball as it is an opportunity for us to identify all of the baseball-playing Wolves in our community. Participants will receive an Identification Series shirt and a participation/evaluation certificate.

- **Grades K-2:** 8:30-10:00 a.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125
- **Grades 3-5:** 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125
- **Grades 6-8:** 1:00-3:00 p.m. on the Main Campus Baseball Field; \$125

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, December 3

- *Monday Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Hanukkah (December 2-10)*
 - *Registration for Spring Explore and Extend Classes Opens Online*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
-

Tuesday, December 4

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
-

Wednesday, December 5

- *Wednesday Eucharist Block Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *St. Nicholas Eucharist: 11:00-11:50 a.m. in the Chapel*
 - *MS/US Pathways Workshop for Parents: 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the HBR*
 - *Coffee and Fellowship With the Head of School for MS/US Parents: 2:30-3:30 p.m. in the HBR*
-

Thursday, December 6

- *Pathways Special Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *MS Pathways Assemblies*
 - *Grades 5 and 6: 8:10-9:10 a.m. in the FAC*
 - *Grades 7 and 8: 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the FAC*
-

Friday, December 7

- *Friday Schedule/SFES Spirit Dress*
 - *Wolf Wear Sale: 7:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the concessions stand near the gym*
 - *NJHS Let Our Voices Be Heard: 8:00 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*
 - *Locker Cleanout During Advisory*
 - *WEB Leadership Training (Grade 8 WEB Leaders Only): 10:45-11:15 a.m. in Mr. Duran's classroom*
-

Monday, December 10

- *Monday Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
-

Tuesday, December 11

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Locker Cleanout During Advisory*
-

Wednesday, December 12

- *Wednesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
 - *Lessons and Carols Rehearsal: 11:20-11:50 a.m. in the FAC*
-

Thursday, December 13

- *Thursday Schedule/Regular Uniform*

- *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *MS/US Christmas Concert: 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the FAC*
 - *Lessons and Carols Rehearsal: 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the FAC*
-

Friday, December 14

- *Friday Schedule/SFES Spirit Dress*
 - *NJHS Celebration: 7:00-7:50 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*
 - *WEB Activity (Grade 5): 10:45-11:15 a.m. in classrooms*
-

Monday, December 17

- *Monday Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
-

Tuesday, December 18

- *Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Lessons and Carols Rehearsal: 10:45-11:15 a.m. in the FAC*
-

Wednesday, December 19

- *Wednesday Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
 - *Lessons and Carols Rehearsal: 11:20-11:55 a.m. in the FAC*
-

Thursday, December 20

- *Special Thursday Block Schedule/Dress Uniform*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *LS/MS Lessons and Carols: 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the FAC*
 - *MS Christmas Sing-along: 3:00-4:00 p.m. in the FAC*
-

Friday December 21–Monday January 7

- *School Holiday*

Upper School

From the Division Head

We are now one week into Immersions and Explorations—please enjoy a few pics from the past week: [photo #1](#), [photo #2](#), [photo #3](#), [photo #4](#), [photo #5](#), [photo #6](#), and [photo #7](#). We hope you'll **join us for student presentations on Thursday, December 6, at 5:00 p.m. in the Crum Athletics Center**. At that time, we'll hear directly from students about the learning involved in each of the three projects.

I would like to thank Bill Brown for sharing [this](#) article about the maker movement. The transformational nature of hands-on, experiential learning is certainly nothing new. If you aren't familiar with the work of John Dewey, I encourage you to take a few minutes to learn about his trailblazing work from over a century ago by watching [this video](#). And, if you have the interest and time, here's a slightly longer video from John Seely Brown, entitled [“Tinkering as a Mode of Knowledge Production in a Digital Age.”](#)

On Wednesday, December 5, Dr. Crystal Collier will meet with St. Francis parents from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus. The topic of her presentation is “Creating Behavior Contracts That Work.” Below is a brief description. **On December 6, Dr. Collier will address all MS and US students on the topics of alcohol and drug abuse and vaping.**

Understanding how children learn can shape the way we parent. In the second social-and-emotional parent workshop, parents will explore the philosophy of learning theory and how behavior is shaped over time. The components of a behavior modification contract will be taught, and examples created. Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios—and go home with new ideas!

Here's to lifelong learning and a growth mindset! Have a wonderful week—I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday (for Dr. Crystal Collier's talk at 1:30 p.m. in the HBR on the Main Campus) and/or on Thursday (for student presentations about Immersions and Explorations at 5:00 p.m. in the Crum Athletics Center).

