

PHILIP-EYE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PHILIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH U.S.A.

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Duerr Lecture Series

BEARING WITNESS: REFRAMING CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM ENCOUNTERS

Joshua Ralston, speaker for the nineteenth annual Duerr Lecture Series, February 21, 22, and 23, is Lecturer in Muslim-Christian Relations at the University of Edinburgh School of Divinity. His lectures, "**Bearing Witness: Reframing Christian-Muslim Encounters**," will focus on ways for Christians and Muslim to encounter one another, debate our truth claims, and work for the common good. Dr. Ralston says that Christians and Muslims are both instructed

by God to bear witness with our lives, prayer, and practice to the truth, mercy, and justice of God's Word. Tragically, both history and recent events have shown that the combination of our theological differences and shared missionary impulse often lead to stereotypes, rivalry, mistrust, and even deadly violence. Is the only way to seek peace, inter-religious understanding, and justice to give up on our particular faith commitments? In his three lectures, Ralston will explore these questions by examining and reframing some of the most hotly debated issues in Christian-Muslim relations today.

Joshua Ralston received his B.A. degree in Philosophy at Wake Forest University, the M.Th. in World Christianity at New College, University of Edinburgh, the M.Div. at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, and the Ph.D. in Theological Studies at Emory University. Currently he is a candidate for ordination in the PCUSA in the San Francisco Presbytery. Prior to his appointment at the University of Edinburgh School of Divinity, Dr. Ralston served on the faculty of Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, VA, as Assistant Professor of Theology. He has also been a Visiting Faculty Member in Theology and Ethics at the ECWA Theological Seminary, Aba, Nigeria, and in Christian-Muslim Dialogue at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo, Egypt. Ralston has published many Peer-Reviewed Essays and has given academic papers and presentations at national and international conferences. In addition, Dr. Ralston has a book, *Law and the Rule of God: A Christian-Muslim Exchange*, forthcoming later in 2016.

Dr. Ralston will be preaching at the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services on Sunday morning. All lectures begin at 7:00 p.m. Sunday night's lecture will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Lectures on Monday and Tuesday evenings will take place in Room 209, the choir rehearsal room. The sermon and all lectures will be recorded and available in sets of four CDs. Child care is available for each lecture by calling the church office, 713 622-4807.

The lecture series was established in 1998 in memory of Chris Duerr, with the purpose of bringing the best Reformed scholars and preachers to St. Philip and the wider community each year.

Come and take part in the lectures for a time of challenging study and spiritual renewal.

SYRIAN REFUGEE RESOLUTION

The Peacemaking & Social Justice Committee highlights this resolution passed by Session at its January meeting: As believers in God's commandment to love others as ourselves, and as citizens of a nation with a tradition of welcome and compassion, we, the members of St. Philip Presbyterian Church of Houston, resolve the following in light of the current refugee crisis: *Guided by our Commitment to Peacemaking, we affirm, as followers of Jesus Christ, our commitment to welcome the stranger and care for the vulnerable. We respect and understand concerns about personal and national security, and we also believe that the suffering and desperation of those fleeing war and persecution require an urgent and loving response. Refugees of any nationality, religion, or ethnicity deserve respect and care. We call upon our state and national leaders to act with compassion and justice and to choose welcome over fear in responding to those affected by the Syrian war.*

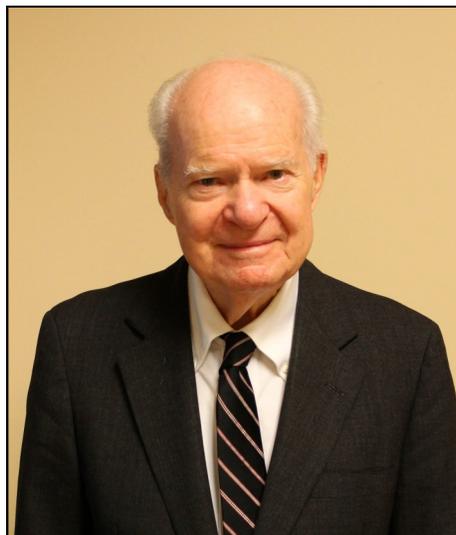
NEW MEMBER BIOS

ANNE MARIE AND JAMIE BERNARD

Anne Marie and Jamie have joined our congregation with their daughter Sydney Elizabeth. They come from the great northern states of Minnesota and Michigan. Anne Marie works in Media marketing, and Jamie is in commercial development in the petroleum industry. Anne Marie has been active in the church through youth groups while growing up, and keeps busy with their seven month old daughter! When she has some spare time, she enjoys keeping fit with exercise. Jamie also is busy with Sydney, and enjoys some sports such as golf and hockey (a vestige of their Northern roots!)

