



December 7, 2021

Volume 65, Issue 23

PHILIP-EYE

INTRODUCTION OF DAVID & SHERRI DEES

St. Philip Presbyterian Church is delighted to introduce two new members, David and Sherri Dees, who joined us by transfer from Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church in Crystal Lake, Illinois. Their son, Ben Dees and his family, are members of St. Philip and he encouraged them to visit us once they were settled in Houston. Thank you, Ben!



David and Sherri were long-time residents of Arkansas and both attended Arkansas State University and then Northwestern University. They have been married for forty-three years. David is now retired from a long, successful career with Marmon Holdings where he served as VP of Communications. Linda has served as Director of Music at her prior church as well as a private instructor in percussion for McHenry College. She was also a percussion coach for the Youth Symphony. Earlier, Sherri was a Music Instructor at Arkansas State University and a solo recitalist in the symphony. She loves to read. David loves music and reading and confesses to buying *too many used books!*

We are so happy to have David and Sherri at St. Philip. They are both very warm and friendly people and love to laugh! We are blessed to have them here. **WELCOME**

Rev. Dr. John W. Wurster
Pastor, Head of Staff

Rev. Keatan King
Associate Pastor

Rev. Omar Rouchon
Associate Pastor

Dr. Randall Swanson
Director of Music

Dr. Matthew Dirst
Organist

Cecy Duarte
Children's Music Associate

Micah Meyers
Art Director

Wilbert Parada
Facilities Supervisor

Dimas Parada
Custodian

Lorrie Castle
Office Manager
Newsletter Editor

Susan Estill
Editor Emerita



ST. PHILIP'S ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET, A SEASON OF GENEROSITY

The Mission Committee would like to express our appreciation to everyone who helped make this year's Alternative Gift Market a success. Generous St. Philippians supported mission partners and mission projects with their holiday shopping, helping others and sharing God's love through their gifts. The Market raised just over **\$15,000!** All of this will fund mission near and far: from the St. Philip Stitches' quilts for House of Tiny Treasures to haircuts for the homeless in Houston through Have Shears Will Travel; From clean water systems in the Yucatan through Living Waters for the World to feeding hungry children in Haiti through the Haiti Children's Nutrition Program. To those who donated items for sale and to the many people who shopped for gifts, bid on auctions items, and made donations at the Market, a hearty Thank You for sharing your blessings as we head into the Christmas season.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

- ✦ **December 8, 15, and 22** – Midweek Advent Services of Scripture and Song at 11 am in-person and online.
- ✦ **December 12** – The Third Sunday of Advent. Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. with Omar Rouchon preaching.
- ✦ **December 19** – The Fourth Sunday of Advent. Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. with John Wurster preaching.
- ✦ **December 24** – Christmas Eve Candlelight Services. A Whimsical Telling of the Birth of Jesus at 5:30 p.m. Communion Service with the St. Philip Choir at 8 p.m. with John Wurster preaching.
- ✦ **December 26** – First Sunday of Christmas. One service at 11 a.m. **(no 9 a.m. service)** with Keatan King preaching.
- ✦ **January 2** – Second Sunday of Christmas Services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. The first communion of 2022 with John Wurster preaching.



Many thanks to those who have already submitted pledges of financial support for 2022. The stewardship committee is hoping to wrap-up our campaign, so the committee will soon be making follow-up calls. Pledge cards can be returned to the church office anytime or placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.

ATTENTION STOCK DONORS!

St. Philip changed broker services to Frost Bank in the beginning of 2021. We ask you to call:

Yvette Webb at Frost Bank – 713-388-1231 for transaction information. Our new account number is #037-293183.

Please let the bookkeeper know you are making a stock donation. You may email bookkeeper@saintphilip.net.

If you have any questions, you may always contact Ada Fuller at 713-306-8267 or amariepoet@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It is the time to adorn our chancel with poinsettias. Beginning right away you have the opportunity to make a donation to assist with this. You can go to the website, saintphilip.net, and click on the Christmas Poinsettia Icon on top of page. Follow the instructions to help. Choose *Flowers/Holiday*. In the optional memo put "Point". Email your honor/memorial designations to Lorrie Castle at lorrie@saintphilip.net. Otherwise, you will receive an email, within a few days asking for names of people you want to honor/remember. Questions? Call Church Office at 713-622-4807.



Christmas Poinsettias

Donations of any amount accepted

(circle one) **I / we** would like to make a donation to purchase poinsettias to adorn our chancel during this Christmas season .