Sincerely,

Cara Henderson
Head of Upper School

Explore and Extend Registration Opens Tomorrow

Registration for spring 2019 Explore and Extend enrichment classes, including private music instruction through the School of Music, opens this **Monday, December 3, at 8:00 a.m. CT**. Courses and descriptions are available on our Explore and Extend page [here](#). To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

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- Some courses are designed with a yearlong curriculum, and returning students are automatically re-enrolled so that they can continue their

current progress. Spaces in certain classes may be limited for this reason. (The Explore and Extend office is working to add more sections to these classes in future, as well as to bring in new classes with the same caliber of excellence.) All other courses are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis.

We are looking forward to a great spring semester of growth and learning with all of our students!

Parent Workshop This Wednesday + MS/US Student Assemblies

Join us to learn about “Behavior Modification: Creating Behavior Contracts That Work” this **Wednesday, December 5, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room**. Led by Dr. Crystal Collier of Pathways, this social-and-emotional-learning parent workshop will explore the following:

- How children learn, including the philosophy of learning theory
- How behavior is shaped over time
- The components of an effective behavior-modification contract, along with examples

Most importantly, parents will have an opportunity to discuss the obstacles that interfere with shaping children's behavior. Bring your questions and scenarios—and go home with new ideas!

On Thursday, December 6, Dr. Collier will present to all Middle and Upper School students (in grade-level assemblies) on the topics of alcohol and drug abuse and vaping. This should provide the basis for some meaningful conversations at home.

Join Us for Coffee Following the Pathways Workshop

Upper School parents, please join us for coffee immediately following the Pathways workshop this **Wednesday, December 5, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room**. We hope to see you there!

A Note From Nurse Toler

St. Francis will be offering hearing and vision screenings for our students on **Thursday, December 6, at 8:30 a.m.**

Here are the basics:

- Students who wear glasses should bring them to school.
- State-certified screeners will conduct the screenings.
- A copy of the results will be provided to St. Francis for school files. Students who do not pass a screening will receive a referral form for follow-up with a physician or specialist.
- Screenings are nondiagnostic. They are not intended to be an equal alternative to an in-depth exam by a licensed physician or specialist.

If you have any questions, please contact South Campus Nurse [Debbie Toler](#) at 713.458.6167.

Volleyball Clinic Offered Over Christmas Break

Explore and Extend is offering a volleyball clinic during our holiday break. To register, log in to My BackPack and select "Program Registration" in the My Forms/Documents section.

BREAK THE WINTRY BLUES VOLLEYBALL CAMP (JANUARY 2-4)

This three-day adventure will catapult us into tournament mode as we break the wintry blues by sharpening our game-play skills. Instructors will send you on a rollercoaster of group and team scenarios (both on and off the court) as we work to improve our leadership skills, team chemistry, game play, and true understanding of how to play against the ball. Spaces are limited and are open to boys and girls in grades 2-9. (Register online to enjoy an early bird discount. Registration prices increase at the door to \$175 for grades 2-4 and \$195 for grades 5-9.)

- **Grades 2-4:** 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym; \$150
- **Grades 5-9:** 8:30-10:30 a.m. in the Crum Gym; \$175

Please Share the Word! Upcoming US Admissions Tours

Our best advertising is word-of-mouth, so please tell your friends and neighbors to come learn more about St. Francis at one of our Upper School Admissions Tours, which are held most Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, December 3

- *Special Schedule for Immersions and Explorations/SFES Spirit Wear*
 - *Boys and Girls Basketball Practice: 4:15-5:45 p.m.*
 - *Registration for Spring Explore and Extend Classes Opens Online*
-

Tuesday, December 4

- *Special Schedule for Immersions and Explorations/SFES Spirit Wear*
 - *Swim Practice: 6:35-8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*
 - *Computer Science Field Trip to Waltrip High School: 12:00-2:00 p.m.*
 - *Boys Basketball Practice: 4:15-5:45 p.m.*
 - *Girls Basketball: 5:30 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Wednesday, December 5

- *Special Schedule for Eucharist/Immersions and Explorations*
 - *Arrive in SFES Spirit Wear/Bring Dress Uniform for Eucharist: See note below**
 - *Eucharist (Joint Chapel Between Upper School and Middle School): 11:00 a.m. in the Main Campus Chapel*
 - *Pathways Workshop for Parents: 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus*
 - *Coffee for MS/US Parents: 2:30-3:30 p.m. in the Hogan Board Room on the Main Campus*
 - *Girls Basketball Practice: 4:15-5:45 p.m.*
 - *Boys Basketball: 5:00 p.m. at The Post Oak School*
-

Thursday, December 6

- *Special Schedule for Immersions and Explorations*
- *Arrive in SFES Spirit Wear/Bring Dress Uniform for Presentations: See note below**
- *Swim Practice: 6:35-8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*

- *Pathways Presentation (Students Only):* 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the FAC on the Main Campus
 - *Boys and Girls Basketball Practice:* 4:15-5:45 p.m.
 - *Immersions and Explorations Presentations:* 5:00 p.m. in the Crum Athletics Center
-

