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PHILIP-EYE

THE ABCS OF LGBTQIA+

by Lorrie Castle

St. Philip's Peacemaking and Social Justice Committee is pleased to sponsor this series of articles on matters of gender and sexual identity. St. Philip is a member of both the [Covenant Network of Presbyterians](#) and [More Light Presbyterians](#), organizations that work for the full inclusion of persons of all gender and sexual identities in the church and in society.

I recently had a conversation with my nieces about human relationships, and I noticed that they used a variety of words, some of which I was familiar with and some not: homosexual, queer, bisexual, asexual, and pansexual. I was aware that "LGBT" had added more letters, to become LGBTQIA+, and that I did not know what the new letters meant. Then the Presbytery of New Covenant offered a webinar with the Rev. Brian Ellison, executive director of Covenant Network of Presbyterians, on thinking about gender identity and sexual orientation as church leaders. You might say, "Lorrie, you're not a church leader, so why would you participate?" but in my role "behind the curtain," a number of questions come through me to pass along to the pastors. This webinar sounded like it would define everything my nieces introduced me to and expand on what everything in LGBTQIA+ means.

The outcome was a brief guide to orientation and identity, how we got here as Presbyterians, the present reality, the work of church leaders today, and keys for providing a safe and welcoming space. One of the key messages I got out of it was that it was our responsibility to educate ourselves, not the LGBTQIA+ community's responsibility, so I approached the Peacemaking and Social Justice committee about the idea of educating our members through a series of articles in the newsletter. We will be addressing each of these topics as the Rev. Ellison did and give you the opportunity to send questions and share your experiences with us.

Let's begin with a brief guide to sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation is a spectrum that describes to whom a person is sexually, emotionally, and romantically attracted. It is the result of a variety of factors, and not a matter of choice by the individual (so not sexual "preference"). These are self-identifying terms that describe feelings and emotions, not behavior.

Heterosexual: a person attracted to people of the opposite sex ("straight")

Lesbian: a female-identified person who is attracted to women (We'll talk next time about what it means to be female- or male-identified.)

Gay: a male-identified person who is attracted to men ("Gay" is also used generically for anyone attracted to people of the same gender.)

Bisexual: a person who is attracted to people of their gender or other genders

Asexual: a person who experiences a lack of sexual attraction

Pansexual: a person who is attracted to people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions

And that "+"? It's not just a mathematical symbol anymore, but a way of symbolizing everything on the gender and sexuality spectrum that letters and words can't describe.

In our next article we will guide you through gender identity (and get to the "I" and the "P" in LGBTQIA+).

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HARRY, MEGHAN, OPRAH – AND BABY ARCHIE’S COMPLEXION

Admit it, St. Philippians, you either watched Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s recent Oprah interview, or you were curious about it. At any rate, it would have been difficult to escape the subsequent headlines, because there were some surprisingly serious issues raised.

One example is Harry and Meghan’s description of painful discussions within the Royal Family before their son was born, about the color of his skin. Their story shows how Black people’s skin color is always under scrutiny, a form of discrimination known as colorism. Though novelist Alice Walker first coined the term in 1983, the practice goes back at least as far as enslaved light-skinned persons generally being assigned to less physically demanding roles on American plantations. (Some considered light-skinned people superior, and deserving of more refined work, because they were “closer” to whiteness.) After emancipation, lighter-skinned people invented absurd laws to exclude darker-skinned people from their clubs and political organizations, which Ibram X. Kendi describes in his book *How to Be an Antiracist*: “Light people reproduced the paper-bag test, pencil test, door test, and comb test to bar Dark people from their churches, businesses, parties, organizations, schools, and historically Black colleges and universities.” In case you are not familiar with these “tests,” here is how they work:

Paper bag test: Is your skin tone as light as or lighter than the shade of a brown paper bag?

Door test: Is your skin tone darker than the certain shade of brown that a club or a church would paint their doors?

The pencil test and comb test were a way of evaluating hair texture:

Pencil test: How easily does a pencil pushed through your hair come out?

