

# PHILIP-EYE

THE NEWSLETTER of Saint Philip Presbyterian Church  
Volume 54, Number 4

Houston, Texas  
15 February 2010

**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**  
Director of Music  
**Margaret Dement**  
Director of Youth Bells

**Judy Gunn**  
Director, Children's Ministries

**Cindy Pope**  
Interim Director of Youth  
Ministries

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Office Manager  
**Nancy Craig**  
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Custodian  
**Peter Ramadan**  
Custodian

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Visit our website @  
[www.saintphilip.net](http://www.saintphilip.net)

## Merger Committee Report to the Congregation

February 7, 2010

### Welcome Dr. Justin Smith, Director of Music

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Session approved the recommendation of our Director of Music Search Committee and elected Dr. Justin S. Smith to be our new Director of Music, effective immediately. As you know, Justin has been serving as our Interim Director of Music through the period of the search.

The Director of Music Search Committee received a total of 61 applications for the position. Some of these were received after the cutoff date and were not considered. Of those considered, resumes were received from all over the world, including some from Europe, several from the east coast and several from western states as well as some from the Houston area. Each member of the committee read all of the resumes and eliminated about half. The search was narrowed to 6-8 candidates on whom further research was done, including reference checks and requesting further information from the candidates.

The final three candidates were invited to come to St. Philip, and to (1) choose music for the choir to sing that would enhance the message presented by the minister and the scriptures, (2) write the music notes for the bulletin, (3) direct the children and adult choirs and then (4) meet with the committee for an interview. All brought different skills. Members of the choir were asked for their input after each of the candidates came.

After many months we

*(continued on page 3)*

One year ago St. Philip was approached by Central Presbyterian Church to explore the possibility of the unification of these two congregations. Ultimately a St. Philip merger committee was formed which included the following members: Bebe Burns, James Cooper, Fort Flowers, Cathy Hunt, Casey Lambright, Jane Larkin, Bill Morris, Kay Vick, and Gene McKelvey (moderator).

Working with our counterparts from Central, a Plan of Union was subsequently designed which has been unanimously approved by both merger committees and the session of Central Presbyterian Church.

Over the next few weeks, as you explore this proposal, I am sure it will sound very familiar to you.

The name of the unified congregation is to be St. Philip Presbyterian Church of Houston

It will be located on this campus at 4807 San Felipe St. Houston, TX

The Rev. Dr. William C. Poe will serve as pastor for the merged congregation. Severance will be given to the current staff of Central Presbyterian Church prior to unification.

Central church has a long history of emphasis on mission. The union of our two churches is expected to expand and broaden the mission programs currently being pursued and enable new initiatives to be undertaken. Indeed, our mutual involvement is already bringing this about.

On January 17, 2010 the congregation of Central Presbyterian Church approved the merger document by a vote of 46 in favor and 7 against.

In the days ahead you will be learning more about the plan for merger and information being developed to prepare our session for action.

## Congregational Concerns:

Hospitalized: **Bill Boren** at Kindred Hospital.

Recuperating: **Jenny Vestal**

At home: **Jack Boelens, Frank Donnelly,  
Meredith Gartner, Penny Vieau**

The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Paul Fritts** (our organ builder) and his family on the death of his mother in Tacoma, WA on February 1.

## 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!! No meeting on February 26th.

**The Mission Commission would like to identify those members who are serving on boards** of area charitable organizations and agencies or other endeavors that St. Philip supports. With your information, please contact Karen McKibben Morris at 713-392-4150 or karen.mckibben@gmail.com or contact Sandra Cooper at 281-778-9614 or jcooper@entouch.net

**The Metropolitan Organization invites all to join** Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Rev. Mike Cole, Bishop Andrew Doyle, Rabbi's and other denominational leaders in prayer and discussion about what we have learned about immigration reform and how we can continue to work together. Sunday, March 7, 3:30 to 5:00 pm at Sacred Heart Co-Cathedral Centre (4th floor; entrance on Jefferson Street). RSVP to 713 807-1429 or tmo@tmohouston.net.

**The final book review of the Holly Hall season** will be held March 31 beginning at 10:30 am at St. Luke's Methodist Church. All are invited (individual ticket \$10.) to hear reviewer Colleen Boudreaux present Mildred Armstrong Kalish's *Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm During the Great Depression*.

**St. Philip turns 60!** St. Philip Presbyterian Church was chartered September 10, 1950. Mark your calendar for September 12, 2010. You will want to be a part of the big celebration of our 60th birthday!

