

FOX CHAPEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Highlights



Dear friends,

As the holidays approach, my mind begins to turn toward books, as I anticipate some relaxing days to read after Christmas. I suspect I'm not the only one. Guessing that you might have a few moments to pick up a new book in the weeks to come, or might be looking to buy one as a gift for a relative or friend, I offer these recommendations.

For an Advent devotional, give Ruth Boling's *Season's Greetings: Christmas Letters from Those Who Were There* a try. In the book, Ruth imagines different characters in the Christmas story and writes letters from their perspective about what Christmas means to them. She's done plenty of research, so we learn a lot about what the first Christmas would have been like. But, more importantly, these letters invite us into the most important question of all: What does Christmas mean for us? Before the book was published, I read the manuscript in order to write an endorsement. Here's what I wrote: "It's been a very long time since I have read a book that has so moved me with the full wonder and beauty, challenge and

mystery of Christmas. These imagined letters take us deep into the heart of Scripture but ever deeper into the heart of God's love. This book will open your eyes. It will change you. Boling imagines Mary inviting us to 'give Christmas your full consent. Allow the God who came at Christmas to come to you, delight you, and meddle with your life.' I can't think of a better way to do that than to spend time with this lovely book."

You can give Billy Collins's new book of poetry, *Water, Water*, to someone who... **CONTINUE PG. 2**

Celebrating Elected Elders & Deacons

We welcome our newest Elders and Deacons, elected at the congregational meeting on Nov. 17! These incoming leaders will serve a three-year term (except as noted below), beginning February 2025. *Correction from last week on the start date of the new leaders' terms.

ELDERS:

Ann Boyd
Chris Chamberlain
Ryan DeMotte
Toby Eberhart
Morgan Oberlin
Jeffrey Todd

DEACONS:

Christine Bennett
David Clark
Debbie Demmler
Juli Huntington
Kathleen McGhee
Dagny Mol
Rob Scott
Amy Stabingas
Beth Lockwood (2 year term)
Wayne Hoover (2 year term)

Doves are Here!

Last day to join the FCPC Deacons in their annual Dove Tree ministry, bringing the love of Christ to needy families this Christmas! Dove Tree adoptions will be available today, **Dec 1** before and after all three worship services. All gifts need to be returned to the church on Sunday, December 8th between 9:00 am and 12:00 noon.

Benefiting agencies are East End Cooperative Ministries, Sojourner House, Homewood Early Learning Hub and Family Center, and Poppin' Tags Free Store in Russellton. Thank you for helping to make this a Merry Christmas for these families.

Questions? Contact: Kathy Smith at 412-965-9592 or Brenda Karas at 724-393-4161



...thinks they don't like poetry. Some poets major in the obscure, but Collins is ever down to earth, finding joy and mystery in the mundane. Collins is a former U.S. Poet Laureate, and the New York Times called him the "most companionable of poetic companions." The poems in this volume often begin in the every day—at the breakfast table, watching a snowflake fall—but they end in surprise laced with gentle humor.

Anyone who reads children's literature knows of Kate DiCamillo, one of the most celebrated living writers of middle-grade fiction. Her newest novel, **Ferris**, follows a fourth-grade girl as she grapples with the wackiness of her domestic life: a grandmother recently diagnosed with congestive heart failure and who sees a ghost; an uncle who has moved into the basement to paint a history of the world; a six-year-old sister who is determined to become a bank robber. This is a story of friendship, family, and love, and the grand feast at the end, with more guests than anyone would have imagined, reminded me of a raucous Holy Communion at which everyone is welcome.