Comb test: If a preacher ran a comb through your hair and it did not easily pass through (your hair was not “straight-typed”), you could not become a member of that church.

In our time, clear disparities remain between light- and dark-skinned Black people in health, education, employment, and earning potential. Latinx Americans and Native Americans suffer similar inequities. Dark-skinned Black youth get punished more harshly in school and the justice system than light-skinned people do.

Colorism and racism go hand in hand. One viral tweet following Meghan and Harry’s interview describes this: “Colourism is what allowed Meghan to marry into the Royal Family and anti-black racism is what forced her out of it.”

We must be committed to ending not just racism, but colorism, with our words, thoughts, and actions. Call out colorism when you see it. Hold people, brands, and corporations accountable.

Peacemaking & Social Justice Committee

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY WITH THE PURCHASE OF EQUAL EXCHANGE PRODUCTS!

We have Medjool dates and dried mango back on the order list.

It’s time for another pre-order, drive-thru delivery sale. You can order all of your Equal Exchange favorites. You may order freely from St. Philip [website](#) or [MyStPhilip](#) until **April 2** at noon. You may also mail in your order by printing the order form and include with your check by **April 2**. The drive-thru pick-up at the church will be held concurrently with our Earth Day celebration from 10:00 to noon on April 17 or 24; this will be announced soon.

We will have pillow packs of our Fellowship blends. The 2.5 oz pillow pack fills a 2-liter pump dispenser (approximately 10 cups). The larger pillow packs make 25-30 cups.

Organic French Roast - 2.5 oz. - \$1

Organic Peruvian Decaf - 2.5 oz. - \$1

Organic French Roast - 8 oz. - \$4

Organic Peruvian Decaf - 7 oz. - \$4

These packs were purchased for fellowship use last March, and with NO fellowship, no coffee has been brewed at SPPC!

Equal Exchange is a Small Producers organization that purchases coffee, tea, cocoa beans and other crops from forty cooperatives, owned and run by the farmers themselves, in twenty countries. Because farmers are paid above market prices for their crops, they are able to make investments in community projects, educational programs, and technical trainings. These cooperative organizations also help keep rural communities healthy and strong, and keep local cultures vibrant.

Equal Exchange is also committed to supporting sustainable farming methods that help green the earth through reforestation, natural resource conservation and organic practices. There are many practices commonly used by people working in sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems. Growers may use methods to promote soil health, minimize water use, and lower pollution levels on the farm.



PHOTO: Members of coffee farming families from PRODECOOP in Nicaragua.


THANK YOU
for supporting farming
families around the world.
.....
equalexchange.coop

GIVE BLOOD.ORG

St. Philip Presbyterian - Houston

Wednesday, March 17
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Church Fellowship Hall

EMERGENCY BLOOD NEED!
3000+ Units of Blood Lost
Due to the Texas Winter
Storm!!

**FREE COVID-19 ANTIBODY TEST
&
FREE Beach Towel with donation!**

Contact: Lorrie Castle
(713) 622-4807
sponsor code: 0496



Aiden, blood recipient



EAT. DRINK. BRING I.D.



**THE BEST WAY
TO FIND A
BLOOD DRIVE
AND SCHEDULE
YOUR
DONATION!**



Duerr Lecture Series

This year's lecture series was presented as a live webinar, in one lecture on Sunday, February 21, with the speaker, Dr. Samuel L. Adams, Mary Jane and John F. McNair Chair in Biblical Studies Union Presbyterian

Seminary, "Effective Speech in the Bible and in Our Age of Polarization". Dr. Adams also preached for the 11:00 Worship Service on that morning by video. The pastoral and music staff of St. Philip combined to make the pre-recorded service beautiful and memorable. This was a true gift from the staff.

The lecture was recorded and may be accessed at:

http://www.saintphilip.net/Duerr_LectureSeries.html,

The service is found at:

<http://www.saintphilip.net/Sermons.html>

The live webinar was free but registration was required in order to have an accurate count of attendees. The registration was handled by Eventbrite, but responded to in person. Registrations came in from all over the country and numbered 150.

