

FBC News

“We are God’s people in this time and for this place.”

Pastor Marcia

JANUARY 2023

New Year, New Focus

A new year brings a new focus to our life and ministry at FBC: what’s God calling us to do and be in our community? We spent much of our energy in 2022 preparing for and executing the sale of our building to the YWCA and we were successful! Many unused items got new life in new homes. (Check out our long pew from Echo Hall in the lobby of Steel River Playhouse, for example.) Other things were recycled, repurposed or disposed of. Seemingly random Christian Ed resources from the past were made into kid’s crafts kits which we distributed to children in our neighborhood via our craft cabinet. Unusable metal cabinets went to metal salvage. Overall, we have been faithful stewards of the resources that have been ours. What we valued most is in a storage unit waiting for new life and ministry.

So, what does that ministry look like? In Nov. we met in person to envision new priorities for ministry. There were constellations of interest in serving the unhoused population in our city, work with children and youth, ideas about partnerships in our community and for future forums bringing together folks locally and from afar. We are not lacking in ideas!

As we look forward, we anticipate the joyful work of discerning what to do next; many things can happen with your involvement. We have financial resources to do much: individually, in small groups or as a whole. In addition to discerning our ministry is the task of seeking a new space: Laura Alden, Sue Heinz and Marcia Bailey are participating in conversations with a local nonprofit to see whether we are a good fit for sharing space. We continue to be open to wherever God leads us.

Meanwhile, we continue to worship online and in person. We remain online because Covid is still a “thing” as are influenza and RSV. Also, because we value the relationships we have made with those who don’t physically live in the Pottstown area. And, because some enjoy the convenience it gives whether one is home or traveling! We will regularly return to the sanctuary as long as we have it (and it’s safe to do so) because we know what some of you value that as well. We are struggling to make the hybrid experience a fruitful one, so we appreciate your patience; we’re all learning something new!

God has blessed us greatly, and we continue to welcome new friends who hear God’s invitation to be a part of a community who strives to follow Jesus and to enact justice in the world. Thanks for being a part of us and for inviting others to join in! With joy and anticipation for what is yet to unfold, we are God’s people in this time and for this place.

Blessings,
Marcia

A Big Thank You!

Dear FBC Family,

Thank you all for the generous check I was given for Christmas from you all! I am deeply honored to be your pastor and to share ministry with each and every one of you. I am grateful for your commitment to Christ and to our community and I look forward to another year together.

In gratitude,
Marcia

A Psalm for the Wild-Built

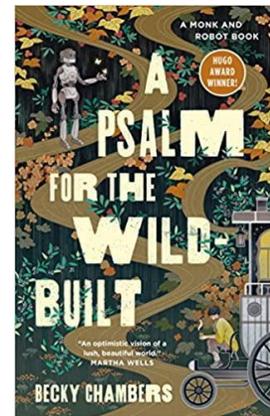
Our book group has started up again on Zoom! We began reading the book *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers beginning Jan 16 at 7pm. We will meet the first and third Mondays of the month.

It's been centuries since the robots of Panga gained self-awareness and laid down their tools; centuries since they wandered, *en masse*, into the wilderness, never to be seen again; centuries since they faded into myth and urban legend.

One day, the life of a tea monk is upended by the arrival of a robot, there to honor the old promise of checking in. The robot cannot go back until the question of "what do people need?" is answered.

But the answer to that question depends on who you ask, and how.

They're going to need to ask it a lot.



Join us on Feb 6 for chapters 3, 4, and 5 and on Feb 20 to finish the book! Check out the Group Life page of the website for the link to join this incredible group of readers!

The Gospel of Mark as a Whole Story Sundays at 9:15am from Jan 8 to Feb 19



Most of the time we read the gospels in bits and pieces, but what if we read and hear a gospel as a coherent story, as if we've never heard it before.

What is the setting? Who is the narrator? What is the plot? Who are the characters? Who is the audience? In this seven-week class we will try to see Mark's story of Jesus whole, maybe like it was heard in the first century.

Check out the Group Life page of the website for links to the text as well as links to audio versions. Then join Rev. Dennis Landon each Sunday at 9:15am for a new perspective on a familiar story.

