



May 6, 2025  
Volume 69, Issue 6

# PHILIP-EYE

## PW BIRTHDAY OFFERING

On **May 11**, we will have a special offering for the Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering. You can make a donation online and choose PW Birthday Offering or use the envelopes found in the Narthex. Each year, the Birthday Offering awards grants up to five programs. Primarily making possible capital improvement projects, the Birthday Offering supports domestic and international ministries, focusing on areas such as agricultural development, child care, community organization, criminal justice, drug counseling, economic justice, elderly care, employment training, homelessness, literacy, violence or women's concerns.

This year's Birthday Offering recipients:

**Leland Presbyterian Church • Windward Volunteer Housing Facility**—Leland, Mississippi—Much of the population around Leland Presbyterian Church, located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta region, struggles with barriers to adequate housing, healthcare and food access. When disaster strikes, residents do not have adequate resources to recover. Volunteers who travel from outside the area to assist in home repairs and community improvements can be the determining factor in whether a family can fully recover.

This Birthday Offering grant will help build a housing facility at Leland Presbyterian Church. Windward Volunteer Housing will offer safe and comfortable accommodations, including showers, laundry equipment and a kitchen. Members of the community who need a temporary place to stay and volunteer groups who come for disaster recovery will find a warm welcome in Leland.

**Red Cloud Renewable • Lakota Thiyuha Dome Home Project**—Pine Ridge, South Dakota—Tribal communities in the U.S. are experiencing a housing crisis, and the Pine Ridge Reservation alone needs an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 homes. Responding to this great challenge, Red Cloud Renewable, a Native-led grassroots nonprofit organization on the Pine Ridge Reservation, provides free training and workforce development opportunities designed to “teach our tribal relatives to fish.”

*Thiyuha* in Lakota roughly translates to “having a home; starting a family; settling down; creating new life.” The Lakota Thiyuha Project aims to increase housing availability through construction of innovative dome homes that are energy efficient, economical, simple in design and easily teachable. The Birthday Offering grant will construct three dome homes, providing housing as well as creating publicity for this affordable option. Construction apprentices will gain experience in this building technique that can rapidly and affordably increase housing availability for Lakota families in need.

[Click here](#) to see the promotional video on the Presbyterian Women YouTube channel.

Everyone is invited to join the Presbyterian Women in the Gathering Area for Birthday Cake after worship on Sunday, **May 11**.



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

**Rev. Keatan King**  
Associate Pastor

**Rev. Omar Rouchon**  
Associate Pastor

**Dr. Justin Langham**  
Director of Music

**Dr. Matthew Dirst**  
Organist

**Diana Weiss**  
Art Director

**Wilbert Parada**  
Facilities Supervisor

**Dimas Parada**  
Custodian

**Denise Ferrell**  
Bookkeeper

**Lorrie Castle**  
Office Manager  
Newsletter Editor



2025 PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

# Birthday Offering

For the LORD your God  
will bless you  
in all your produce  
and in all your undertakings,  
*and you shall surely celebrate.*

—Deuteronomy 16:15b



Give or learn more about the  
*Birthday Offering*  
by visiting [presbyterianwomen.org/birthday](https://presbyterianwomen.org/birthday).

The poster features a light blue textured background on the left and a vertical strip on the right with a white lace pattern and white cherry blossoms. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo for the Presbyterian Church (USA) featuring a stylized flame and the text 'PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)'.

## NEW PW LEADERSHIP

We're very happy to announce that **Susan Leonard** and **Meghan Sankowski** will be the new Co-Moderators of the St. Philip PW Coordinating Team! Susan and Meghan bring lots of new energy to the group and we wish them well. Save the date for the Kick-Off Luncheon of September 21.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women study year is coming to end. The following meetings are scheduled for this month and then we look forward to seeing you again in September.

**Monday Morning Saints—May 12—** 10 AM in the Dining Room - Tricia Tolbert [phtolbert@gmail.com](mailto:phtolbert@gmail.com)

**The Hallmark Circle—**ontact Sue Shirley-Howard for location, day and time [sue@fluencyhouston.com](mailto:sue@fluencyhouston.com)

**Sunday Circle—May 18—**after worship in the Dining Room. Jan Meyer [jsmeyer9990@gmail.com](mailto:jsmeyer9990@gmail.com)

**One More Chance Study for Everyone—May 25** at 10 a.m. in the Library. Everyone is welcome. Lee Ardell [leardell@gmail.com](mailto:leardell@gmail.com)



## ST. PHILIP DURING THE WEEK

**SOCIAL JUSTICE STUDY GROUP**—This group meets on first Monday nights, 7-8 PM, by zoom to read and discuss social justice issues of our day. Interested persons who want to be added to our zoom mailing list can contact Sara Jean Jackson ([sjj10223@gmail.com](mailto:sjj10223@gmail.com)).

**LAMBETH STUDY**—Keatan King leads young adults in study every Monday evening at 7:00 PM via Zoom. It is a time of study, reflection, and prayer. If you would like more details, email Keatan at: [keatan@saintphilip.net](mailto:keatan@saintphilip.net).

**MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY**—Wednesday Bible study with John Wurster meets weekly at 9:30 AM, and is a hybrid format with an in-person option in the Office Conference Room and also a Zoom option. Bible novices, Bible experts, and everyone in between is welcome! To get on the list for the Zoom links, send a note to:

[john@saintphilip.net](mailto:john@saintphilip.net).

**WOMEN'S MONTHLY BOOK CLUB**—This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. The next meeting is **May 8** at 7:00 PM. This will be a social so watch your email for details. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nina Lambright at: [nnl@lambrightlaw.com](mailto:nnl@lambrightlaw.com).