Encouraged by this response, the DLS Advisory Board will be working out a way to present next year's lecture, the 25th annual series, both in person and through a virtual format.

Our speaker for **February 20-22, 2022**, is Rev. Dr. Christopher Edmonston, pastor of White Memorial Church in Raleigh, NC. The series will return to a three day lecture format with the speaker on campus for preaching and lecturing, and there will be a celebration of our 25 years. Put the date on your calendar now; you don't want to miss it.



In order to continue our longstanding support of the Brookwood Community, we have kept in place our customary order for Easter lilies. They will be delivered to St. Philip to adorn our Sanctuary for our online Easter service.

We are working on ways to make lilies safely available for pick-up and enjoyment the following week.

We invite you to contribute to our flower fund and dedicate a lily to someone this Easter. Donations may be made for any amount either through our website—saintphilip.net, choosing the Flowers/Holiday fund option from the menu; or by sending a check to the Church Office. If donating online where the memo line is limited in the number of characters, please e-mail Lorrie Castle (lorrie@saintphilip.net) with the details of your dedication, including your name and the person(s) being honored and/or remembered. Similar information should be included with mailed checks. Mailed dedications should arrive by **March 29**. Thanks for your help in continuing this holiday tradition!

The list of donors and memorials/honors will appear in the online bulletin and the Philip-Eye following Easter.



Our February communion offering supported the Meals on Wheels Program of Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston, a long-time mission partner of St. Philip. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to give them

\$1,155. This program provides home-delivered meals to approximately 4,900 homebound seniors and disabled adults in Houston as well as surrounding counties in our metro area. The nutritional support provided by Meals on Wheels helps people stay independent and in their own homes, something that has been especially important in this pandemic year. You can find more information on the Meals on Wheels Program at <https://www.imgh.org/meals-wheels-greater-houston/>.

APRIL COMMUNION OFFERING

Our communion offering recipient this month is PCUSA **One Great Hour of Sharing**. You can give securely to the March Communion Offering through saintphilip.net or send a check to the church office, with "Communion Offering" in the memo line.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for justice, resilience, and sustainability.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



APRIL

Birthdays

Sylvia Lawson	1
Dillon Junkin	2
Harold Dement	3
Russell Bahruth	4
Judy Barrish	4
Sprague Boone	4
Jim McKelvey	4
Paul Barrios	4
Janet Macheledt	5
Arlo Weltge	6
Richard Lee	7
Gary Whitney	8
Steve Carmichael	9
Ryan Maguire	10
Bill Burns	10
Stephen Paine	11
Ben Dees	11
Jan Ostendorf	11
Ginger McFarland	11
Lucy Vestal	13
Caroline Vestal	13
Rhonda Sands	13
Bob Burns	14
Pam Taylor	15
Bob Skaggs	17
Ian Pearce	17
Mary Murphy	18
Christy Rubenstein	18
Ethan Lambright	18
Douglas Duerr	19
Jack Lippincott	19
Lincoln Vahora	19
Dick Nunn	19
Greg Han	21
Penny Larkin	22
Kay Cash	23
Jane Ikpeme	23
Nancy Dring	24
Patrick Conner	24
Michelle Aldrich	24
Betsy Boston	24
Mary Sinderson	25
Jim Larkin	25
Tom Sands	25
David Winship	26
Gabriel Han	27
Kris Kelly	28
Neely Atkinson	29
Lee Ardell	29
Dustin Rosen	29
Vada Woodall	30

STORIES BORN FROM TRAUMA: EXPLORING THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

One of the most significant and formative voices in my faith journey is Dr. Johanna W.H. van Wijk-Bos who taught Old Testament at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary for 40 years. Johanna transformed the way I view the Hebrew Bible, revealing the theological beauty of texts that previously seemed inaccessible to me.