**The Philip-Eye will be published** on March 1, 15, and 29. 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 Director of Music:

As many of you know, it's my very great honor to accept the permanent position of Music Director here at St. Philip, effective February 7<sup>th</sup>. I was thrilled and humbled when the search committee extended the offer to me a few weeks ago, and I look forward to many years of fruitful musical collaboration and fellowship together. I'm proud to be a part of a congregation that obviously values the importance of music so very much; it's my goal to continually enrich our worship and fellowship together, as well as to enhance the city-wide reputation of St. Philip as a place where thoughtful music making occurs on a weekly basis.

I thought I would use this column to introduce myself a little more, for those of you who don't know me well (yet!). I came to Houston three and a half years ago to pursue my Doctorate in choral conducting at the Moores School of Music; my wife, Cristy, was also looking for a one year fellowship in Neuroradiology. Needless to say, the number of American cities that offer both programs is quite small; add in the fact that my wife is a native Texan (originally from Laredo), and the choice was quite easy! When we moved here, we had a six week old baby boy named Alex; now, Alex is in preschool at Poe Elementary, and we have eight month old Nicholas in our lives, as well. How time flies. Life around the Smith household is, safe to say, never boring. Alex loves music and can be seen sitting in the pews on many Sundays, conducting along with the choir! Nicholas started sleeping through the night about a month ago, making our lives that much better in the process!

As I take on my new permanent position, it's hard not to note that the music at St. Philip is in an exciting place. We now have four regularly rehearsing choirs that perform at worship services (Choir, Youth Choir, Children's Choir, and Bell Canto), and, of course a magnificent new organ with a true virtuoso on hand to play it. I will soon be forming a St. Philip Concert Series, to begin in the Fall, which will bring in groups from around the city and the nation, as well as our "homegrown" ensembles, to perform in our beloved, beautiful Sanctuary. And, of course, we in the music department continue our mission of enhancing our Sunday worship together via the very real power of music. I have always believed that music brings one's soul closer to the Divine; it is my goal to bring our collective congregation to a more sacred place each and every time we gather to sing or ring to God!

**Justin**

(from page 1)

enthusiastically bring you the name of Dr. Justin S. Smith as the new Director of Music for St. Philip. When Justin came as interim he was not interested in the position because he had spent many years working on and dreaming about his career in academia. He is a recent graduate of the University of Houston Moore's School of Music doctoral program. With the love and support he received at St. Philip, as well as his ability to do music all of the time, Justin decided he might be interested in a church music job, and then decided this is what he would like to do for the foreseeable future. Justin brings his love of music, his strong work ethic, his enthusiasm for making the music program at St. Philip grow, his skill in interpreting music, and his ability to make music with other people who love to make music.

Please greet Justin warmly and congratulate him on this important moment in his life and in the life of St. Philip. And thank the members of the Search Committee for a job well done: Jeanette Wenneweser, Moderator; Carol Junkin; David Fox; Eleanor Grant; Florence McKelvey; Gary Whitney; John Lemen; Julie Evans; Maggie Dement; Vada Woodall; Matthew Dirst and Bill Poe, Staff.

(Ed. Note: Read Justin's column on page 2)

### Covenant Network Speaker to be Featured at Wednesday Night Live, February 24.

St. Philippians are encouraged to mark your calendars and plan to attend the WNL meeting on Wed., Feb. 24. Our speaker will be the Rev. Lou East, who serves as our contact liaison for the 2010 national meeting. As per our usual schedule, supper will be served beginning at 5:45 p.m. Rev. East's program will begin at about 6:10 p.m. Please notify the church office if you plan to attend. A donation of \$7.00 for supper will be appreciated.

Following this presentation, which will be an explanatory outline of the purpose and programs of Covenant Network, the first meeting of the official Local Arrangements Committee will be held. This will be an opportunity to talk with Lou, to get her advice on logistics, and worship, and publicity, and committee organizing. Everyone is invited to attend this organizational committee and to plan to begin now to participate in this exciting activity.

### A Note of Thanks...

*I would like to thank everyone who gave books or stuffed animals for my school project benefiting Interfaith Ministries Refugee Program. St. Philip's members contributed 85 stuffed animals and 137 books. My total donation from St. Philip and my neighborhood was 495 books and 286 stuffed animals. I know that the children that will receive these will really be happy.*

*Thank you for putting a smile on a child's face.*

*David Lindsay*

## Hallelujah!

CORNER

Welcome new members **Julie MacLemore** and **Mickey** and **Ken Meyers** who joined St. Philip on January 24th.

The Hunger Offering received on February 7 benefiting Good Neighbor Healthcare Center totaled \$957.00 and the Souper Bowl of Caring benefiting Kid's Against Hunger received \$732.00. Thank you for your continued generosity.