Jamie made a lovely statement about their family life, when he commented that they believe "Family always comes first". They found St. Philip as they drove by the electronic sign in front of the church. They stayed because of our ministerial staff, friendly congregation, and music and youth programs.

Please welcome Jamie, Anne Marie, and Sydney to our congregation.



EWELL MURPHY, JR.

Ewell likes to be called Pat, and he has joined our congregation by transfer from First Presbyterian church. Pat grew up in San Angelo Texas, and attended UT in Austin as well as Oxford in England. He is currently an adjunct professor of Law at University of Houston. Pat enjoys reading to relax. He has three children. Michaela (Mexico City), Harlan (Houston), and Megan (Austin).

Pat is a former member of Saint Philip and came to us based on our worship service, our staff, friendly congregation, and our music program. We are glad to welcome Mr. Murphy back to St. Philip.



YOUNG ADULT DINNER AT THE DUERR LECTURE SERIES

SUNDAY, FEB. 21ST, Dinner at 6:00 p.m. Lecture at 7:00 p.m. The Duerr Lecture committee invites Young Adults to gather before the lecture for dinner and informal conversation with our lecturer, Dr. Joshua Ralston.

Dr. Ralston's lectures, "Bearing Witness: Reframing Christian-Muslim Encounters," will explore ways for Christians and Muslim to encounter one another, debate our truth claims, and work for the common good.

Come for the very yummy (free!) dinner and stay for an engaging, thought-provoking lecture on the timely and essential need for a new way forward in Muslim-Christian relationships.

These lectures are designed for an interfaith audience, so feel free to invite friends of all faiths to dinner and this stimulating lecture!

Please RSVP to Keatan for dinner and for childcare!

DUERR LECTURE SERIES BROWN BAG LUNCH

Men and women are invited to meet with Dr. Joshua Ralston on Monday, Feb. 22, at noon in the Dining Room. Please bring a brown bag lunch and enjoy informal conversation with the speaker for the Duerr Lecture Series. Drinks are provided. Bring a friend; all are welcome; no reservations necessary. Note that there is only one lunch meeting, and both men and women are invited.

DUERR LECTURE COMMITTEE

Thank you to the **Elizabeth Duerr and the Duerr Lecture Committee** who make this series of lectures available each year to our congregation and the community.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL

Nursery and Preschool

Infants and children through 3 years old

8:30 am to 12:30pm - Room 106

Staffed by professional childcare providers

Age 3 through Kindergarten

Godly Play Class - Room 104

Elementary

Grades 1,2, and 3 meet in Room 105

Grades 4 and 5 meet in Room 103

Middle School

Grades 6-8 meet in Room 206

High School

Grades 9-12 meet in Room 205

Jubilate with Children's Music Associate

1st through 5th grades 9:30 am – 10:00 am

in Room 105 with Alicia Chew

ADULT CLASSES

NEW LENTEN CLASS FOR ADULTS

Continuing for the five Sundays in Lent, Keatan King and John Wurster will lead an adult Sunday School class in the dining room at 9:30. "Who Do You Say That I Am?" is a class offering perspectives on the life of Jesus and how his life intersects ours. Scripture, poetry, images, and songs will help to frame our reflections and conversations. The topic for **Feb. 21** is "Jesus as Rabbi."

SPa CLASS - Room 200

The SPa (Saint Philip Adults) class is a fellowship of adults from all walks of life who gather for learning and community. Our discussion-based class meets each Sunday morning; we use the material from the well-regarded "Thoughtful Christian" series. Topics are timely and relevant. Please visit www.thethoughtfulchristian.com for more details.

BIBLE STUDY - Room 204

The class is beginning a study of the book of **I Samuel** which tells of the rise of the kingdom of Israel and the eventual rise of **David** as their leader, revealing throughout the very human traits of the people involved in the narrative. The Bible study class utilizes the insights of a variety of scholars to expand our understanding of God's message of faithfulness to His people. Nancy Cook and Al Waldrop lead the discussions. All are welcome.

CHURCH & SOCIETY - Room 201 -

Feb. 21 - Trauma, Resilience, and Neuroplasticity - A study of the book *The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel van der Kolk, MD, trauma researcher and clinician, on the primacy of trauma on the brain, a presentation on the healing potential of the brain and the spirit. Presented by Rev. Steven Spidell, Director of Spiritual Care at Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital in Baytown, TX. **Feb. 28** - Volunteers Interfaith Caregivers - Southwest - where volunteers strive to help frail and elderly

people in southwest Houston remain independent, seek health care and preserve their quality of life. **Mar. 6** - Simple Gifts of Hope - Medical Benevolence Foundation - The Church is God's chosen instrument to bring hope to the poor and oppressed. MBF works to partner with the local church in developing nations and the domestic US church to build sustainable healthcare ministries; presented by Mark Harris, Director of Partner Engagement, Western United States. **Mar. 13** - Grief and Loss - Recent theological thinking on suffering; presented by Dr. Nathan Carlin, Associate Professor in the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

WEEKDAY STUDIES

MONDAY EVENING STUDY GROUP

On Monday, **Feb. 22**, at 5:30 p.m., we continue our discussion of Joel Baden's book *The Historical David: The Real Life of an Invented Hero*, with chapter 4, "David becomes king: A series of timely deaths." Those staying for the Duerr lecture at 7:00 may wish to bring a light supper. We meet for fellowship, a brief prayer, and study each second and fourth Monday, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., in the dining room (in the administration building, at the south end of campus).

