

# PHILIP-EYE

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

Volume 60, Number 9

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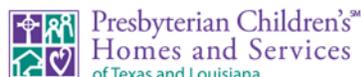
Houston, Texas

May 3, 2016

## PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING

On Pentecost Sunday, St. Philip has an opportunity to support PCUSA's Special Offering, the Pentecost Offering. How are gifts to the Pentecost Offering used?

St. Philip's session voted for 40% of this offering be sent to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services to help at-risk children, youth and young adults in our own community.



25% goes to Ministries with Youth administered by PCUSA and helps youth unite with Christ and lifts them up as leaders and messengers of God's word through programs like Triennium and d365.org.

25% supports Young Adult Volunteers (YAV). PCUSA provides opportunities for young adults to serve in communities around the world and grow as leaders through transformative Christian service.

10% advocates for at-risk children. PCUSA supports vital ministries to improve education and provide a safe haven for children across the globe.

The Pentecost Offering gives us an opportunity to unite with thousands of other Presbyterian congregations to share in the lives and futures of our young people.

**Communion Offering**  
**May 15**  
**Pentecost Sunday**

## ST. PHILIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR INTERFAITH MINISTRIES (IM) OPERATION IMPACT

In preparation for hurricane season, Interfaith Ministries (IM) Meals-On-Wheels program needs volunteer groups to deliver shelf-stable meals and bottled water to all of their 4,000 homebound seniors in our community. These seniors are unable to prepare for disasters due to mobility issues. IM wants to make sure their homebound seniors are prepared with a week's worth of food and clean water.

About 20+ volunteers are needed for a St. Philip team which will be assigned 50 seniors. Three or four volunteers who drive large SUV or trucks are needed to pick up the meals and bottled water for 50 seniors on Saturday, **May 21** and bring the supplies back to St. Philip. Other volunteers will be assigned the names, addresses, and route schedules of their assigned seniors. The volunteer can deliver the food and water on **May 21**; however, the volunteers have until **May 24** to make their deliveries. The more people who volunteer, the fewer deliveries each has to make.

Greg Han is in charge of getting people to sign up. You can sign up on Sunday mornings, **May 8** and **May 15** in the Gathering Area. This is a one-time volunteer opportunity that the Mission Committee hopes you will respond to.



## Dear Friends,

The Session has voted to hire Randall Swanson as our next Director of Music. With over thirty years of experience in church music, Randall has served as Organist and Director of Music at Cathedral of Saint Raymond in Joilet, Illinois since 2012. Previously, he served congregations in Texas, Virginia, and Chicago. Randall is a native of Wisconsin. He holds degrees in organ and church music from Lawrence University (Bachelor of Music), University of North Texas (Master of Music), and Northwestern University (Doctor of Music).

In his application letter, Randall wrote:

*At a very young age, I was deeply captivated by the music and worship practices of the church, and it is to these that I have devoted my life's work as a conductor and organist. As an Episcopalian with Methodist family roots, I believe I have been blessed with an innate understanding of the powerful place of musical excellence in building the Christian spirit. I am very familiar with music and worship in the Reformed tradition, and I welcome the prospect of sharing my skills and experience in the visionary, welcoming, and affirming ministerial environment that you are fostering at St. Philip Presbyterian Church. . . . With its ministry to the diverse population of Houston and its associations with many of the great musicians and performing organizations in the Houston area, I am particularly attracted to St. Philip because of the rich musical life that exists there, including the excellence of your very fine adult choir. . . . Among the many of St. Philip's attributes that I find appealing is your desire to nurture and build your program attending to the spiritual and musical development of young people. In addition to extensive experience working with both professional and volunteer adult singers, I have had a great deal of experience working with children's and youth choirs throughout my career. Connecting with children and youth to channel their seemingly boundless energy and enthusiasm into music continues to be among my greatest joys as musician, and I would warmly embrace the opportunity to engage with the staff, children, youth, and families at St. Philip to continue developing this important ministry.*

Randall will begin his work with us June 15, and I'm very much looking forward to having him as a colleague. Many thanks to the members of the search committee for their hard work in filling this important position: Don Barker, Carla Burns, Maggie Dement, Matthew Dirst, Julia Fox, Judith Hiott, Roderick James, John Lemen, and Jeanette Wennenweser (chair).