(circle one) **in honor of / memory of** _____

Donor - Your Name(s) (Please print legibly) _____

*Please place envelope in the offering plate or return it with your **payment** to the church office by Monday, **December 13**. Use additional space below if needed.*

I have included a check, _____ cash or will pay online.



Reaching for the Stars

For Sarah Valentina Hernandez Solache, the colorful city of Zitácuaro in the highlands of Mexico — where millions of Monarch butterflies bathe the fields and forests in a sea of orange during their annual migration — was, and always will be, home. But, despite its beauty, Valentina admits that it simply wasn't a safe environment for her.

"I had an amazing childhood there," said Valentina, who was raised Presbyterian in her local church. "Mexico is beautiful, with the best climate and the best food ever. But it is also a really dangerous country."

The ongoing violence against young girls that terrorized her community while she was growing up was one of the primary reasons her parents decided to send her, like her older sister before her, to pursue her education in the U.S. at the Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, Texas. Established in 1911, the school is an international, college-preparatory, boarding school related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that motivates and equips young people for lives of Christian leadership in the global community.

"We met the school thanks to our church, which has a relationship with Pan Am," Valentina said, referring to her alma mater by its common nickname. "They send scholarship award letters to people all over Mexico."

The experience was life-changing and transformative. Both sisters are now distinguished graduates of Pan Am. Valentina is a pre-med student on a full scholarship at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, and her sister is a Houston-based architect.

"Coming to Pan Am and to this Christian community is where I actually found myself and my faith, and where I knew that I loved God," she said. "I found my blessing here."

Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering help Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color, like Pan Am, prepare young people to become leaders in the Church and the world.

"The generous people who give to Christmas Joy give us scholarships and the opportunity to continue our education in the United States," she said. "I will always be grateful for that. But beyond that, they have also given us a lot of hope. All of the things I always dreamed about, thanks to them, they are making me feel like it can actually happen."

The president of Pan Am, Dr. Gordon A. Govens, states, "Through the sharing of the Christmas Joy Offering — and prayers — every student receives the gift of reaching his or her full potential." In other words, with our gifts to this offering, hope turns into dreams. Dreams turn into reality. And all of a sudden, those stars are within reach.

You may give to the Christmas Joy Offering throughout December in worship at St. Philip or through the online giving portal in MyStPhilip.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

WOMEN'S MONTHLY BOOK CLUB—This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. At our next meeting on **December 9** at 7:00 p.m., which will be a social event, watch your email for details of where we will be meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nina Lambright at nnl@lambrightlaw.com

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY WITH JOHN WURSTER—A look via Zoom at the Bible readings for the coming Sunday continues with Zoom sessions Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Email John for details and to get on the list - john@saintphilip.net.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP—Men of all ages are welcome to participate in this self-led group. The Men's Weekly Fellowship meets in person each Friday in the Dining Room from 11:45 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. We are currently studying the book *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr. Also, while there is an in person meeting, that meeting is carried live via Zoom for those who want to join the meeting but are either out of town or prefer to meet from a distance. Please contact Gary Gardner at ggardne148@aol.com if you would like to be a part of this interesting group.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STUDY GROUP will have its next meeting tonight, Tuesday, **December 7**, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. The study book is *Race in America; Christians respond to the crisis*, edited by David Maxwell and Laura Cheifetz. The book is available from Amazon or from the PC(USA) bookstore. Persons interested in joining the group can send an email to welcome@saintphilip.net and type PSJ Study Group in the subject line.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS is meeting again each Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. in Room 204 of the Education Building. We will resume our study of the last ten Psalms with Dr. Robert Alter's *The Book of Psalms* (2007) and then return to the Kingdom of Israel at I Kings 2.13 with Dr. Alter's *Ancient Israel, The Former Prophets* (2013). Join us for more discoveries in Dr. Alter's translation and commentary on the Biblical Hebrew. All are welcome.

CHURCH & SOCIETY—9:40 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. by Zoom - **December 12** - Current and Future Plans for the Rothko Chapel -The Rothko Chapel, one of the world's most celebrated sacred art contemplative spaces, is undergoing a comprehensive restoration and campus expansion as part of its 50th Anniversary and the Opening Spaces site development plan. This holistic plan includes restoration of the Chapel, enhanced grounds, and new facilities including a visitor welcome house, administration and archives building and program center allowing the Chapel to further its dual mission: to offer a space for community and interfaith encounters, celebration and contemplation, as well as to foster community engagement on critical social justice issues. The Opening Spaces restoration campaign ensures the Rothko Chapel's future for generations to come as it strives to meet the needs of an increasing number of visitors and more fully address the pressing human rights issues of the day. Presented by David Leslie - Executive Director of the Rothko Chapel **December 19** - Family Film Study "*Soul*" - What makes life meaningful." We are human because, like the movie "*Soul*", we ask this question. And that just might make this pandemic film for everyone, because the answer, in part, is to make, watch, and discuss movies like this one, to explore what makes life worthwhile. "*Soul*" explores the nature of humanity and what it means to be yourself. As *Rolling Stone* noted, "There are many elaborate lessons on life and how to live it in "*Soul*", though its best may ironically be its simplest: Look. Listen. Learn. Enjoy." Presented by Kate Burkart - leading film/media studies at St. Philip since 2002. Email Mickey Meyers if you would like to join any of the classes:

