

PHILIP-EYE

THE NEWSLETTER of Saint Philip Presbyterian Church
Volume 53, Number 24

Houston, Texas
30 November 2009

Rev. Dr. William C. Poe
Pastor

Rev. Kristy Forbes Vits
Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Samuel Lanham III
Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Dr. Jack Boelens
Parish Associate

Rev. Gregory Crisp Han
Parish Associate

Rev. Helen Bailey
Parish Associate

Dr. Matthew Dirst
Organist

Dr. Justin Smith
Interim Director of Music
Margaret Dement
Director of Youth Bells

Judy Gunn
Director, Children's Ministries

Cindy Pope
Interim Director of Youth
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Celebrating Advent at St. Philip

December 6, 2009

2nd Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;

Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe, preaching

Special music celebrating the musical talents of our Children and Youth!
Featuring the Children's Choir singing "Long Time Ago" and the Youth Choir
offering a jazzy version of "Carol of the Bells." Plus Bell Canto rings with youth
soloists on a beautiful version of "O Come, O Come Emanuel," as well as a
spectacular antiphonal piece for two brass choirs by Giovanni Gabrieli.

December 13, 2009

3rd Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6

Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

The Rev. Kristy Forbes Vits, preaching

Special music celebrating the ancient dialogue between popular Christmas carols
and "classical" music, featuring two masterpieces inspired by carols.
Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and Charpentier's *Midnight Mass
for Christmas*, though written three hundred years apart, weave famous carols from
their country's Christmas traditions into their compositions.
With full string orchestra, which will also present
Vaughn Williams' magical and mystical *Fantasia on Greensleeves*.

December 20, 2009

4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 80:107

Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe, preaching

Special music celebrating Mary, Christ's first disciple.
The Choir will sing Antonio Vivaldi's *Magnificat* in its entirety.
The Magnificat text, sometimes called the Song of Mary, is given an irresistible,
Italianate flair, full of delightful choruses and arias and accompanied by orchestra.
In addition, Bell Canto will present a stunning, virtuosic version of
"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus."
Christmas Joy Offering received

December 24, 2009

Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Worship Services

4:00 pm

A service especially for children and their families

7:30 pm

Service of Candle Light and Communion

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe, preaching

Special offering for Ministers Discretionary Fund received

Congregational Concerns:

Hospitalized: **Herman Frietsch, Meredith Gartner** and **Mason Jackson**, Betty Anne and Bill Poe's nephew, all at St. Luke's; former member **Harold Flynn** on life support at Memorial City.

Recuperating: **Mike Alexander, Patrick Ball**

At home: **Grayson Anderson, Bill Boren, Penny Vieau**

Check These Announcements

The Men's Fellowship offers to all men of the church a more intimate, informal opportunity for study, fellowship and service. We meet each Friday at noon for a BYO lunch followed with a presentation and discussion. Currently we are reading *The Life of Jesus for Today*, by Ronald J. Allen. Get your copy from Dan Flowers and join us !!

Share the spirit of Christmas: For those who adopted a family, your gifts are due at the church on December 6th; gifts will be delivered on December 12 and 13. Bring items to be distributed to those less fortunate to the boxes near the library: December 6—canned food; December 13—new socks for children and adults; December 20—new underwear for children and adults.

PrimeTimers Christmas Festivities: December 10, 11:00 am to 1:30 pm luncheon at the Hallmark. Note that due to extensive construction, parking at the Hallmark is limited and the PrimeTimers will be provided transportation from the St. Philip parking lot in the Hallmark van beginning at 11:00 am. And on **December 17**, plans are to see Disney's 3D "A Christmas Carol" and lunch at Café Adobe. Sign up for both events in the church office.

Volunteer at CCSC's Jingle Bell Express:

Location: Bellaire United Methodist Church; 4417 Bellaire (at Newcastle)

Sort & Set Up: Tuesday-Thursday, December 8-10, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Organize toys, books and food packages!

Distribution: Friday-Saturday, December 11-12, 7:45 am to 1:00 pm. Help parents "shop" for their children! For more information contact 713-961-3993 or seasonal@ccschouston.com

The Philip-Eye will be published on December 14, 2009 and January 4 and 18, 2010. Please submit information and articles in a timely manner. 10:00 am on the day of publication is the deadline. E-mail to philip-eye@saintphilip.net or leave in the PE box in the mail room.