As we prepare to welcome Randall to St. Philip, let us also express our gratitude for those who have led us during these interim months: Matthew Dirst once again took on leadership of the St. Philip Choir in addition to his ongoing responsibilities as organist; Eleanor Grant conducted the choir as needed; Jane Malczewskj led the Bell Canto; Gregory McDaniel (with assistance from Jane) worked with our youth singers; and members of the Music at St. Philip Committee took on extra tasks in this especially full concert season. Thank you!

Faithfully yours,



CanCare will host its 22nd Annual National Cancer Survivors Day Luncheon on Thursday, **May 19**, at 11:30 a.m. at The Westin Houston, Memorial City. The luncheon keynote speaker will be NFL Houston Texans defensive end, Devon Still. He recently signed with the Texans after taking some time off to care for his now 5-year-old daughter, Leah, who just recently finished an intense battle with cancer.

Devon graduated from Penn State University in 2011 with a degree in Criminal Law and Justice. He received both the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year and Big Ten Lineman of the Year awards in 2011. In 2012, he was drafted in the 2nd round by the Cincinnati Bengals.

On June 2, 2014, Devon received the devastating news that his 4-year-old daughter, Leah was diagnosed with stage IV neuroblastoma, a very rare form of childhood cancer with a 50% survival rate. Devon put his football career on hold to be by Leah's side during her fight. The Bengals placed him on the practice squad so he would not lose his medical benefits and not be required to travel with the team, thus allowing him to stay with Leah. Leah fought a long and hard battle and on March 18, 2015 in a post to Instagram, Devon announced that Leah was finally cancer-free.

Over the past twenty-six years, CanCare's message of hope has made a tremendous difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families. CanCare has trained 1,768 volunteers who are survivors of more than 75 different types of cancer. These selfless individuals, CanCare's heroes, have provided one-on-one support to more than 22,000 people and have made over 127,000 visits to patients and families in hospitals and treatment centers. Additionally, 179,000 people have been served directly with one-time listening support and referrals to cancer resources and information.

You can make your reservations online at [cancare.org/luncheon](http://cancare.org/luncheon) or by mail to CanCare, 9575 Katy Freeway, Suite 428, Houston, TX, 77024. Individual tickets are \$150.

Hope to see you there,  
Karen McKibben Morris



## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL

### Nursery and Preschool

#### Infants and children through three 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

### PRESBYTERIAN 101—Room 202

Presbyterian 101 is a series of classes about the distinctive marks of Presbyterian faith and practice. Led by John Wurster, these sessions explore the history, theological emphases, worship features, and governing characteristics that define this part of the Christian family. New members, prospective members, seekers, wonderers, and everyone else is welcome. The class continues through **May 8** at 9:30 a.m.

### 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](http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com) for more details.

### BIBLE STUDY - Room 204

The class is engaged in a study of the book of **1 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

**May 8** - *How We Came Together-The Story of Central Presbyterian Church Joining With St. Philip Presbyterian Church* presented by C.J. Miller and a report on the Central Mission Endowment Fund presented by Cathy Patterson. **May 15** - *The Story of German Lutheran Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the Context of the Events of the Holocaust* led by Mickey Meyers, Bonhoeffer docent at Holocaust Museum Houston. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's ministry and actions in the Holocaust are examined in the context of what was happening under Nazi oppression 1933 - 1945, including Bonhoeffer's defining the relationship between the church and state and the role of the church in response to social injustice. **May 22** - *The Institute for*

*Civility in Government* presented by Rev. Cassandra Dahnke, a pastor at Woodforest Presbyterian Church and co-founder of the Institute for Civility in Government and co-author of *Reclaiming Civility in the Public Square*. **May 29** - *Film Study—Birdman* presented by Kate Burkart, presenter for film/media studies at St. Philip since 2002. **June 5**—*Allowing Everyone to Vote-The Fifteenth Amendment and the Voting Rights Act* presented by Professor Peter Linzer for Constitutional Law at the University of Houston Law Center.

## WEEKDAY STUDIES

### MONDAY EVENING STUDY GROUP

On Monday, **May 9**, at 5:30 p.m., we begin our discussion of Harvey Cox's book *How to Read the Bible*, with the introduction and chapter 1, "Serpents, floods, and the mystery of evil: The Book of Genesis." Besides conversation, our meetings include light food and drink, fellowship, and a brief prayer. We meet each second and fourth Monday, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., in the dining room (in the administration building, at the south end of campus).

### PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP

The Men's Weekly Fellowship meets every Friday in the Conference Room at 12:00 p.m. 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 a bag lunch; refreshments will be provided. All men welcome. The group wraps up promptly at 1:00 pm.

### MONTHLY BOOK GROUP

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, **May 12**, we will discuss *Why Not Me?* by Mindy Kaling. This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. For more information go to: <http://saintphilip.net/BookGroup.html>

children across the globe.

### ARTS & CRAFT STUDIO

The next scheduled Saturday craft is **May 7** from 12 p.m. till 6 p.m. RSVP to Lorrie. 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](mailto:lorrie@saintphilip.net) or 832-262-1244.

### Are you Presby Pro (Presbyterian Proficient)?

Test your knowledge about Presbyterian history, symbols, practices, and more.

1. Who were the "sent ones" that spread Jesus' message throughout the world?
2. The Presbyterian church is governed by its own constitution which has two parts. What are they?



## POP MINISTRY

The POP Ministry has a Lay Ministers Training coming up soon. We provide Lay Ministers to serve those that are sick in hospitals, in the Medical Center and beyond. We also serve the caregivers and their family members. Through the ministry of Prayers Of the People, last year over 14,000 persons were visited and cared for.

There is no cost for this training, and all interested parties can easily register at our website [www.popministry.org](http://www.popministry.org) on the training tab.

*Date:* Saturday, **May 21** *Time:* 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
*Location:* First Presbyterian Church of Houston, 5300 Main Street Houston, TX 77004  
*Registration Deadline:* **May 19** - Lunch is provided.



## FRIDAY PHIL-UP AT ZOËS KITCHEN

Join us for Friday Phil-Up! We'll meet at Zoës Kitchen (3838 Westheimer Rd, between Drexel and Willowick/Wesleyan) on Friday, **May 20th** 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!



## LORD OF THE STREETS

The next date for us to serve breakfast to the homeless is **Sunday, May 22**. We gather in the St. Philip parking lot at 6:30 a.m. to carpool to Trinity Episcopal Church and are back at the church by 9:00 a.m. in time for Sunday school. We need 15 volunteers. If this date is good for you, please call Janet Davis at 713-464-2385 to take part in this gratifying project.

## NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE TEACHING OF JESUS

This year **The Saint Philip Summer Lectures** will welcome **Dr. Mark Allan Powell**, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. The week-end events on **August 13th and 14th** will include three sessions: on Saturday with lunch, a Saturday evening gathering for Young Adults (20's and 30's), a gathering at the Sunday School hour for the Youth (Jr. and Sr. High's), and he will preach at both worship services on Sunday. Save the date for this unique opportunity!

## MO-RANCH

The committee coordinating our retreat are in need of glass jars for a project. They should be the size of a spaghetti jar or smaller and made of clear glass. There will be collection boxes in the Sanctuary and the Office.

Thank you.

## YOUTH LOCK-IN

If you are in the area of the church this Friday and you see lights on in the Education Building, don't worry we didn't leave them on by accident. The youth group will be spending the night at the church with some awesome and brave sponsors.

## JOHN BLOW CLEARING HOUSE

The Clearing House is the place to bring all discards: books, clothing, household items, anything and everything, excluding furniture and computers. These items will be passed on to various agencies that are supported by our church. These include Christian Community Service Center, The Women's Home, SEARCH, and House of Tiny Treasures.

The Clearing House is located in the stand-alone brick building by the staff parking lot. It is open on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. During the week the key is available in the front office.

John Blow was a member of St. Philip many years ago, Janet Davis recalls. John may not have started the Clearinghouse, but he managed it for many years in a small shed. Once the classrooms were added, the current building went unused, so John and others proposed to use it for the Clearinghouse and soon handed the reins over to Mrs. Davis. Eventually upon John's death the church named it the John Blow Clearinghouse.

Many, many thanks to Don & Janet Davis, Tom Lewis and Paul Pennington for their great help with the Clearing House these days.

## PW BIRTHDAY OFFERING

The Birthday Offering is a PW offering received in the spring of each year to celebrate the blessings in the lives of Presbyterian Women. This year the offering raised at St. Philip on **April 10** totaled \$1,850 for mission projects of Presbyterian Women church-wide. Thanks to all who joined to support our projects for peace and justice.



