



**First Baptist Church**  
all are welcome...really!

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FBC Family By Choice

Fully Inclusive  
Community Friendly  
Mission Based

**610-326-2273**

[www.FBCPottstown.org](http://www.FBCPottstown.org)

301 King Street | Pottstown PA 19464

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# January - Visions

January 4, 2019



## Beginning the Work of Christmas

I know, the decorations are still up (or hardly back in their boxes) and you are weary of the leftovers (I stashed mine in the freezer, so I can bring them out and pretend someone else “cooked” on some cold, winter night!), but even though Christmas is officially “over,” in truth, the work of the season has just begun. What do I mean by that? I mean that once Christ has come among us and we are reminded again that ours is an incarnational faith, God calls us to embody what we think and believe in ways as real and practical as was the life and ministry of Jesus himself. *We all* get to be incarnated: God in us in the world, every day!

Howard Thurman, celebrated American author, philosopher, theologian, educator and civil rights leader wrote a poem some of you are familiar with; it’s called “The Work of Christmas.” It will be the basis for our Epiphany worship series:

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,

When the shepherds are back with their flock,

**The work of Christmas begins:**

**To find the lost,**

**To heal the broken,**

**To feed the hungry,**

**To release the prisoner,**

**To rebuild the nations,**

**To bring peace among people,**

**To make music in the heart.**

--"The Work of Christmas" in *The Mood of Christmas & Other Celebrations* (1985)

Together, as we continue to discern God's new call to us as a congregation, we will explore what this "work" might look like in our community, in the relationships we are forging with the ministry partners who share our building, in a world hallmarked with great physical and spiritual need, as well as with each other. We will consider the ongoing faithfulness of Mary and Joseph, God's call to action rather than charity, the work of liberation today and consider the differences between public and personal peace. We will end season of Light with the invitation to "make music in the heart" as we dedicate our new "Renew" hymnals and highlight the gift of music that is so central to our worship life.

Christmas might be over but the reality of God's incarnation in the world is only begun as we live lives that reflect the Light of the World shining in and through us. Worship with us, pray with us, discern with us, give generously with us. The work of Christmas is ours to share!

Blessings,  
Marcia

## **All Church Retreat!**

Or should we say, “All Church Advance!” **Mark Feb 2, from 9-3 pm**, on your calendars now and stay tuned for details about this exciting, important time for us to discern our future together! We are planning a day of conversation and worship, of eating and fellowship, of deciding and declaring where we hear God calling us in the year to come. We have important things to consider: should we sell all or part of our building? Are we ready to talk about becoming Welcoming and Affirming so as to widen our welcome in a public way? What new ministries are we excited about as we think about our building partners? Who do we want to touch in this New Year?

It is very important that as many members and friends of First Baptist share this day together so that we can talk and listen to one another about what we hear God inviting us to in this new year together. You will be hearing more about this and you can expect to be invited to participate! Plan now to say “yes”!

## **Generous Giving, Generous Living Continues**

Last November our Stewardship Team reminded us of God’s generosity to us and challenged us, in many ways, to give and live generously in our daily lives. Remember the challenge to give the equivalent of your technology bill each month to the church? Or the invitation to set aside the same amount you’d spend weekly on coffee or lunch out (can you say “Starbucks” or “Wawa” here?!) and make that a part of your offering to God?

Our Budget Committee worked diligently to create a budget that reflected our needs (heat, light, water) and also our vision for ministry (A new partnership with Steel River Playhouse! A new outreach to our LGBTQIA friends and neighbors?) It will work if we have your continued support!

Thanks to all who made pledges; if you didn’t/couldn’t make one last fall, you certainly can make one now! It’s never too late to give back to God and to support the ministry you want to see happen. Pledge cards are always available (on the table in Echo Hall or in the church office; we’ll send you one!)

We are excited about the year ahead and what God is doing in our midst. Join us in giving and living generously in this new year!

## **First Baptist Partnerships**

Over the last few months, your Moderators (Laura Alden, Deb Brauner, Myra Forrest) have been hard at work negotiating new relationships with groups who have/will share our physical space. Each one of these groups will be contributing financially to our ministry and mission. Here's the folks we are excited to be partnering with in the new year:

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** has been meeting four times a week in our building for several years. We strongly believe in the work they do in our community and the lives they effect by offering support and counsel to those who struggle with drug addiction and recovery. At a time when our country is facing a significant rise in drug-related illness and death, NA's work has never been more important. We are pleased to support this significant ministry in our community. NA meets in New Fellowship Hall.