Finally, a short work of fiction that was published in 2021: **Small Things Like These**, by Claire Keegan. At 115 pages, this book falls somewhere between short story and novella, and can be read in one sitting. Keegan, an Irish writer, takes us into the heart and mind of Bill Furlong, a middle-aged father and husband who, at Christmas, is wondering about the meaning of his life. The story presents him with an opportunity to act with courage to do the right thing, even though it may have costs. At one point, walking through the town, Furlong "found himself asking was there any point in being alive without helping one another? Was it possible to carry on along through all the years, the decades, through an entire life, without once being brave enough to go against what was there and yet call yourself a Christian, and face yourself in the mirror?" The copy of the book I read last weekend was loaned to me, but it will land on my Christmas wish list, as I expect to reread it this time every year.

I pray that, as we move toward the celebration of Christmas, wherever and whatever you read, you find words that turn your heart to the wonder and beauty—as well as the heartbreak—of this world, stories that open your spirit to a deeper recognition of love.

Peace, 

Lunch with the Pastors for Newcomers

SUNDAY DEC 8 / 12:15-1:30 PM / LOUNGE



Join us for a light lunch and an opportunity to learn more about FCPC's ministry, mission, pastors, staff, and membership – and for us to get to know you as well! Childcare is provided.

Please RSVP with number attending and childcare needs to Sarah (sarah@fcpc.us).

Staff Christmas Gift

The Session invites congregation members to contribute to a "Staff Christmas Gift" offering to express the congregation's love and gratitude for the FCPC staff at Christmastime. Contributions received for the "Staff Christmas Gift" will be split evenly among the 13 individuals on staff who work 15 hours/week or more. This love gift will be in place of year-end bonuses for staff.

Contributions made to the "Staff Christmas Gift" should be gifts that are above and beyond regular pledged offerings and contributions that support the ministries of the church. Please have contributions to the church office by Dec 9, marked on the memo line with "Staff Christmas Gift."



Christmas Season at FCPC

Sounds of the Season Concert

DEC 7 / 7:30 PM / SANCTUARY

It is time for this year's Sounds of the Season concert. Come listen as the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale sings holiday favorites, including traditional classics, familiar carols, and popular songs. The audience is invited to sing along on some of its favorites. This concert is a great way to start your holiday season with family and friends. Get your tickets today at <https://app.artspeople.com/index.php?ticketing=pghcc> or by scanning the QR code.



Service of Lessons & Carols

December 15th / ALL SERVICES

Get ready for our annual Lessons & Carols Sunday services. Experience the story of Christmas, through readings and music, and hear the lessons it has to teach us.

Come enjoy the music of our festival choir, chancel choir, handbell choir, childrens' choir, and welcome back the West Virginia Brass Quintet at the 11 am worship service.



The Longest Night Service

A Service of Hope and Remembrance

TUESDAY / DEC 17 / 7:00 PM / ATRIUM

Join us for a special service of reflection and comfort. If you're going through a difficult time, whether it be grief, loss, illness, or life's challenges, you are not alone.

We invite you to come and experience a quiet evening of meditation, special music, and prayer. We will gather to acknowledge the darkness and find encouragement in the light of Christ's love.

Questions? Contact Nikki Rosswog, Minister of Congregational Care, at nikki@fcpc.us

• ✨ • ✨ • ✨ • Christmas Eve Worship Services • ✨ • ✨ • ✨ •

• **Worship Led by Children**

- Tuesday, Dec 24, 4:30 PM in the Sanctuary
- Worship for all ages.

• **Contemporary Worship**

- Tuesday, Dec 24, 6:00 PM in Fellowship Hall
- (Childcare provided)
- Contemporary service featuring our worship band.

• **Traditional Worship**

- Tuesday, Dec 24, 7:30 PM in the Sanctuary
- (Childcare provided)
- Traditional candlelight worship.

• **Traditional Worship**

- Tuesday, Dec 24, 10:00 PM in the Sanctuary
- Traditional candlelight worship.

Music at FCPC

Organist Position

In consultation with the Minister of Music and Pastor/Head of Staff, FCPC seeks an organist to provide organ and/or piano accompaniment for scheduled worship services and other occasions in support of the music ministry.