From Your DCM:

Advent, which begins four Sundays before Christmas, is the season of the church year that emphasizes the anticipation of Christ's first coming to earth. Christ's coming as the Messiah was first prophesied in the sixth century B.C. when the Jews were captive in Babylon. For centuries, faithful Hebrews looked for their Messiah with great longing and expectation, echoing the prayer that He would "ransom captive Israel."

We will be singing *O Come O, Come Emmanuel* each Sunday during the Advent season as we light the candles of the Advent wreath. This tradition has not always been a part of my Christian upbringing. It is a meaningful ritual that is continued in Church School with the children, in worship, and in homes. Some families daily light the appropriate number of candles during the evening meal. This can be an opportunity for family devotionals. St. Philip is providing Advent devotional pamphlets that are available in the gathering area. As we journey through the hustle and bustle of Christmas, a time of Bible study and remembrance of the birth of the Baby can be a time of rest and renewal.

Duerr Lecture Series

Speaker for the 13th annual Duerr Lecture Series, February 21, 22, and 23, 2010, will be Rev. Dr. George W. Stroup, J. B. Green Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. His lectures, "**The Gods Around and Within Us: Our Struggle with Idolatry**" will address questions about the meaning of idolatry, what form it may take in contemporary life and what resources there are in Christian faith that can help us in our struggle to "unmask idolatries in Church and culture" (*A Brief Statement of Faith*).

Dr. Stroup was born in Tulsa, OK, and received degrees at Rice University, Yale Divinity School and Vanderbilt University. He is an ordained minister and is a member of Cherokee Presbytery. Stroup has many publications, most recently are *Before God*, (Eerdmans, 2004) and *John Calvin* (Abdingdon, 2009). He has served on The Committee to Write a Brief Statement of Faith and is currently on the committee considering the addition of the Belhar Confession to the Book of Confessions.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the lectures to hear this engaging speaker help us understand the Bible's deep concern about idolatry and how it relates to our lives today. Stroup will preach at the Sunday morning worship services and present lectures each evening at 7:00.

All lectures are free and open to everyone. Child care is available by calling the church office.

Welcome New Members...

Logan Vits joined St. Philip on September 6, 2009 by reaffirmation of faith. He has a special connection with St. Philip in that his wife, Kristy, is serving as Interim Associate Pastor. Logan and Kristy are parents of four-year-old Nathan who can be seen participating in Time for the Children during Sunday morning worship services.

Logan was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and grew up in the Webster Groves Presbyterian Church. He is a lifelong Presbyterian and was most recently a member of St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Ballwin, Missouri, where Kristy served as Associate Pastor. Logan graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a degree in psychology. He and Kristy met at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1996 where he earned an M.A. in Theology. Since 1998, Logan has worked in the construction industry. He focuses on commercial construction in his role as architectural consultant for Assa Abloy Door Security Solutions.

Logan loves to read about science and religion, and he also loves to build things. He is musical--plays the drums, piano and guitar. His favorite activity in his spare time is playing with Nathan--they love to create things with legos!

If you haven't already done so, let Logan know how pleased we are to have him and his family in our midst.

Diana and Bill Herzog have been attending the early service and joined St. Philip on November 15th, transferring their memberships from NorKirk Presbyterian in Carrollton, TX. Bill is an ordained Presbyterian elder and has been involved in the areas of evangelism and belonging. Bill is a regional sales consultant for a professional services and IT firm, TriNet. A CPA, he provides services to corporate clients.

The Herzogs have been married for 28 great years. Bill says Diana is a saint for putting up with him for that long and thanks God for her every day. They have three sons: Billy is 22 years old, Travis, 19 and Tyler, 18. Bill notes that Diana has done the most important work in their family by raising their children to be responsible, God-fearing citizens and keeping him out of trouble. He adds that she has done a great job!

Bill and Diana plan to take an active part in the life of St. Philip. We are so happy to have them in our community and look forward to serving with them.

Help Decorate the Chancel

Your \$10 donation will help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas with greens and poinsettias in memory/honor of someone you choose. Forms that you may fill out are available in the Narthex and the church office. The list of those memorialized/honored will be included with the December 20 bulletin.

December Hunger Offering

The recipient for our December 6 hunger offering is Juan Marcos Presbyterian Church, a mission church of the Presbytery of New Covenant, charged with serving a low-income, largely Hispanic neighborhood on the near north side of downtown Houston. The outreach activities of Juan Marcos have traditionally included a Day Care Center for children, a Senior Nutrition Program serving noon meals to senior citizens in the neighborhood, a Thrift Shop, an emergency Pantry, and a Christmas program that provides new shoes and gifts for children and seniors.