On Wednesday evenings through **March 31** at 7-8 p.m., we are excited to welcome Johanna among the St. Philip community to lead us through major themes from the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings, opening texts we may know less about through her artful, relevant teaching. During the season of Lent, we make a concerted effort to engage in spiritual disciplines to deepen and mature our faith. Taking a deeper dive into the historical books of the Bible is one such faithful Lenten practice.

Read more about the series below, and email me at keatan@saintphilip.net to receive the Zoom link.

Grace and peace,
Keatan



Based on Johanna's three part book series, ***A People and A Land***, each session will explore one of two texts in detail to help us become more deeply engaged with the material.

March 17

The End of the Beginning: Joshua and Judges

Did you ever wonder why there are books like Joshua and Judges in the Bible? What do we do with the wars of conquest and

all the violence? Why is God so often angry? Were the Israelites really commanded to wipe out an entire population? There are texts in the Bible that feel offensive and unchristian to us. Let's find out if we can come closer and learn something from these books, something about the ancient community and about ourselves and our life with God.

March 24

The Road to Kingship: 1 & 2 Samuel

All of the books in the Bible about Israel's history are also called the Former Prophets. What does it mean that these books are prophetic? Was David a good king or a bad one? Was kingship good for Israel? What do these books tell us about good and bad government? If you would like to hear more about the foundational stories in our Bible, come and talk with me about some of the stories in Samuel and the road to kingship of the people of the Bible.

March 31

The Land and its Kings: 1 & 2 Kings

Once upon a time there was an old king who was called David and his wise son Solomon who inherited the throne. After Israel got its wish and God gave them a king, the institution continued and we will see how it went in this sequel. Was Solomon really wise and did he set a good example? Why did it all come to such a bad end? Could God not have saved the people from exile? Let's see if we can find teaching and guidance for our lives in these old stories about a kingdom far from us in time and space.

THESE DAYS

The April/May/ June edition of These Days has arrived. If you would like to pick up a copy or have one mailed to you. Please contact Lorrie Castle lorrie@saintphilip.net or call 713-622-4807.

WHO'S ZOOMING WHOM?

A few of the groups at St. Philip continue to meet during this time via Zoom and other video conference services—the session has had meetings, book club, church committees and Church and Society. We even have Sunday Coffee Hour. If you would like to participate in future meetings, please contact the appropriate group's leader.

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR—Gather with fellow St. Philipians to talk about the sermons, hear about their week and what helped them get through the week. The Coffee Hour begins after the closing voluntary. Email Lorrie Castle at lorrie@saintphilip.net to be added to the list.

WOMEN'S MONTHLY BOOK CLUB—This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. Our next meeting is **April 8** at 7 p.m. when we will be discussing *Call Your Daughter Home* by Deb Spera. Contact Sarah O'Dell for Zoom link – sarah.odell6@gmail.com.

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY WITH JOHN WURSTER—A look at the Bible readings for the coming Sunday meets on Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. or 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 each Friday via Zoom at noon. Please contact Gary Gardner at ggardne148@aol.com if you would like to join or know the current material they are discussing.

CHURCH & SOCIETY—9:30 a.m. via Zoom - March 21 - Main Street Ministries - A non-profit organization that serves under-resourced neighbors to remove barriers and to create a path to a sustainable life and community with the belief that 1) people in poverty are problem solvers with valuable assets and that 2) relationships are key to building and transferring resources. - a recipient of the Central Mission Endowment Council grant - Presented by Barbara Allen - Executive Director of Main Street Ministries - **March 28** - Palm Sunday - Mary's Child - Matthew Dirst, St. Philip organist, leads us in a study of the reaction of Mary to the events of Holy Week with Marian laments, "Stabat Mater", in visual art, literature, and music. Dr. Matthew Dirst is a Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music at University of Houston and the Artistic Director of Are Lyrica, Houston. Email Mickey Meyers if you would like to join any of the classes: mmcgm63@gmail.com.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLE MEETINGS

All women of the church are invited to join any of the meetings of Presbyterian Women. The meetings are virtual, and a Zoom link is sent to all P.W. members of each circle. If you are not a member of a circle, you are welcome to participate, so please email Lorrie to request the link: welcome@saintphilip.net.