Duties:

- Play the organ and/or piano for two Sunday morning worship service and other regularly-scheduled special services (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.)
- Play for rehearsals of the Chancel Choir
- First right of refusal for weddings and funerals (paid separately, not included in compensation)

Education/Training:

While a degree(s) in music is/are preferred; private study, course work, and experience will be considered.

Experience:

Minimum of three years experience in service playing, accompanying at the organ and piano, and hymn playing required.

Interested? Please send any resumes to S.C. Toe at sc@fcpc.us



Call for Musicians

Interested in leading musically in one of our worship services? You are most welcome! We have opportunities to play the piano, other instruments, and sing at 8:15am; play in the band or sing, at 9:30am; play an instrument or sing in the choir at 11:00am. There is also the opportunity to play in the handbell choir on Thursdays at 6:15pm.



Instrumental Rehearsal

DEC 8th / 1:00 PM / SANCTUARY

Brass, woodwinds, strings, bring your instruments! We will meet on Sunday December 8th in the Sanctuary at 1:00 pm for a time to play music together.

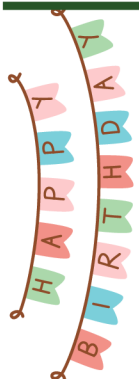
There is no advance registration, just come with a stand, your instrument, and yourself. All music will be provided.

Join the FCPC Children's Choir

Children K-5th grade welcome to join

Rehearsals are held weekly on Sundays from 10:15-10:55 AM in the choir room (room 209).

Questions? Please reach out to S.C. Toe, Minister of Music at sc@fcpc.us



Birthdays

DEC 2 Kathy Smith, Jean Hopper, Anna Ferris, Barb O'Connell

DEC 3 David Dick, Lary Dunn, Emmy Schroeder

DEC 4 Anne Heiner, Tim Sutton, Luca Friday, Jase Kutzner

DEC 6 Stephan Dake, David Daquelente, Michele Williams, Jimmy Minor

DEC 7 Maggsie Sliger, Mike Boyd



Care & Concern

We hold these friends in prayer:

Charles MacDonald, friend of Bob Heister
Elijah Goulet
Kim Power
Dorothy Hill's niece, Helen
Hutch Hutchison
Jonny Wallisch
Jane May, sister of Sue Patrick
Lorraine, friend of Diane Tung
Ewan Boag, Grandson of Emy and Bill Boag
Noah and Aysha Baker, family of Corinne Baker
Shawn Stelitano, husband of Heather
Alison Bischoff
Friends of Gail dealing with end of life issues
MacKenzie and Chasen Strawn, family of Marcia
Mayhew
Lorraine Tabish, mother of Kim Siddons

We celebrate with:

• Barbara Frey on the birth of her grandson
George James Longo on October 22.

We pray for those who grieve:

• For the Leslie family, at the death of M. Russell
Leslie on November 23rd.
• For Pat Taylor, at the death of her husband Tom
Taylor on November 7th.

We pray for peace, aid, and consolation for all who suffer, including:

• For addicts in our community to heal and recover.
• The people of Israel, Gaza, Ukraine, Haiti, Sudan,
and places in conflict, violence, and hunger.
• Refugees throughout the world.
• For our republic.

To keep this list current, please renew requests on a monthly basis for continued prayers.



Letters of Concern

Every week the deacons send letters of concern to members of our church family who are experiencing joys or concerns. You are invited to sign these letters each week before or after all worship services.