For the members of St. Philip, long-standing ties to Juan Marcos have made it an informal "sister" church, deeply admired for its efficient and caring use of our benevolence dollars. Please be generous with your donations for this church's ministry.

Organ Volunteer Sign-up

Beginning on Sunday, December 6, you will have the opportunity to sign up to be a helper on January 3 when the new pipe organ is delivered after the 11:00 service. There will be a table in the gathering area each Sunday in December and members of the organ committee will be there to answer your questions and put you down on the list. A light lunch will be available on the 3rd free of charge for all who volunteer to help. If you are unable to be a helper we hope you will want to stay and cheer on all those who are working.

Those people who were able to attend the reception in Tacoma on November 15 - David and Joyce Fox, Elizabeth Duerr and Matthew Dirst - had a wonderful time. We can report that the organ is beautiful, impressive, and has a wonderful sound. Matthew pronounced it a dream to play. We were able to climb up to the top on the inside of the organ and see the hundreds of pipes that are not visible from the front... and not even all of the pipes were installed at that time. Hearing the organ played when one is inside of it is really a visceral, emotional experience (fortunately it was not played too loudly). The crew in Tacoma is now busy dismantling the organ and getting it ready for transport to Houston.

Some hosts are still needed to house the five men who are coming for the installation. It would be especially nice if someone has a garage or small apartment where one or two men could stay for the entire month and where there would be some small cooking facilities... this would be ideal. We have met these men and can report that they are all very nice! You can see pictures of some of them at the sign up table in the gathering area.

If you have questions, please contact a member of the organ committee: Robin Angly, Al Atkinson, Matthew Dirst, Elizabeth Duerr, Susan Estill, Jeanie Flowers, David Fox, Gene McKelvey, Justin Smith and Miles Smith.

December 27 Film Study: *Up*

9:30 in Room 201

From Pixar's Academy Award-nominated team of director Pete Docter (*Monsters, Inc.*) and co-director Bob Peterson comes *Up*, a comedic adventure that took off (and lifted spirits!) this past summer.

Carl Fredrickson, a grouchy retired balloon salesman, sets off to the lost world of his childhood dreams...little realizing that exuberant eight-year-old Wilderness Explorer Russell is along for the ride. Together they journey through danger and surprises as Carl discovers it's the people you're with who make the adventure worthwhile.

Visually rich and warmly emotional yet filled with buoyant good humor, *Up* is a story of inspiration found, promises kept, and dreams made real.

Watch the *Philip-Eye* and the Sunday bulletin for some questions to consider that will help guide you in viewing this film, then visit your preferred video rental source, watch the film with your full attention within a week of our study, and come prepared to share your thoughts. *Up* is rated PG for some peril and action (running time: 96 minutes).

Youth News

Café SPY Joined By Youth Choir

Have you checked out Café SPY and Youth Choir? Youth Choir meets from 9:15 to 9:45 a.m. in the choir room. Café SPY meets in the youth room from 9:45 to 10:30 a.m. Cafe SPY features hot chocolate, great coffees, yummy goodies and stimulating discussion on the theme "Faith Questions".

SPY Bistro

December 6: Mall Madness like you've never seen it before. A different shopping experience plus dinner at the Rain Forest Cafe. Meet Cindy at the Galleria in front of the fountain, lower level, at 4:00 p.m. Pick up at 6:30 p.m.

December 13: Packing food for Kids Against Hunger and some great games.

For more on youth meetings and activities contact Cindy Pope at Cindy@saintphilip.net.

Church School Classes for All Ages

Sunday Mornings 9:30 am

Classes for Children

Nursery through two year olds

Room 7-8.

Godly Play class for ages 3-4

Room 6.

Elementary Rotation classes K-5th grades

Room 105.

Youth Classes

Junior High and Senior High

Café SPY.

Rooms 205/206 in the Education Building.

Adult Classes

The SPa (St. Philip Adults)

Room 200 in the Education Building

Join us for a casual, discussion format class with rotating leadership and involvement by all.

December 6: Advent Study, Part I

December 13: Advent Study, Part II

December 20: Advent Study, Part III

Bible Study

Room 204 in the Education Building

A study of the book of Exodus

Led by Dr. Nancy Cook and Al Waldrop

Church and Society

Room 201 in the Education Building

"Living the Questions 3.0"

Led by The Rev. Dr. Bill Poe

December 6

Compassion: The Heart of Jesus' Ministry

December 13

Creative Transformation

December 20

Embracing Mystery

Holiday Film Study

December 27

Room 201

Up led by Kate Burkart

Dated Material

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