churchsociety_stphilip@comcast.net.

LENT CLASSES—The Education Committee will offer a 5 week class during Lent called "Experiencing God," an opportunity to see how the Holy Spirit connects with people in unique and personal ways in their daily life. Two or three church members will informally share one of their spiritual practices for 10-15 minutes. There will be also time for individuals to try these different ways to encounter God. The goal is to encourage and learn from one another on our journeys of faith.

If you feel God might be calling you to share in this way, please contact Betsy Boston at ehbluzerne@aol.com or Omar Rouchon at omar@saintphilip.net.

PW RETREAT

The Presbyterian Women's retreat will be held on **January 21-23, 2022** at Journey Conference and Retreat Center. The program, *Epiphany: Gifts of Wise Women*, will be led by Keatan King and Anne Wilson. There will be plenty of time for fellowship, crafts, music and s'mores. The Center is a short drive on the south side of town, but feels rural and far from the city. Deadline to register is **December 19**, and registration forms will be available at the PW Christmas luncheon on **December 12** and in the Gathering Area before and after the 11 a.m. worship service on **December 19**. You can also register through MyStPhilip under the events tab. The cost is \$170.00 which includes lodging for 2 nights and 5 meals; if you do not wish to spend the night, you can attend Saturday only and receive 3 meals for \$40. Payment can be made via check, through the event registration, or on the St. Philip website, using the "Presbyterian Women" option in the pull-down menu on the contribution page. Scholarships are available. Please contact Jan Meyer (jsmeyer9990@gmail.com), Judith Hiott (judith.hiott@outlook.com) or call the church (713-622-4807) for any questions.

September 2021Stated Session Meeting via Zoom Teleconferencing – September 21, 2021

- Session approved the 2022 Challenge Budget of \$1,731,500.00 that was proposed by the Budget Council.
- Session elected Ada Fuller to serve as Treasurer of St. Philip Presbyterian Church in 2022.

October 2021

- Session authorized the Personnel Committee to act on behalf of the Session to hire a part-time bookkeeper for the church.
- Session authorized the Moderator to form a task force to explore the feasibility of a memorial garden or terrace on the church campus that would allow for the interment of cremated remains.
- Session authorized the Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism of Gopal Athreya to be rescheduled for November 21, 2021 at the 11:00 a.m. worship service with the Rev. Keatan King officiating.
- Session authorized the Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism on Sunday, October 31, 2021, during the 11:00

a.m. worship service, of Zoe Jane Carlin, daughter of Keatan King and Nathan Carlin; with the Rev. Omar Rouchon officiating.

- Session approved the Minutes of September 26, 2021 Congregational Meeting on behalf of the Congregation.
- Session appointed Lad Perenyi to serve as an Assistant Treasurer and to sign checks for the Church drawn on our operating account at Frost Bank beginning in January 2022.
- Session reaffirmed Treasurer Ada Fuller, and Assistant Treasurers Rhonda Sands, Gary Gardner, and David Castle as check signers and reaffirmed Ada Fuller and David Castle as joint signers for transactions at Texas Presbyterian Foundation.
- Session elected John Boone, Cathy Patterson, Judye Hartman, Ruthie Waldrop, and Curt Webb to serve as Ruling Elder Commissioners to the November 20, 2021 stated meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant via Zoom teleconferencing.

John A. Lemen, Clerk of Session



LOWERING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT: COMPOSTING

Why Compost?

According to Project Drawdown, an organization that tracks the impact of the major climate solutions, “Nearly half of the solid waste produced globally is organic or biodegradable. Much of it ends up in landfills; there, it decomposes in the absence of oxygen and produces the greenhouse gas methane, which is up to 34 times more powerful than carbon dioxide over a century. While many landfills have some form of methane management, it is far more effective to divert organic waste to composting.”

For many households composting is a simple change that diverts hundreds of pounds of food from local landfills. Doubling our composting efforts worldwide could avoid methane emissions from landfills equivalent to 2–3 gigatons of carbon dioxide by 2050.