Staff Contacts

Rev. Ginger Thomas, Co-Senior Pastor.....ginger@fcpc.us
Rev. Roger Owens, Co-Senior Pastor.....roger@fcpc.us
Rev. Rebecca DePoe, Designated Associate Pastor.....rebecca@fcpc.us
Rev. Lori Bass-Riley, Minister of Children and Families.....lori@fcpc.us
S.C. Toe, Minister of Music.....sc@fcpc.us
Nikki Rosswog, Minister of Congregational Care.....nikki@fcpc.us
Emma Kate Lander, Interim Minister of Youth.....emmakate@fcpc.us
Sarah Hays, Office Manager.....sarah@fcpc.us
FCPC Office.....412-963-8243

Youth Ministry (Grades 6-12)

We invite all middle and high school students to join our weekly Sunday afternoon youth group. We meet in the Youth Lounge for games, snacks, discussions on how scripture impacts our life, and to grow together as a community. Bring a friend!

Questions? Contact Emma Kate Lander, Interim Minister of Youth, at emmakate@fcpc.us or 410-858-7311

DO YOU HAVE A 9TH GRADER WHO'S INTERESTED IN JOINING THE CHURCH? SIGN THEM UP FOR CONFIRMATION!

Confirmation prepares youth to engage in the life of the church! It provides a space to wrestle with big questions like, "Who is God?" or "What is God doing?" or "How can my faith impact the world around me?" This exciting journey invites students to deepen their faith and officially become members of Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church.

SIGN UP FOR MORE INFORMATION USING THE QR CODE BELOW.



CONTACT EMMA KATE LANDER, INTERIM MINISTER OF YOUTH, AT EMMAKATE@FCPC.US OR (410) 858-7311 WITH ANY QUESTIONS!



DECEMBER FCPC YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

DEC. 1: MS 2:00-3:30/HS 4:00-5:30
DEC. 8: MS 2:00-3:30/HS 4:00-5:30
DEC. 15: COMBINED CHRISTMAS PARTY 2:00-4:30
DEC. 22: NO YOUTH GROUP - HAVE A GREAT XMAS BREAK!
DEC. 29: WILD ILLUMINATIONS AT THE PITTSBURGH ZOO @ 5:30 - ADVANCED SIGN UP REQUIRED!



COMBINED FCPC YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 15 2:00-4:30

Wear your favorite ugly Christmas sweater and come celebrate the holidays with FCPC! We'll eat holiday cookies and drink hot cocoa while we watch *How The Grinch Stole Christmas (1966)*, play some fun games, and do a "White Elephant Gift Exchange."

*For the White Elephant Gift Exchange, please bring a wrapped gift under \$15. If you have any questions, please reach out to Emma Kate at emmakate@fcpc.us or (410) 858-7311.



Wild Illuminations

AT PITTSBURGH ZOO & AQUARIUM
DEC 29 5:30-8:00

JOIN FCPC YOUTH FOR A SPECIAL OUTING TO SEE THE HOLIDAY LANTERNS AT THE PITTSBURGH ZOO. ADVANCED SIGN UP IS REQUIRED! PLEASE USE THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP AND SEE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT TICKET COSTS.

Make a Difference as a Youth Group Volunteer!

Want to share Christ's love and support with teens? Talk to Emma Kate Lander about serving as a volunteer for youth ministry for youth group gatherings, special youth events, or a trip with youth.

Children & Family Ministries (Infant-5th Grade)

SUNDAY MORNINGS

8:15 AM WORSHIP

No children's programming during this service.

9:30 AM KIDS' CHURCH

For age 3 to 5th grade. Children are signed in prior to worship and begin the service on the children's rugs at the back of Fellowship Hall. After the Children's Message, children will be led to the Lowest Level. Parents/guardians can pick up their children in the Lowest Level.

9:30 & 11 AM NURSERY CARE

Room 109, ages 0-3. Staffed by experienced adults.

9:30 & 11 AM COMFORT SPACE

Room 107. A place to comfort or feed a child and watch the worship service.

11 AM KIDS' CHURCH

For ages 3 to 5th grade. Children are signed in before worship and begin the service with loved ones. After the Children's Message, children will be led to the Lowest Level. Parents/guardians can pick up their children in the Lowest Level.