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday Bible study with John Wurster continues with a focus on the Gospel of John. While containing some of the most familiar passages in the whole Bible, John also offers a distinctive, often complex, presentation of Jesus. The class meets weekly in the dining room, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP

The Men's Weekly Fellowship meets every Friday in the Conference Room at 12:00 pm. They have selected *Words Made Flesh* by J. Pittman McGehee. Robert Estill has copies of the book available for \$15. Those men who wish to participate should bring bag lunch and refreshments will be provided. All men welcome. The group wraps up promptly at 1:00 pm.

Join us for Friday Phil-Up! We'll meet at Luby's (1743 Post



Oak Blvd) on Friday, **Feb. 26th** at 6:30 p.m. for food, fun, and fellowship. A great way to unwind at the end of your work week! All ages are welcome. We hope that you will join us!



Are you Presby Pro (Presbyterian Proficient)?

Test your knowledge about Presbyterian history, symbols, practices, and more. Each edition of the *Philip-Eye* will have two questions to expand your familiarity with our faith. The answers are later in the newsletter.

1. Do Presbyterians practice the act of confession?
2. What is Holy Week?

ARTS & CRAFT STUDIO

The next scheduled Saturday craft is **Mar. 6**, from 12 p.m. till 6 p.m. Please RSVP to Lorrie so we have enough supplies. Bring a snack to share with everyone. Have any type of craft project that you would like to work on and just need the company? Come join us! Contact: lorrie@saintphilip.net or 832-262-1244.

MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

A monthly interest group for women who like to read books, socialize, and have a night out meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at a member's home. At our next meeting, **Mar. 11** we will discuss *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng. This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. For more information go to: <http://saintphilip.net/BookGroup.html>

Annual Chili Cook-Off

Join us for the Annual Chili Cook-Off! The fun begins at 5:30 pm in fellowship hall on Saturday, **Mar. 5th**. Categories include: Best Vegetarian Chili, Hottest Chili, Most Unique Chili, Best Overall Chili, and Best Corn Bread. If not entering a chili or cornbread, please bring another pot-luck dish to share: A-J side dishes, K-Q salads/veggies, R -Z dessert. All ages are welcome. Get your ladles ready! We'll see you there!

WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERVICES

We have worship in the Sanctuary each Wednesday at 12 noon throughout Lent. The preacher for February 17 is Laurey Murphy, pastor of Spring Branch Presbyterian Church. Her text is Psalm 27. Lunch is available in the Gathering Area at 12:30.



ENGAGEMENT PARTY

Please join us as we celebrate the upcoming marriage of Keatan King and Nathan Carlin. The Presbyterian Women will be hosting an engagement party for Keatan and Nathan on **Feb. 20th** from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. All are invited to join us for cake, fellowship and celebration!

Keatan and Nathan are registered at Macy's, www.modandmulberry.com, and look forward to upgrading their home with the help of Lowe's. Or in lieu of gifts consider making a contribution to the youth or young adult programs at St. Philip.

HELP!!!

The Presbytery of New Covenant has been seeking congregations to join them in supporting Montrose Street Reach Ministry, which has been serving the homeless from the Presbytery Center's parking lot every Wednesday night for over ten years. The Young Adults of St. Philip are making this ministry our mission. Every 4th Wednesday of the month during 2016, we will supply and serve snacks to homeless persons gathering before they have dinner.

The Young Adults are asking the congregation to join them in donating **individually packaged snacks** (granola bars, peanut butter crackers, goldfish, animal crackers, etc.) and leave them in a marked box in the Gathering Area or the church office. Easy-to-chew snacks are especially helpful (Fig Newtons, chewy granola bars, etc.) The Young Adults of St. Philip will deliver and distribute the snacks at the Presbytery Office.

WOMEN'S HOME EASTER BOXES

Annually, St. Philip gathers items for 'Easter' boxes to give to women at The Women's Home. They offer women – many who are homeless and lack job skills or education due to abuse, substance abuse and mental illness – a home and support. The boxes include personal items and accessories. If you would like to contribute one or more of these goods, please refer to the list below and bring to worship or the office and put in the box marked Women's Home. We will collect items until Sunday, **Mar. 20th** and the goal is to donate at least 55 boxes. If you would prefer to have someone else do the shopping, donations are taken. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Davis 713.464.2385. Many, many thanks; each is appreciated.