### Welcome New Member...

**Julie MacLemore** transferred her membership from Southminster Presbyterian Church in Missouri City to St. Philip on January 24<sup>th</sup>. She is a lifelong Presbyterian who grew up in Jonesboro, Georgia.

She graduated from Agnes Scott College and the University of Houston. Her son Dan and wife Shannon have provided her two "almost-perfect" grandchildren, Philip and Abigail, who live in Waco.

Julie has most impressive credentials in every respect. Professionally, she is an international tax specialist who has worked in both Houston and Europe. Currently, she is Director of International Taxes in the Americas for CGGVeritas.

In the church, she has served as session member, teacher, liturgist, worship leader, planner of special events, vacuum cleaner operator and person in charge of turning out the lights and locking the doors. In our presbytery, she has chaired the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, chaired the Task Force that reviewed and commented on the proposed new Form of Government, served on the Committee on Examinations, acted as PNC liaison, and been a member of the General Council as well as numerous administrative commissions and two investigating committees. For two years, she was a Volunteer in Mission for Finance in New Covenant, and for four years, she was the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

Julie was a commissioner to the General Assembly (GA) in 1992 and participated as volunteer GA staff to GAs from 1999 through 2003. She has read ordination examinations for ten years and led workshops at local and national P.C.(U.S. A.) events. She served as chair of the Board of the Ecumenical Ministry Development Network and as a member of the Advisory Board to the Houston Extension Program of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Currently, she is vice-chair of New Covenant's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, a member of the Board of Trustees of Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly, and chair of the GA Restricted Funds Resolution Committee.

In her spare time, Julie enjoys visiting with friends and her grandchildren, reading, needlework, music and theater, and ---sleep.

We are so pleased to welcome Julie into our congregation. Please greet her personally.

## 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 to 10:45 am each Sunday and concludes on March 21. Due to Spring Break, Confirmation class will not meet on March 14.

### SPY Bistro Dates

Join us on Sunday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 pm for dinner and fun at SPY Bistro! Along with our topic, "What's Love Got to Do With It?", there will be games galore. February 28 will provide another SPY "Destination Unknown." Where are we going? Only your SPY advisors know for sure! Future meetings in March include Movie Night and an Overnighter. Watch future editions of the *Philip-Eye* for more info!

### Youth to Attend Triennium

Two of our St. Philip youth, Sarah Cherillo and David Lindsay, are slated to attend the national Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue University July 20 - 24. This event brings together youth from all across the nation to participate in leadership development activities. We are proud to have these youth represent SPPC.

For more on all youth meetings, programs and activities contact Cindy Pope at [Cindy@saintphilip.net](mailto:Cindy@saintphilip.net).

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## Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering

Dr. Mary Louise (Mel) Bringle is professor of philosophy and religious studies and chair of the Humanities Division at Brevard College, Brevard, NC and an ordained Presbyterian elder. A thought-provoking and challenging speaker, Mel combines her interest in practical and pastoral theology with her talent for hymn writing.

Her hymns are included in hymnals and supplements of numerous denominations (Mennonite, Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, United Church of Canada, and the Church of Scotland). She currently serves as president of The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada, and chair of the committee to create a new denominational hymnal for the Presbyterian Church (USA). One of the most popular keynoters in the PC(USA) today, don't miss her speaking and singing on "Undersung Heroines in the Lineage of Jesus."

The program is on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church, Houston. Tickets are \$15 and available online at [www.fpchouston.org](http://www.fpchouston.org) or by mail to Amy Waltz, 3103 Castlerock Drive, Pearland, TX 77584.

## March Communion Offering

The communion offering to be received March 7 is designated for Interfaith Ministries' Meals on Wheels program. This program delivers lunch meals to senior citizens who are unable to get out, either for physical or financial reasons.

Interfaith Ministries is a coalition of religious entities of all faiths, not limited to the Christian religion. It provides means for communication between members of different religions and provides outreach services to the community. The Meals on Wheels program has long been a beneficiary of communion offering at St. Philip.

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## Duerr Lecture Series 2010 Presents Rev. Dr. George W. Stroup February 21, 22 and 23

Dr. Stroup says that the Bible is deeply concerned about idolatry. It is the first sin. 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.

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.

### In addition...

**St. Philip men are invited to meet** with Dr. Stroup on Monday, February 22nd, at noon in the Dining Room for a brownbag lunch and informal conversation with the speaker for the Duerr Lecture Series. Bring a friend, all are welcome, no reservations necessary.