Monday Morning Saints

Second Monday of each month—10:00 a.m.

Sunday Circle

3rd Sunday of each month—12:30 p.m.

Thursday Evening Circle

1st Thursday of each month—7:00 p.m.

WORSHIP IN PERSON

As we continue to assess and monitor coronavirus data and the recommendations of local health leaders and then filter that information through our particular context at St. Philip, we have decided to offer an outdoor worship service on Sunday as described below and in-person daily prayer service. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. The Going Forward task force will continue to review on a weekly basis.

DAILY PRAYER SERVICE

We invite a limited number of people to attend in-person our 11:00 a.m. daily prayer service (Monday-Saturday). Currently, we have a limit of five persons per day, beginning with Monday's service. Contact Lorrie to sign up.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

We will offer outdoor worship opportunities on the church campus on a week-to-week basis. Worship services will begin at 9:00 am. Worshipers are asked to bring their own chairs or blankets. We will also have chairs available at the church for those who need them. Worshipers will be spaced on the lawn at appropriate distances. The lawn service will last about thirty minutes. Registration is required and will open the Monday before the service; link can be found in pastoral email updates or through MyStPhilip. If the event has reached capacity, the event sign-up closes.

Link for **March 21**—[click here](#).

If you have trouble with the registration or are not online, please call/text Lorrie Castle (832-262-1244). We will also have the usual 11:00 service that day, which will continue to be on-line only.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Sarah O'Dell and family upon the death of her father Jimmy Regan on March 4.

Anne Marie Benard and family upon the death of her father Kenneth Allan Henick on January 5.

St. Philipians and their families—Travis Calhoun; Kay Cash; Sondra Sullivan; Mary Margaret Hansen; Doris Cantrell; Ellen MacDonald; Arlette Keene; CJ Miller; Jan Ostendorf; Marion Takehara; Emily Estill; Mezgebe Gebray; Ann Perkins Cloud—cousin of Stephen Paine; Dixie Hahn—sister of Mary Sinderson; Brad Davis—nephew of Sam Fisher; Douglas Everhart—brother of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Carol Paine Kendrick—sister of Stephen Paine; Betty Grant—sister-in-law of Eleanor Grant; John Anderson—brother of Tom Anderson; Janet Fisher—sister-in-law of Dan Cleveland; Bessie Johnson—mother of Pat Lindsay; Mac & Beverly Wilson—parents of Butch Wilson; Vera Moore—mother of Chuck Johnson; Kelsey Higgs Gallegos & family—daughter of Nancy Higgs; Dottie Laas and family—cousin of Sam Fisher; Alice Barron—sister-in-law to Beth Atkinson; Shirley Boggus—grandmother of Omi Ford; Jimmy Reagan—father of Sarah O'Dell; Dona Rowe—mother of William Rowe; and Elizabeth Carlton Lithio—granddaughter of Jeanie Flowers.

Homebound—Sue Baier; Walter Baker; Joe Anne Berwick; John Bobbitt; Paulie Carlson; Kitty Curry; George Helland; Jean Nelson; Alice Pennington; Joyce Randolph; Mary Sinderson; Jody Tomforde; and Penny Vieau.

Friends of St. Philipians—Judith Tomaino—friend of Curt and Sharon Webb; Jack Burrell—friend of Stephen Paine; Shirley Stubblefield—friend of Barbara Runge; Paul Ratliff—friend of Jo Helland; Bill McDonald and Jackson Tavel—friends of Curt and Sharon Webb; David Shebay—friend of Greg Han; Clayton Amacker—friends 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 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/>) or sent to the Church Office at 4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056.

The Going Forward task force will continue to review on a regular basis the coronavirus data and the recommendations of local health leaders, filtering that information through our particular context at St. Philip.

Next edition: April 6; Deadline April 1—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.



MORE LIGHT
 PRESBYTERIANS



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