## APRIL COMMUNION OFFERING

Bering Omega Community Services was the recipient of the April Communion Offering and received \$1,089. Thank you for the extra support of this Mission Partner who nurtures the well-being and meets the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of persons affected by HIV/AIDS.

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS - APRIL 2016

The April Stated Meeting of Session was cancelled due to inclement weather and street flooding.

### Specially Called Meeting of Session on May 1, 2016

Jeanette Wennenwaser, chair of the Director of Music Search Committee, recapped the search process the committee had followed to identify, vet, and interview candidates for the position. She then introduced the candidate the committee had selected for consideration by the Session to hire.

Session authorized the hiring of Dr. Randall Swanson as Director of Music, St. Philip Presbyterian Church.

Session agreed to commission a task force to review member Jim DeMent's application to move from Inquirer to Candidate status in his preparation for ministry as a teaching elder, and for the task force to report to Session in time to take action via electronic vote prior a **May 14** meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant Committee on Ministry.

**ST. PHILIP PLANS ADDITIONAL PARKING FOR THOSE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY**

Last year a St. Philip member requested the Property Committee to consider how to make more handicap parking available, due to the distance to the sanctuary from many of the current handicap places. He specifically requested that the places on the west side of the education buildings (with an entrance at that end of the sanctuary) be converted. After much discussion, we realized that this issue was mainly crucial on Sunday mornings and for all-church events held in the sanctuary. At other times, those places are often used for Sunday School room access, delivery to those buildings, and evening youth meetings.

Instead of converting all spaces to handicap, the decision was made to reserve them for persons with limited mobility on Sunday mornings and for all-church events. There are already two handicap places there, and soon there will be signs at the other places like one pictured here.

We have previously asked that other members leave these places available on Sundays, and we ask again that able-bodied members do that until the signs are in place. Other persons will not be towed for using these spaces, but know that someone might really need them before you take one.

When the future landscaping program is approved and work begins, we will take advantage of the workers to add a few more spaces in this strip, and hopefully cover the entrance and include a button that will make it easier for persons to open the door. Some of these will also be official handicap places. Thank you for your cooperation in the meantime!



**UPDATE FROM THE LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE**

It has been a long time since your Property Committee reported that a landscape architect had been engaged to help us plan how to replace the great willow oak that had to be removed from the front of the sanctuary. A Landscape Committee was organized to gather input and ideas, and work with the landscape architect. This is a committee that will work with the session in moving forward, and at crucial points, plans and drawings will be brought to the congregation for comment.

You might remember that we asked for input from members regarding ideas and wishes in the re-planning of that area. From that request, and comments that the members of the new Committee suggested at our first meeting, we put together a list of ideas and wishes that we brought to our first meeting with the landscape architect. High on the list were requests that the façade of the church be visible both from the street and from the parking area. Also, provide shade for the walk from the parking area to the sanctuary, and have the main walk lead to the main entrance.

Some wanted more trees, some wanted no trees. Many requested environmentally friendly plantings. Other requests included a labyrinth, a columbarium, a fountain or water element, no water element, a gathering area with benches, and if possible restore the St. Philip logo that was in the old outside gathering area. The first meeting with the landscape architect brought out other wishes: some really missed that outside covered gathering area; why not a covered drop-off area at the parking lot; a plaza at the front of the sanctuary; discussion of the community garden. There was much consideration around the handicap parking, partly generated by a separate request for more, discussed above in this newsletter.

The first plan from the landscape architect generated even more discussion among the committee members. Along with many of the above ideas, it included a bosque of trees, possibly with benches, a generous new community garden, a trellis over the concrete area near the statues of the reformers, and more space in the center area (by moving the sidewalk) for outdoor events.

Clearly we cannot have everything, especially since some things contradict others! Cost will be a factor. The area runs along San Felipe, so it is not a contemplative space. There are some City of Houston limits on permeability and easements to be considered. But we are eager to get our first main plan soon, and look forward to bringing it to the congregation.

Members of the Landscape Committee are Walker Fair, Joyce Fox, Celia Morgan, Lori Murphy, Cathy Steward, Gary Whitney, Gary Willis, Winston Crowder, and Ginny Camfield, Chair. If you have questions, thoughts or ideas to contribute, please contact any member.



The youth are taking action in recognition of Earth Day and collecting used batteries which they will recycle.

**LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!**  
 Financial Information as of 3/31/2016

Pledges Received	\$197,463.88
YTD Budget	\$246,750.00
Income	\$292,707.12
Expenses	\$321,455.99
Revenue over (under) expense	(\$28,748.87)

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

Carolyn Vestal and family upon the death of her husband  
 Bedford Vestal—Memorial Service will be May 6th,  
 11:00 a.m. at St. Philip

Roderick James and family upon the death of his sister, June  
 James, in New York on April 28

Joy Maguire and family upon the death of her mother, Jane  
 Craig—Memorial Service will be Monday, May 9th at  
 2:00 p.m. at St. Philip

Sondra Sullivan—recovering at Brookdale Galleria  
 Helen Harris—recovering at Brookdale Galleria  
 Toto McGehee—recovering from broken elbow

Candace Demary’s parents, Wayne & Peggy Bourque, coping  
 with health issues in Lake Charles; Wayne has been  
 moved to hospice care

Karen & Bill Morris’s nephew Jason in Virginia, diagnosed  
 with Stage IV colorectal cancer  
 T.E. Keever – Hallmark Healthcare Center  
 Jan Conner - coping with many health issues

Larraine Lyter-Reed’s brothers: Martin is recovering from  
 below-the-knee amputation; Leland – ongoing  
 cancer treatment

Joe Anne Berwick—residing at Belmont  
 Pat Clark—treatment at MD Anderson  
 Mike Tomforde, Jr.—Hallmark HC

**Recuperating at Home**

Sue Baier            Jan Conner  
 Gary Gardner      Malcolm Host  
 Dick Howard       Rusty Howard  
 Jo Jones             Penny Vieau  
 Paul Pennington   Ruth Weber



**IM**  
 INTERFAITH  
 MINISTRIES  
 FOR GREATER HOUSTON

**DINNER dialogues**

**Expanding the Circle:**  
 Interfaith Dialogue Needs You, Houston Needs  
 Interfaith Dialogue

In this final Dinner Dialogue of the 2015-16 IR program year, come expand the circle of dialogue. If you are a prior Dinner Dialogue attendee, bring a new attendee for free! Help introduce the value of interfaith dialogue to someone new.

**THURSDAY JUNE 2ND, 6:30 P.M.-9:30 P.M.**

Help Interfaith Relations expand the circle of understanding. Help make Greater Houston a city of respect. In order to "expand the circle" we invite you to bring up to two friends for free who have never attended a dinner dialogue. Registration for returning friends is \$20 per person. Hosted in homes throughout Houston.

**USHER - NOT JUST A POP STAR AT ST. PHILIP**

We are grateful for the ministry of our ushers. They serve an important role as agents of hospitality, responding to the needs of those gathering for worship and fostering an atmosphere of welcome and inclusion. In addition to distributing bulletins and collecting the offering, our ushers take on a variety of other tasks, including helping people find a seat in the sanctuary, assisting with wheelchairs and walkers, pointing newcomers to the nursery and the restrooms, checking the pews after worship, stocking cough drops, and much more. Ushers serve God by serving all of us as we come to worship at St. Philip.

Our ushers serve on Sundays, as well as for memorial services and other special events. They serve for alternate months each year. William Howard oversees the group.

The 2016 ushers include:

Cheryl Barker  
 Mary Benson  
 Molly Boren-Whitney  
 Laura Burgess  
 Tim Burgess  
 Kate Burkhart  
 Alan Coufal  
 Sharon Coufal  
 Nita Davis  
 Elizabeth Duerr

David Durham  
 Robert Estill  
 Susan Estill  
 Jeanie Flowers  
 Joyce Fox  
 Ada Fuller  
 Gregory Germain  
 Katie Hannan  
 Jo Helland  
 Cameron Highsmith  
 Dick Howard

William V Howard  
 Roderick James  
 Jay Jeanes  
 Jane Larkin  
 Lee Larkin  
 Taylor Lawson  
 Mary McGuire  
 Steve Nettles  
 Rhonda Sands  
 Sue Shirley-Howard  
 Doug Simmons

Mary Ann Thomas  
 Jenny Vestal  
 Wesley Vestal  
 Max Wennenweser  
 Gary Willis  
 Robin Willis  
 Jennifer Wilson

**Thank you!**



1. The apostles and there were twelve.
2. *The Book of Confessions* and *The Book of Order*. These books convey what the church believes and the policies and procedures of the church.



**www.saintphilip.net**  
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