**Centro Cultural Latinos Unidos (CCLU)** has been at home at First Baptist for 21 years and continue to work among the Latina/o community here in Pottstown under the capable leadership of Rita Paez. CCLU is a bilingual, bridge-building organization, committed to enriching the lives of Latinos and others by embracing diversity through cultural, educational and recreational programs in the greater Pottstown area. We are delighted to continue to support this organization and seek to build stronger relationships with this group. CCLU continues to use the King Street side of Old Fellowship Hall.

**Steel River Playhouse** seeks to strengthen community, inspire creative exploration, educate, and entertain, through the presentation of quality performing arts events and education for diverse audiences. Located just down the street and around the corner from First Baptist, they will be sharing our space for rehearsals and storage. Our agreement with Steel River includes the opportunity to use their theater space for our Christmas Concert as well as to be recipients of their talent in ministries to children and adults. Stay tuned as we create opportunities to see plays and to experience drama (the artistic kind!) in the year to come! Steel River will be housed in the second-floor classroom, King Street side, of our education building.

**YWCA Tri-County Area (YW)** has been renting space in our building since late August for an after-school program but now is moving to the two first-floor classrooms in our education building as their pre-K program makes their new home with us. YWCA Tri-County Area is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all—all things that First Baptist values! We look forward to exploring ways to serve our community together.

### **December Congregational Meeting**

At our December meeting we voted on a budget for 2019 and we also elected Nancy Unruh to Chair the Board of Christian Education and added Dennis Landon and Deb Brauner to that Board as well. Our thanks to these who are willing to serve in this way!

## **Christian Education**

**Chairperson of the Board, Nancy Unruh**  
**Sunday School Superintendent, Susan Heinz**

*Mission Statement for the Board of Christian Education:  
Our mission is to support each other by providing tools and opportunities for continual growth, regardless of who we are and where we are on our journey to know God. (Revised 1/17/2015)*

### **Sunday School**

The adult class will meet at 9:15 am in the library. The children's Sunday School meets during the Worship service at 10:45 am.

### **Cards**

If you know someone who needs cheering up, the children love making cards to be sent to the shut-ins and long-distance friends. If you know someone that would appreciate a card, please let Kathy, Sue, or Lauren know.

## Redner's Save a Tape Receipts

Thank you for your continued support of Christian Education. We receive 1% of the total receipts which helps us purchase supplies for Sunday School. Please continue to use your Redner's Rewards Card whenever you shop.

## The Secret Place

The Secret Place is available on the table in Echo Hall for your personal devotions. Please consider a contribution to help defray the cost of making this material available. Feel free to pick one up for a friend.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting of the CE Board will be on Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested sharing some of your ideas, please feel free to join us.

## Cluster Notes

Ruth Chonka

In order to serve our community, **the Cluster has need of the following things:**

- **Volunteers** in the warehouse and pantry, stocking shelves. Call 610-970-5995 and ask for Samantha.
- Gallon size closable plastic bags
- Pots, Pans and cleaning supplies
- Low-Fat, Low-Sugar, or Low-Salt items: canned or boxed food such as soup, meat, stew, pasta, vegetables, fruit, cereal, oatmeal, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, baby food, real juice
- Laundry, cleaning supplies and equipment, toilet paper, paper towels
- personal hygiene items, diapers (size 3,4,5), wipes
- sheets and blankets (all sizes)
- Plastic and paper grocery-size bags.
- Egg cartons are **not** needed right now

**Cluster Fundraisers:** Professional Pharmacy register tapes (includes prescriptions). Place in Ruth Chonka's mailbox.

**Bi-lingual Persons Needed:** The Cluster is seeking persons who can help Spanish-speaking clients who shop at the Cluster. Please contact Victoria Bumstead (610-970-5995) or [vbumstead@pottstowncluster.org](mailto:vbumstead@pottstowncluster.org).

## Diaconate

**Joel Dugan, Chairperson**

**Community Meal:** The Cluster Luncheon is at Christ Episcopal Church on the first Monday of the month. The meal begins at 11:45 am and anyone who can help serve is welcome. We thank all those that have committed to this ministry in Pottstown.