Friday, December 7

- *Special Schedule for Immersions and Explorations/SFES Spirit Wear*
 - *Wolf Wear Sale:* 7:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the concessions stand near the gym on the Main Campus
 - *Fine Arts Field Trip to the Art Car Museum:* 10:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
 - *Boys and Girls Basketball Practice:* 4:15-5:45 p.m.
-

Monday, December 10

- *Day 1 Schedule/SFES Spirit Dress*
 - *WOW Assembly:* 9:50 a.m. in the Crum Gym
 - *Boys and Girls Basketball Practice:* 4:15-5:45 p.m.
-

Tuesday, December 11

- *Day 2 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice:* 6:35-8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club
 - *Joint Chapel Between US and PS:* 9:30 a.m. in the Crum Gym
 - *Boys Basketball:* 4:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
 - *Girls Basketball:* 6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym
-

Wednesday, December 12

- *Day 3 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
- *Girls Basketball Practice:* 4:15-5:45 p.m.
- *Boys Basketball:* 6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym

Thursday, December 13

- *Day 4 Schedule/Regular Uniform*
 - *Swim Practice: 6:35-8:00 a.m. at the Houston Racquet Club*
 - *Girls Basketball Practice: 4:15-5:45 p.m.*
 - *Boys Basketball: 6:00 p.m. in the Crum Gym*
-

Friday, December 14

- *Day 5 Schedule/SFES Spirit Dress*
- *Boys and Girls Basketball Practice: 4:15-5:45 p.m.*

* Since dress uniforms are required for Eucharist on Wednesday, December 5, and Immersions and Explorations presentations on Thursday, December 6, and we are asking students to arrive in spirit wear and change into their dress uniforms for a short time on each of those days, we recommend that students bring hangers so they can leave their uniforms overnight. We hope this will eliminate the need to launder the uniform again or the possibility of forgetting to bring it on the second day. Please contact Cathleen at 713.458.6130 if you have questions.

Church

Dedicate a Christmas Poinsettia Today

Be a part of the St. Francis tradition of dedicating a Christmas poinsettia "in memory" of a loved one or "in thanksgiving" for your many blessings. Dedications will be listed in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship bulletins. Dedication forms are located on the tables in the Narthex, or you may [submit one online here](#).

This Year's Angel Tree Now in the Narthex

Every Christmas, an Angel Tree decorates the Narthex. All are invited to participate by providing gifts to low-income families with children who have received financial aid during the year from the Linda Sadler Memorial Fund or other outreach ministries of St. Francis. Gifts might include bicycles, clothing,

shoes, books, toys, or gift cards. **This year's Angel Tree is now in the Narthex**, if you'd like to be an angel to someone this year! [Read more about the Angel Tree here.](#)

Christmas Sing-along and Potluck Dinner Is December 9

One of the best things about the Christmas season is the music! Join us on **Sunday, December 9, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.** as we gather to sing our favorite carols, new and old. We'll begin with a festive dinner in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall. Ham, turkey, and soft drinks will be provided, so bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Children Invited to Participate in the Christmas Pageants

Preschoolers through fifth graders are invited to participate in our Christmas Eve Nativity Pageants! We will have **two pageants on Monday, December 24—one at the 2:00 p.m. service and one at the 5:00 p.m. service.** The church will provide costumes, which will be fitted at the rehearsals.

[Please fill out the online registration form to participate.](#)

Christmas Worship Schedule Now Available

St. Francis Episcopal Church's Christmas worship schedule is now available online. [Click here to view it.](#)

Call for Student Performers: Christmas Musical Is December 9

We are looking for 10 to 15 students in grades 2 and up to participate in our Christmas musical, *Fact or Fiction*, by Celeste and David Clydesdale.

- The performance will be held the evening of **Sunday, December 9, in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall**, and will be directed by Ben Hall, Elizabeth Steen, and Richard Keith.
- Rehearsals will be held at the church on dates to be announced.
- If you are interested in participating, please e-mail your name, grade, and contact information to [Rick Keith](#).

Spring First Communion Classes Begin January 13

First Communion classes begin **Sunday, January 13**. This eight-week course

is designed to prepare second-grade students to receive the Holy Eucharist. If you would like to sign up or request further information, please contact [Nichole Hilgert](#).

Discovering Christian Meditation

An opportunity for silent prayer at the church is now available:

- Tuesdays, 5:00-5:30 p.m.
- Thursdays, 7:30-8:00 a.m.

These sessions are in the St. Clare Chapel and are led by Father David Price.

We find the roots of Christian meditation in the practice of Jesus recorded in the Gospels and in the content of the Epistles. We see it developed further in the writings of the desert tradition of the early church. Come learn a bit about it, gain a few hints about the practice and, mostly, come and pray.