**St. Philip women are invited to meet** with Dr. Stroup on Tuesday, February 23rd, at noon in the Dining Room. Please bring a brownbag lunch and enjoy informal conversation with the speaker for the Duerr Lecture Series. Bring a friend, all are welcome, no reservations necessary.

## Some Thoughts About Union

by Mary Sinderson

For a number of months teams from each of our churches have been engaged in conversation about the possibility of merging the two congregations into one. The discussions have resulted in a plan of union approved by the Session and the congregation of Central.

Central Presbyterian Church has a long and rich history in Houston as reported by Dr. Cathy Patterson in worship on Sunday. It began as a Cumberland Presbyterian Church in downtown Houston in 1894. Its evangelistic approach led to a rapid increase in membership. After several moves, this congregation became allied with what was referred to as the "northern" Presbyterian Church, but is now part of the re-united Presbyterian Church.

The history of Central demonstrates a marked and constant devotion to mission—both in the sense of evangelism and in the sense of outreach to those in need in the community. The individual members of Central have a heritage of active, hands-on participation in mission/outreach projects. A number of current members have enthusiastically participated with us in packing meals for our Kids Against Hunger project. They have long been active in presbytery projects and committees, demonstrating leadership in all areas of presbytery business. Many of the current members have joined us for Wednesday Night Live, for Rally Day, for worship, and for fellowship. Of all the Presbyterian congregations in Houston, the Central members are probably the most spiritually aligned with St. Philip members. The plan of union provides for a significant endowment for mission upon sale of the Central property on Richmond Ave., giving the combined congregations the ability to have an expanded mission budget. There are a number of people in our congregation who know Central and its membership well. Session and merger committee members are familiar with the plan. You are encouraged to learn more from all of these members about the history of Central and the exciting prospects union would open for the future of both congregations.

## 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. Bring to a PW Circle meeting or leave in marked container in the church office or the Sanctuary gathering area.

## St. Philip to Host National Meeting

Responding to an invitation from our Session, the Covenant Network of Presbyterians will hold its annual meeting in Houston at St. Philip, November 4-6, 2010. Covenant Network is an organization supportive of the acceptance of all persons into the full life and responsibilities of church membership. St. Philip has indicated over the years through its public statements (Commitment to Peacemaking documents, the Missional Church statements approved by past Sessions) its welcoming attitude toward all persons. Our educational programs, and our life together reflect this theology. And so it is with pride and excitement that we look forward to hosting this national meeting.

St. Philip has the honor of being the first church in Texas to host this national meeting. We expect that the three-day conference will bring to our doors many nationally recognized preachers and speakers, some of whom have visited us as Duerr Lecturers. There will be opportunities for our congregation to participate in worship services and to meet and talk with many of our denomination's leading preachers and theologians. Worship services will highlight our new organ and our entire program of music and visual arts.

Serving as a local arrangements committee for this event will be our Peacemaking & Social Justice Committee. Persons interested in assisting with this effort are encouraged to contact Sara Jean Jackson or Chuck Johnson. For more information you are encouraged to visit the organization's website at [www.covenantnetwork.org](http://www.covenantnetwork.org).

### Lectionary Readings

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

March 7, 2010

3rd Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

### 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-5<sup>th</sup> 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.

This 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.

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 21

"Spirituality and Mental Illness"

Led by Dr. Jim Lomax

February 28

Speaker from The FORGE for Families whose  
mission is to enrich the spiritual, educational,  
vocational & leadership development of inner city  
families in Houston's Third Ward community.

March 7, 14 and 21

Steve Spidell speaking on

"Reality TV: Theology in the Video Era"

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

March

1 Kathryn Lippincott

3 Brian Webster

6 Elaine Rodiek

7 Joseph Harwood

7 Sally Wickes

8 Tom Anderson

9 Susan Gartner Leonardson

10 Rita Hannah

11 Toto McGehee

14 Bennett Pepi

16 Kate Burkart

17 Patrick Ball

17 Jacob English

17 Elaine Flowers

18 Daniel Flowers

18 Bette Shumake

18 Patricia Fossler

21 Ann Anderson

23 Stephen Kirk

23 Virginia Waldrop

24 Grady Evans

26 Inez Cummings

26 Emily Estill

26 Paxton Lambright

27 Diana Fields

27 Helen Harris

28 Jacqueline Hamilton

28 Sue Mitchell

28 Sarah Cherrillo

29 Sarah Felknor-Ragland

30 Jane Lee

31 Jean Nelson

31 Ruth Ewing

People who have contributed to the life of our  
congregation over the past 60 years.

### 60 years...Remembering:

**Talbot Wilson** – Architect of St. Philip and  
Central Presbyterian and the first promoter  
of our Jazz Communion Service.

Dated Material

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