Questions? Contact our Minister of Children and Families, Pastor Lori Bass-Riley, by email at lori@fcpc.us or call/text at 412-737-1412.



Wednesday Night Live! Kids Club

WEDNESDAYS / 6:00-7:30 PM

A place for your child to Have Fun! Make Friends! Grow in Faith! Children ages K-5th are welcome.

Contact Pastor Lori with any questions! 412-737-1412 (call/text)



Christmas Eve Service Leaders!

DEC 24/ 4:30 PM / SANCTUARY

Looking for children to lead worship at our 4:30pm Christmas Eve service! Must be in grades K-5 to participate. We need readers, nativity characters, musicians, & ushers! Sign up by Dec 8th using the link or by scanning the QR code. <https://fcpc.shelbnextchms.com/external/form/38c306a4-0dc8-4478-b0b7-5ac4b19775b3>

Questions? Contact Pastor Lori at 412-737-1412



FCPC Preschool Tours

TIME TO SCHEDULE A TOUR!

Families interested in learning more about the preschool and the enrollment process are encouraged to schedule a tour with us. Contact Karin, Stephanie, or Jason in the preschool office at karin@fcpc.us, 412-552-9382, or preschooladmin@fcpc.us. We're excited to hear from you!



This Week at FCPC

SUN DEC 1

- 8:15 AM** Cup and Loaf Worship Service (Chapel)
- 9:30 AM** Contemporary Worship (Fellowship Hall), Kids' Church (Lowest Level), Nursery Care (Room 109), Comfort Space (Room 107)
- 10:15 AM** Children's Choir (Choir Room)
- 10:40 AM** Communion Servers Meeting (Library)
- 11 AM** Traditional Worship Service (Sanctuary), Kids' Church (Lowest Level), Nursery Care (Room 109), Comfort Space (Room 107)
- 2 PM** Middle School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)
- 4 PM** High School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)

MON DEC 2

- Preschool Closed
- 2 PM** Knitting Group (Library)
- 7 PM** Mission Committee Meeting (Lounge)

TUE DEC 3

- 8 AM** Men's Prayer Fellowship (Lounge)
- 9 AM** Preschool
- 9 AM** Backpack4Hunger (Chapel)
- 9:30 AM** Staff Devotions & Meeting (Lounge)
- 5:45 PM** Meditation/Contemplative Prayer Group (Lounge)

WED DEC 4

- 9AM** Preschool
- 9:30 AM** Women's Bible Study (Chapel)
- 11 AM** Congregational Care Meeting (Lounge)
- 3 PM** Stephen Ministry Meeting (Brides Room)
- 6 PM** Weds Night Live! Kids Club (Fellowship Hall)

THURS DEC 5

- 9 AM** Preschool
- 9:30 AM** Griefshare (Chapel)
- 6:15 PM** Handbell Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- 7:30 PM** Lessons & Carols Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- 8:30 PM** Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

FRI DEC 6

- 9 AM** Preschool

SAT DEC 7

- 7:30 PM** Sounds of the Season Concert (Sanctuary)

SUN DEC 8

- 8:15 AM** Cup and Loaf Worship Service (Chapel)
- 9:30 AM** Contemporary Worship (Fellowship Hall)
- 10:15 AM** Children's Choir (Choir Room)
- 11 AM** Traditional Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12 PM** Lunch with the Pastors (Lounge)
- 2 PM** Middle School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)
- 4 PM** High School Youth Group (Youth Lounge)

Giving

Give Online

- + Scan the QR code to give online
- + Text the word GIVE to 412-201-0557



2024 Giving Statement

If you have questions about your 2024 giving statement, please reach out to our designated email at giving@fcpc.us.

2025 Financial Pledge

If you have not yet made your stewardship pledge for the coming year, there is still time. 2025 pledges can be made online via our website at www.fcpc.us/giving or by contacting Sarah Hays, Office Manager at sarah@fcpc.us or call 412- 963-8479.

FOX CHAPEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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