Do It Yourself

Most Houstonians who want to use compost in their gardens have a rotating composting bin that mixes your compost (similar to the one near the garden at St. Philip) or an enclosed worm farm. Both options have compartments that make it easy to add organic waste and remove finished compost. Including yard waste in your compost requires larger solutions such as a three-bin

system where compost is moved into successive bins as breakdown of organic matter progresses. Creating a pile of house and yard waste in the corner of your yard also works—but requires a nonchalant attitude and more work to manage.

Creating your own compost usually does not include composting meat, dairy, cooked food, or processed food because of the difficulty of managing critters in the home environment. Still, most households have enough fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, coffee grounds, and tea bags to make the effort worthwhile.

Composting Services

Recently two composting services, Moonshot and Zero Waste, have been working to expand Houston's composting efforts. They offer a few free organic waste drop-off sites or will pick up your compostable waste for a fee. They make composting possible for citizens who don't want to do their own composting. In addition, the services will compost meat, dairy, processed food, and compostable paper products. St. Philip's Earth Care team plans to explore the idea of using one of these services and converting more of St. Philip's paper and plastic products to the compostable variety.

When you start composting, you become aware of how much of your garbage is diverted away from the landfill. Your kitchen garbage is suddenly dry and can be managed with one or two paper grocery sacks every week. Meat and dairy waste can be frozen in a paper container until garbage day and tossed in the sack or given to a composting service each week. If you don't already compost, try a solution that works for you.

Peacemaking and Social Justice Committee—Earth Care Team

IN OUR PRAYERS

Congratulations to Edward Atkinson on his marriage to Ana Cristina Alonso Soria in San Luis Potosi on December 4th.

St. Philipians and their families—Jo Helland; Beth Flowers; Lee Larkin; Janet Davis; Susan Huffman; Joyce Fugit; Dorothy Murphey; Bill Slick; Don Padgett; Steve Adger; Judith Crane; Shirley Coffman; Ellen MacDonald; Arlette Keene; CJ Miller; Mezgebe Gebray; James Graham McGall - cousin of Mickey McGall Meyers; Dale McAllen—brother of Orlean Anderson; Alma Fonseca—mother of Angelina Fonseca; Bill Polk—brother-in-law of Sharon Webb; Darryl Cazes—brother of Pam Taylor; Ann Perkins Cloud—cousin of Stephen Paine; Douglas Everhart—brother of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Gretchen Everhart—niece of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Carol Paine Kendrick—sister of Stephen Paine; John Anderson—brother of Tom Anderson; Mac & Beverly Wilson—parents of Butch Wilson; Vera Moore—mother of Chuck Johnson; Dottie Laas and family—cousin of Sam Fisher; Shirley Boggus—grandmother of Omi Ford; Dona Rowe—mother of William Rowe; and Elizabeth Carlton Lithio—granddaughter of Jeanie Flowers.

Homebound—Walter Baker; John Bobbitt; Paulie Carlson; Kitty Curry; George Helland; Jean Nelson; Joyce Randolph; George and Lorraine Scott; Marion Takehara; and Jody Tomforde.

Friends of St. Philipians—Auden McCarty—friend of Mary McGuire; Ted & Susan Hirtz—friends of Jacqueline and Bill Taylor; Paul English; Matt Scalapino and Laura Chilton—friends of Stephen Paine; Shirley Stubblefield—friend of Barbara Runge; Paul Ratliff—friend of Jo Helland; Lavon Thomas—friend of Curt and Sharon Webb; Clayton Amacker—friend of Peg Palisin and Gary Gardner; and Walter "Buddy" Hammann III—friend of Robin and Gary Willis.

We also pray for health care workers, first responders, and caregivers; for those who are sick; and for those who watch and wait.

If you have a pastoral care need or a prayer request you would like to share, please email deacons@saintphilip.net.

Pledge payments, communion gifts and other gifts to support the Church can be made anytime through our website (<http://saintphilip.net/>), text "SPPC" to 73256 and follow the prompts, or sent to the Church Office at 4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056. Pledge cards are being accepted in the Church Office or you can make your pledge in MyStPhilip.

Next edition: December 21; Deadline December 16—3:00 p.m.

Stay connected with regular emails from the pastors until then.

If you have any comments or suggestions for the Philip-Eye, please send them to:
philipeye@saintphilip.net or call 713-622-4807 and ask for Lorrie.



4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056

Phone: 713.622.4807 Fax: 713.622.5405 www.saintphilip.net