### **Communion Offering Reminder**

The Communion envelope found in your box for the first Sunday of the month is used for the Fellowship Fund on the even months. The Fellowship Fund is to help our members in financial need. On the odd numbered months, the Fellowship Fund is used for missions.



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## Board of Worship & Music

**Teri Hoffman, Chairperson**

In September the Worship and Music Committee presented our new hymnal RENEW! In an effort to introduce some new music to our congregation; this hymnal does just that and also includes



traditional hymns. Hymnals may be sponsored with your gift of \$10 with a dedication label placed inside the front cover in honor of or in memory of a loved one. To date **50 hymnals** have been purchased in honor or recognition of loved ones. We are still accepting dedications and donations for our new hymnal Renew. Our plan is to celebrate these gifts and dedicate our hymnals on Sunday, Feb 17.

## Trustees

**Michael Heinz, Chairperson**

## Trustees Updates

1. A deposit has been made for replacing the kitchen windows.
2. Arrangements have been made for snow removal.
3. Light bulbs have been replaced in New Fellowship Hall.
4. Trustees will need two new members come the summer of 2019. Anyone interested should contact Michael Heinz.

## We've Got Mice!

No, not the four-legged rodent kind, but "Church Mice", the two-legged helpful kind as folks pick up small but essential tasks that need to get done around our church. Each of these jobs takes only a brief amount of time and effort; they can be done alone or with a friend, some by someone as young as an elementary school student or as "experienced" as an elder! They include things like picking up bulletins in the pews to recycle after worship each week, picking up trash in the parking lot, making sure the building is secured after worship, straightening up after using a space, keeping the book shelves neat, polishing brass on an occasional basis, etc. Jeanne Petrosky has put together a list and a sign-up sheet for your convenience; it's in Echo Hall.

# Change of address:

Rev Dr. Marcia B. Bailey  
119 Revere Court  
Collegeville, Pa 19426  
610-585-4322

If your address, phone number, or email has changed since our last directory, please let the church office know so we can update our records.

## Ministry Coordination Team

As we begin a new year, we want to remind you of those who have accepted responsibilities for our various boards and invite you to consider where you would like to serve in the days to come. Everyone is welcome and needed to serve God!

Co-Moderators:

Laura Alden  
Deb Brauner  
Myra Forrest

Financial Secretary: Jeanne Petrosky  
Church Clerk: Nancy Unruh  
Treasurer: Suzanne Grace

### **Boards**

Christian Education: Nancy Unruh, Chairperson  
Sunday School Superintendent: Susan Heinz  
Lauren Emmell, Dennis Landon, Deb Brauner, & Maricarmen Trexler

Diaconate: Joel Dugan, Chairperson  
Ruth Chonka, Jane Gruen

Trustees: Michael Heinz, Chairperson  
Rick Unruh, & John Forrest

Worship and Music: Teri Hoffman, Chairperson  
Corinne Griffiths, Kathy Ballein, Tim Raub, & Myra Forrest

Missions: Kathy Purington, Chairperson  
Jane Gruen & Ruth Chonka

## January Birthdays

- 2 Yolanda Grohoski
- 3 Robert Tyson, Jr.
- 5 Gladys Miller
- 7 Christina Rojas
- 9 Holly Hayer  
Carol Weiss
- 10 Jacob Trexler
- 12 Diane Gumbarge  
Sydney Yeager
- 22 Michael Heinz  
Susan Kelly
- 26 Tim Raub
- 29 Marcia Bailey
- 31 Corinne Griffiths

Are we missing your name? Send us your birthday so we can invite others to celebrate with you!



## What to Look for in January

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Sunday, Jan. 6, 10:45am   | Worship & Communion Service              |
|                           | Worship & Music Board meeting            |
| Monday, Jan. 7, 11:45 am  | Community meal at Christ Episcopal       |
| Thursday, Jan 10, 7 pm    | Ministry Coordination Team               |
| Sunday, Jan. 13, 10:45 am | Worship Service                          |
|                           | Board of C.E. & Trustee meetings         |
| Mon., Jan. 14, noon       | Elderberries Luncheon at Coventry Parlor |
| Sunday, Jan. 20, 10:45 am | Worship Service                          |
| Sunday, Jan. 27, 10:45 am | Worship Service                          |
|                           | Diaconate meeting                        |