Girl Scout Cookies!!!

Clara Lawrence will be selling Girl Scout Cookies on Feb 5 after worship in Echo Hall! Don't miss out!

The Pottstown Poetry Group

Join us on the second Monday of the month for the next Pottstown Poetry Group Open-Mic. Our next evening of poetry will be on Feb 13 at 7pm on Zoom!

“What happens at an open-mic poetry reading?” you ask. Great question! You can...

- Read a favorite poem (or more than one if we have time)
- Read a poem you wrote
- Just sit back and listen to others reading poetry!



Bring a poem to read or come to just listen to the beauty of words with us.

Save the Date! Feb 5: Worship and Congregational Meeting

On Feb 5 we will worship in person/hybrid at 10:30am and then adjourn to Echo Hall for a light meal followed by our congregational meeting. At this meeting we will vote on our proposed budget for 2023. Having sold the building we are in a new financial situation, one which continues to require faithful giving to support the work of ministry. Our budget will be very different this year, and we need your input to make it as effective and efficient as possible.

Please plan to join us for conversation and a vote. You need not be an “official” member to come.

FBC Mini Retreat is March 26

Beginning with worship at 10:30am we will transform Sunday, March 26 into a mini retreat day as we inspire, challenge and excite each other for ministry! This time together will be a mix of getting to know each other better, sharing ideas, worship and prayer, food and fun! You won't want to miss it! Save the day; more details to come!

Shout Outs!

Shout outs of thanks to ...

- Jeanne Petrosky for digging into the storage space and locating our Christmas decorations for Christmas Eve!
- Bruce Albright for repairing the Kids Little Free Library which was recently damaged.
- Mike Heniz for securing a new laptop and tablet to help with hybrid worship.
- Rick Unruh who did an inspection of a potential space for FBC in the future.
- Cheryl Clenndinning who helped to set up the sanctuary for Christmas Eve worship
- Dennis Landon, Deb Brauner, Barry Sawtelle and Laura Alden (and Malcolm) who lit our luminaries on Christmas Eve in the bitter cold.

A Warm Welcome

A warm welcome to Russell Bush, David Lotz, Heather Hunter and Greg Longaker who have been worshipping with us for several weeks. We are delighted to include you as part of our FBC family!



What's Happening at FBC!

Check out these upcoming events! Visit us online to find links at www.FBCPottstown.org.

- Jan 21 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Jan 22 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Jan 22 at 10:30am Online Worship
- Jan 24 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia
- Jan 28 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Jan 29 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Jan 29 at 10:30am Online Worship with guest pastor Rev. Sara Davis-Shappell
- Jan 29 at 2pm Card-Making in Echo Hall
- Jan 31 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia
- Feb 4 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Feb 5 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Feb 5 at 10:30am Hybrid Worship with Communion
- Feb 5 at 12pm Congregational Meeting and Fellowship Meal
- Feb 6 at 7pm Book Group – *A Psalm for the Wild-Built*
- Feb 7 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia
- Feb 11 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Feb 12 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Feb 12 at 10:30am Online Worship
- Feb 13 at 7pm Open-Mic Poetry Night on Zoom
- Feb 14 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia
- Feb 16 at 7pm Ministry Coordination Team Meeting
- Feb 18 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Feb 19 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Feb 19 at 10:30am Online Worship
- Feb 20 at 7pm Book Group – *A Psalm for the Wild-Built*
- Feb 21 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia
- Feb 25 10am – 12pm Office Hours with Kristi
- Feb 26 at 9:15am Learning Community – The Gospel of Mark
- Feb 26 at 10:30am Online Worship
- Feb 28 10am – 2pm Office Hours with Pastor Marcia



Financial Info

We continue to come together to do the work of ministry in our neighborhood and in the world. Your gifts make this happen! Thank you!

Income in Dec	\$ 5,457.85
Expenses in Dec	\$ 6,367.46
Net Loss for Dec	\$ - 909.61



Do you have anything you'd like to add to the next edition of FBC News?

Email details to the office at office@FBCPottstown.org by March 13!