

PHILIP-EYE

THE NEWSLETTER of Saint Philip Presbyterian Church
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60 *growing in
God's grace..*
years

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
Ministries

Karen St. Laurent
Office Manager
Nancy Craig
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Wilbert Parada
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Visit our website @
www.saintphilip.net

Duerr Lecture Series 2010 February 21, 22, and 23

St. Philip Turns 60!

St. Philip Presbyterian Church was chartered September 10, 1950. Much about our roots will appear in these pages over this coming six months.

Mark your calendars now the Kick-Off Dinner on March 7, 2010. You'll want to be a part of this one of many celebrations of our 60th birthday!

Lectionary Readings

February 7, 2010
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138
1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

February 14, 2010
Transfiguration of the Lord
Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2;
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

February 17, 2010
Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17;
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21, 2010
1st Sunday in Lent
Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

February 28, 2010
2nd Sunday in Lent
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35

"The Gods Around Us and Within Us: Our Struggle with Idolatry"

George W. Stroup, speaker for the thirteenth annual Duerr Lecture Series, February 21, 22 and 23, is the J. B. Green Professor of Theology, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. Dr. Stroup says that the Bible is deeply concerned about idolatry. It is the first sin. The first two commandments of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments address idolatry (Exodus 20:2-6). Israel sins in the Wilderness when it constructs and worships a golden calf (Exodus 32). Jesus of Nazareth calls people to the Kingdom of God and away from the temptation of the kingdoms of this earth (Matthew 4:1-11). Stroup asks, was idolatry a problem only for ancient Israel and Jesus? followers in the first century? Even though we have no golden calves in our homes or in our sanctuaries, is idolatry no less a problem for twenty-first century Christians? Just what is idolatry and what forms does it assume in contemporary life? Are there resources in Christian faith that can assist us as we struggle, in the words of *A Brief Statement of Faith*, to "unmask idolatries in Church and culture?" The lectures include What Makes an Idol an Idol?, The Idols Round About Us, and Unmasking the Idols of Church and Culture. Stroup's sermon on Sunday morning is titled No Idol Story, scripture readings Luke 24:1-12 and Deuteronomy 6:10-15.

George Stroup was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A lifelong Presbyterian, he received the B.A. degree in History at Rice University, the B.D. and S.T.M. at Yale University Divinity School, and the M.A. and Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University. He was ordained in 1973 in Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery and is now a member of Cherokee Presbytery. Stroup has served on the faculties of the University of the South, Princeton Theological Seminary and

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Congregational Concerns:

Hospitalized/Healthcare: **Bill Boren** at Methodist

Recuperating: **Don Barker, Marty Coyle, George Scott**

At home: **Meredith Gartner, Penny Vieau**

The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of former St. Philip Interim Pastor, **Jack Bennett**, on his death on January 21 in New Braunfels; and to **Beth Atkinson and family** on the death of her father on January 22.

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 *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White*, by Adam Hamilton. Get your copy from Dan Flowers and join us!!

Save the Date: A retirement luncheon for Bill Poe is being planned for Sunday, June 27th at 12:30 in Fellowship Hall.

Many, many thanks to Betty and Charlie Moreton for doing the Presbyterian weekend meals delivery on Saturday, January 30. One of the many outreach programs of St. Philip, we are responsible for delivering meals to shut-ins in central Houston on the fifth Saturday of each month that has one. If you would like to make a short term commitment, please call Janet Davis at 713 464-2385 to become involved. May 29th is our next delivery date.

Congratulations Kids Against Hunger Packers: We now have three pallets **one and one-half tons** of fortified rice casserole packages ready to ship to Haiti. Sunday, January 24th after church, forty-nine St. Philipians were joined by volunteers from Central Presbyterian Church and The Oasis of Love Congregation, that meets on our campus, to enjoy lunch and package food for earthquake victims in Haiti. Keep up the good work. Sign up to help pack food Sunday, February 28th after the 11:00 am service. Anyone at least nine years old can pack. Lunch will available for \$7.

The Philip-Eye will be published on February 15, March 1, 15, and 29. 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 the Pastor's Study:

A friend once commented to me that she enjoyed the Season of Advent so much that she wished we could have it twice a year. In one sense, Lent fulfills her desire. Lent is to Easter what Advent is to Christmas -- a time of preparation. The liturgical color of both seasons is purple.

At that point, however, the similarities end. The whole atmosphere of Lent is radically different from Advent. Since it is in the crucifixion of Jesus that human sin is most clearly revealed, Lent has an atmosphere of humility and repentance, rather than the expectant joy of Advent. In Lent, we walk with Jesus the road that led him to the cross. We remember that Jesus walked that road for our sakes, and for our salvation; and we are humbled by such a sacrifice of love. There is, of course, the note of triumphant joy that is Easter awaiting us at the end of this road, but it is important for us to experience the way of the cross together before we get to Easter.