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|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Bar Soap | Cosmetics |
| Panty Hose/Knee Highs | Tooth Paste |
| Tissues | Deodorant |
| Postage Stamps | Combs |
| Hairspray | Hotel Samples |
| Shampoo (10-12 oz.) | Jewelry |
| Hand Lotion | Scarves |
| Small Easter novelties | Pens/Pencils |
| Wash Cloths | Razors |
| Greeting Cards | Memo Pads |
| Photo Boxes from craft stores | |

E-VOTIONS FOR LENT

For each of the 40 days of Lent, John Wurster prepares a brief reflection on a biblical passage and sends it out via e-mail. Last year, over 200 people received e-votions. You can join the distribution by sending an e-mail to john@saintphilip.net.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

February 14, 2016

The congregation elected Kay Cash and Sarah O’Dell to serve a two-year term (2016 – 2017) on the Congregational Nominating Committee. They will serve with Don Barker, Kate Burkart, and Gary Whitney, who are in the second year of their terms. Ruling Elder David Castle will chair the committee and an additional Session member will also serve.

The 2015 Annual Report was distributed at the meeting. Clerk of Session, John Lemen, reported that St. Philip had 588 members at the end of 2015. During 2015, the congregation lost nine members to death, five members to periodic review of the membership roll, and six members to transfers to other churches. Also during 2015, the congregation gained 26 members by transfer from other churches, five members by reaffirmation of faith, and four members (confirmands) by profession of faith; for a net gain of 15 members for the year.

Treasurer, Ada Fuller, presented the unaudited 2015 which showed total actual revenue received (\$1,448,762) greater than budget (\$1,403,300), and total actual expense (\$1,380,868) less than budget (\$1,427,350). The 2015 revenue in excess of expense amounted to \$67,894, which Session took action to allocate to Mission spending at its February 7, 2016 called meeting. Ada also presented the 2016 budget of \$1,416,600 that Session had approved on February 7th.

The congregation approved the 2016 Terms of Call for John Wurster and Keatan King which had been proposed by Session and presented by Personnel Committee chair, Jane Lee. The changes represent overall increases for each of the pastors.

Copies of the 2015 annual report are available in the church mail room.

John Lemen, Secretary of Meeting



1. Yes, but not in a confessional. Each Sunday we partake in corporate confession during worship as an entire congregation.
2. Holy Week is a time of remembrance and proclamation of the atoning suffering and death of Jesus Christ. It will begin on Sunday, March 20th—Palm Sunday.

SERVICE OF HEALING AND WHOLENESS

A service of healing and wholeness has been moved to **Feb. 28th**, at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. In this service, we claim God’s promise of well-being and seek God’s healing touch in body, mind, and spirit. The service includes individual prayers with the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, along with scripture readings and hymns. Those seeking healing in their own lives or in the lives of others are encouraged to attend, as well as those who feel called to pray with those who suffer. In gathering for this service, we acknowledge that all healing is from God; and we affirm that in the midst of illness, pain, and suffering our relationship with God in Christ sustains us.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Skip Britton and family upon the death of her husband HL Britton on February 9th.
 Celia Morgan and family upon the death of her sister on February 9th.
 Susan Mitchell and family upon the death of her mother, Judy Mitchell on February 6th in Seattle, WA.
 Candace Demary’s parents, Wayne & Peggy Bourque coping with health issues in Lake Charles
 T.E. Keever – Hallmark Healthcare Center
 Sue Baier - Treemont Healthcare Center, recovering from a fall
 Shirley Smith – friend of Mary Ann Thomas coping with debilitating health issues
 Pat Lindsay’s father is at home with a leg wound
 Margret Lindsay—John Lindsay’s mother – moved to hospice care
 Jan Conner - Sondra Sullivan’s sister & a member, coping with many health issues
 Lorraine Lyter-Reed’s brothers: Martin is recovering from below the knee amputation; Leland – ongoing cancer treatment
 Jean Benson Miksch—receiving cancer treatment—daughter of Mary Benson
 Cynthia Shoup—recovering from surgery for breast cancer
 Annie Roach – hospitalized for lung and heart problems
 Helen Harris - recuperating at Brookdale
 Pat Clark—treatment at MD Anderson
 Joe Anne Berwick—residing at Belmont
 Larry Dean—Seven Acres
 Mike Tomforde, Jr.—Hallmark HC



Recuperating at Home

Malcolm Host	Bedford Vestal
Jo Jones	Paul Pennington
Virginia McFarland	
Penny Vieau	
Rusty Howard	
Betty Knepper	