I would like to make some suggestions which may enrich your observance of the season. First of all, and perhaps most important, **make worship a part of your Lenten observance.** Plan to be in worship each Sunday morning during the season of Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday, February 17th, and culminates on Easter Sunday, April 4th. In addition, place these special worship opportunities on your calendar:

Ash Wednesday evening, Feb. 17th, we will share a light supper in the Fellowship Hall at 5:45 pm and then move to the Sanctuary at 6:30 for a service that will include the Imposition of Ashes.

The First Sunday in Lent, Feb. 21st, our guest preacher will be the Rev. Dr. George Stroup of Columbia Theological Seminary, who is our Duerr Lecturer.

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 28, 8:30 & 11:00 am we will remember and celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and take our first step into the week of his Passion.

Maundy Thursday, April 1st, 7:00 pm we will gather around the Communion Table in the Sanctuary to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Easter Sunday, April 4th, 8:30 & 11:00 am we will gather for glorious and joyful worship on the Lord's Day in the Sanctuary, to share the glad good news of resurrection!

Finally, I invite you to make a personal commitment to participate in the **One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**, which will be received on Easter Sunday. This special "over and above" offering, shared by Christians all over the world, goes especially to fight world hunger, to disaster relief, and to the self-development of people.

One writer, writing for pastors, has said, "So many of us seem to sprint through Lent, hurdle Holy Week, and fall down exhausted on Easter Sunday." Not a pretty picture of a people who are

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was Associate Professor of Theology at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary from 1980 - 1986. Since 1986 he has been Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary.

Dr. Stroup has many articles in journals such as *Interpretation*, *Theology Today*, and *Journal for Preachers* amongst others, as well as having written and edited several books. His latest books are *Before God*, Eerdmans, 2004 and *Calvin*, Abingdon Press, 2009. He serves on the editorial board of *The Columbia Series in Reformed Theology*, Westminster John Knox Press. He served on the General Assembly Select Committee on a Brief Confession of Faith (1984-1991) and is currently serving on the committee considering the addition of the Belhar Confession to the Book of Confessions.

He is married to Dr. Donna Fox Stroup and they have two grown children. Stroup describes himself as a seventeenth-century Calvinist whose interests are contemporary and constructive theology, including hermeneutics, Christology, and the role of narrative in theology. Now on Sabbatical, soon after these lectures Stroup will travel to Cambridge where he will be living for several months and working on a book on idolatry.

Rev. Dr. Stroup will be preaching at the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services on Sunday morning. All lectures begin at 7:00 pm, and the Sunday evening lecture, in the Fellowship Hall, will be preceded by dinner at 6:15, \$7.00, no reservations necessary. Lectures on Monday and Tuesday evenings will take place in Room 209, the choir rehearsal room. The sermon and all lectures will be taped and available in sets of four CDs. Child care for all ages 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. Duerr was born and raised in Germany, growing up during the years of World War II. He came to the U. S. in 1950 in the first class of Fulbright Scholars from Germany, studying at Michigan State University. He also studied at the University of Hamburg, Germany, where he received the equivalent of a Master's Degree in political economics. He moved permanently to the States in 1968, becoming a naturalized citizen in 1973. He joined St. Philip in 1979 and later served as an elder.

The Lecture Series was established through generous contributions made in Duerr's memory. While the lectures are free and open to everyone, your gift to ensure the continuation of the series on an annual basis is greatly appreciated. Gifts may be made to the series in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one. Checks should be made payable to St. Philip, marked "Duerr Lecture Series" and sent to the church office.

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

Hallelujah!

CORNER

"And many more" for Dan Flowers who celebrated his 90th birthday on January 21.

The Special Haiti Relief Offering received on January 17 and 24 totaled \$9,106.00. Our donations will be distributed through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, a mission arm of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Thank you for your generosity in giving to this earthquake relief effort.

On January 31, the Sacrament of Baptism was administered to **Annabelle Seeliger**, daughter of **Maggie** and **Tyson Seeliger**.

Many, many thanks to Chuck Johnson for his most informative daily videos during the installation of the organ. Watch at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVI_eZr810g Or go to the St. Philip website, click on "Whats Happening" and then on "Pipe Organ Updates" for a direct link.

Easter Boxes for the Women's Home

It's time once again to begin filling Easter boxes. The recipient of these boxes, The Women's Home is a unique long-term residence program providing women the opportunity to rebuild their lives through spiritual counseling, individual therapy and work training.

The Easter boxes, a long-time project of Presbyterian Women is open for participation by all. The goal is to fill 55 shoe boxes, wrap them in pretty spring paper and present them to the Women's Home for Easter distribution. Here are some suggestions of needed items: cosmetics (purchased or department store samples), hotel or airline samples, tooth brushes and tooth paste, mouthwash, razors, combs, hair brushes, hair spray, postage stamps, envelopes, note paper, note cards, jewelry. You may do a complete box, a partial box, or just donate loose items. If you prefer, we take cash donations to purchase items. Bring to a PW Circle meeting or leave in marked container in the church office or the gathering area near the Sanctuary.

Questions? Call Janet Davis at 713 464-2385.

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supposed to be making an intentional effort to prepare for the celebration of the resurrection. Let's try to find the meaning of the Season in our observation of it, and not allow it to pass us by.

Yours in Christ,

Bill

February Hunger Offering

The recipient of our February 7th hunger offering is Good Neighbor Healthcare Center, an agency that has been supported by St. Philip during all the years of its existence.

Good Neighbor expresses a mission to provide quality health care, education and assistance to low income families in the Fourth Ward area of Greater Houston, regardless of ability to pay. The Center has strong ties to Houston area teaching institutions and agencies allowing patients access to a wide variety of services. St. Philip's long history of support of the Center includes not only contributions but also volunteers and Board members.

As always, our members are encouraged to consider a generous donation at this time.

Summer Employment Opportunity

Mo-Ranch is now receiving applications for summer staff. Excellent, free accommodations, a variety of jobs and a superb spirituality program await young adults. Prospective summer staff applicants can go to www.moranch.com and click on Jobs at Mo. Then click on Summer Staff and download a general employment application.

Send questions to vanessap@moranch.com or call 1-800-460-4401, ext. 273

Youth News

Confirmation Class Continues

The Confirmation Class, open to all youth in Middle and Senior High School, is taught by Larry Wright and Cindy Pope. The class meets in the Middle School Youth Room from 9:45 am to 10:45 am each Sunday and concludes on March 21.

SPY Bistro Dates & Souper Bowl of Caring

Souper Bowl of Caring is Sunday, February 7. Our youth will collect non-perishable food items in the Gathering Area. Please help stock food pantries in our area. The group will not meet that evening. February 14 is a special meeting time and Valentine's Day event, "What's Love Got to Do With It?" The group will meet from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. SPY Bistro will return to its usual time on February 21; then, February 28 will provide another SPY secret destination.

Volunteers Needed

Youth volunteers are needed to help direct parking for the Presbytery meeting on Saturday, February 6 from 8:00 to 10:00 am. Those willing to volunteer are asked to contact Cindy Pope.

Interfaith Youth Dinner Dialogue

This annual event, sponsored by Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, will be held from 5:30 to 9:00 pm on Thursday, February 11 at St. Agnes Academy, 9000 Bellaire Blvd. Moderated by an IMGH staff member, the event will include Baha'i, Christian, Jain, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh traditions. Youth ages 13-18 are encouraged to participate. For registration information, contact Cindy Pope.

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

Wednesday Night Live

Dinner is at 5:45 followed by a study led by Rev. Kristy Vits. Call the church office to make a reservation for dinner. Cost is \$7.00 per person.

The class is called "The Question of God." From the PBS website, *The Question of God* explores in accessible and dramatic style issues that preoccupy all thinking people today: What is happiness? How do we find meaning and purpose in our lives? How do we reconcile conflicting claims of love and sexuality? How do we cope with the problem of suffering and the inevitability of death? Based on a popular Harvard course taught by Dr. Armand Nicholi, author of *The Question of God*, the series illustrates the lives and insights of Sigmund Freud, a life-long critic of religious belief, and C.S. Lewis, a celebrated Oxford don, literary critic, and perhaps this century's most influential and popular proponent of faith based on reason. The class will watch a DVD and then have a discussion.

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

This class will use "Living the Questions" as our discussion resource.

Living the Questions is a unique study curriculum that strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity.

Each session has a 20-minute video segment which includes conversations with leading voices of faith, sermon and lecture clips, digital stories illustrating aspects of an evolving faith, and concrete spiritual practices and disciplines.

Leadership will be on a rotating basis.

Come join the SPa class in 2010!

Bible Study

Room 204 in the Education Building

The class is studying the Book of Exodus

Led by Dr. Nancy Cook and Al Waldrop.

Church and Society

Room 201 in the Education Building

February 7

"Disenfranchised Grief"

When Society Doesn't Accept a Death

Led by Rev. Dr. Steve Spidell

February 14 and 21

"Spirituality and Mental Illness"

Led by Dr. Jim Lomax

February 28

Speaker from The FORGE for Families

Their mission is to enrich the spiritual, educational, vocational & leadership development of inner city families in Houston's Third Ward community.



Sixteen years ago, a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired a group of young people to do something more than celebrate a football game. They created the Souper Bowl of Caring, a youth-led grassroots movement that is now an international event. Since going nationwide in 1993, these youth have raised millions for people in need.

This year our dollars will benefit Interfaith Ministries Kid's Meals Program. This project serves at-risk and special needs children 2 to 6 years old living in a family whose income is "low-income" based on the Federal Guidelines on Poverty. Meals are delivered Monday through Friday to hungry children living in areas of southeast Houston.

At the close of worship this Sunday, February 1, our youth will be in the Narthex with soup pots to receive your donations. Be generous. Empower the Souper Heroes in our congregation as they help others through the Souper Bowl of Caring. Every dollar collected will go to the Kid's Meals Program.

Dated Material

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