**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 in person in the office Conference Room and via Zoom at 11:45 AM. The group is using a new book by Richard Rohr "The Tears of Things" to study how the wisdom of the Hebrew Prophets can offer a hope filled model for the world today. If you would like to join them please contact Gary Gardner at: [ggardne148@aol.com](mailto:ggardne148@aol.com).

### NURSERY CARE IS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT SUNDAY MORNINGS

8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. Infants to age 4 are invited to our Nursery which is staffed by professional childcare providers. Please find that our Nursery has temporarily been moved to Room 100 off the Gathering Area. An usher or a greeter will be happy to direct you there.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES START  
AT 9:45 A.M. UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

**GODLY PLAY**—Ages 3—Kindergarten—ROOM 103

**ELEMENTARY**—Grades 1-4—Room 205—The elementary-aged children are invited to participate in *Mini-Revolutions*, a lectionary-based curriculum employing multiple modes of learning engagement, and centered on activities and practices to help build spiritual habits. Room 205.

**YOUTH**—Grades 5-12—Dining Room—Kids Against Hunger Youth families will turn the Sunday School hour

into a time to revive the Kids Against Hunger program as leaders in our congregation.

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY**—ROOM 204—We are studying Proverbs in Dr. Robert Alter's *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes* (2010). Join us from 9:30 to 10:40 AM to deepen our understanding of God's faithfulness to God's people from Dr. Alter's translation and commentary on the Biblical Hebrew. All are welcome.

**CHILDREN'S CHAPEL**—In the Children's Chapel, our young disciples learn the whos, whats, wheres, whens and whys of worship in the chapel, while also praying, seeing and hearing God's word at an age-appropriate level. Children return to join the congregation in the first few pews on the lectern side of the church for the last hymn. The Children's Chapel is held every 2nd and 4th Sunday when we have Sunday School classes. Children are able to participate in this during the worship service.

**CHURCH & SOCIETY**—ROOM 201—Join us from 9:30—10:40 AM with presentations in person and by Zoom. **May 11**—St. Philip Peace and Social Justice Committee present Breathe Project - The Breathe Collaborative is a coalition of citizens, environmental advocates, public health professionals and academics working to improve air quality, climate pollution and make our region a healthy and prosperous place to live. The Collaborative powers the Breathe Project through science-based work and a community outreach platform. Presented by Thaddeus Popovich-Allegheny County Clean Air Now (ACCAN), Climate Reality Project. **May 18**—Empathy—the Key to a Climate Safe Future? The human suffering wrought by hurricane Helene in September 2024, reminiscent of Houston's disastrous Hurricane Harvey in 2017, reminds us that as the climate crises deepens, communities across the nation desperately need everyone working together toward solutions. But too often these days, political and social divisions stand in the way of understanding and action, leading to stalemate and the next climate fueled tragedy. Since 2021 Chautauqua Institution has been exploring the role of empathy in bridging what divides us—whether politics, race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or economic status. Mark Wenzler, director of the Climate Change Initiative at Chautauqua Institution, returns to the Church & Society forum in May to preview an exciting new empathy based strategy for reducing conflict and empowering effective collective action on climate change. **May 25**—Memorial Day media study with Kate Burkart: *Severance*.—This wildly creative Apple TV+ hit show, which just concluded its second season in March, appears at first glance to be about an extreme form of work-life balance. A new experimental technology called "severance" allows Lumon Industries employees to undergo surgery where a brain implant allows for their work- and home-life memories to be separated. We will examine the very first episode, "Good News About Hell," which sets the stage for the series, highlighting the ethical and moral dilemmas surrounding the severance process and the characters' attempts to navigate their

new realities, and will consider why the show has proved so compelling to its viewers. If you would like to join any of the classes, send an email to: [jshartman01@gmail.com](mailto:jshartman01@gmail.com).

## WELCOME BRATTON-FOX FAMILY

Please welcome new members to the church Kelly Fox and John Bratton. Their children are Elizabeth and Grayson (joined St. Philip by confirmation in the Spring 2024). The family moved to Houston in 2023 and started attending the church John had grown up in. Grayson is 14 and goes to Post Oak School. He likes bike riding and technology of all sorts. Elizabeth is 13 and also goes to Post Oak School. She likes art and caring for animals. Kelly works in the administration at Rice University. John is has degrees in Chinese politics and environmental studies, and right now is a stay-at-home Dad. He enjoys cooking, reading, and cycling.



### June Birthdays

Anne Wilson	2	Sarah Victorian	17
Rhoda Arnes	3	Tim Burgess	18
Dan Boston	3	Mark Clemmons	18
Pat Lindsay	4	Carrie Pepi	18
Laney Miller	6	Sally Slick	18
Mark Taylor	8	Jenny Vestal	19
Deborah Unruh	8	Carmen Sullivan	22
Scott Easterly	10	Mary Hansen	22
Sasha Arlinghaus	13	George Pepi	23
David Castle	13	Governor Frazier	26
George Scott	13	Gil Kim	30
Zoe Carlin	14		



### Day School Wishlist

Many thanks to those of you who were able to tour the St. Philip Day School facility, which is nearing completion of the renovation process. Our next goal is to outfit the classrooms with the support of the congregation. If you feel moved to donate anything from a children's book to a crib to an Amazon gift card, we would be enormously grateful for your contribution! Our founding Director, Candice Harris, has a vision for a warm, comforting school filled with cozy reading nooks, imaginative play stations, and more! Review the wish list here: <https://a.co/5d3k87D>



## PLANTING IT FORWARD WITH FARMER ELIZABETH

The Mission Committee will be assisting Plant It Forward Farmer Elizabeth on **Saturday, May 24** from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. We will help with weeding and simple garden tasks which will be so appreciated. No experience is necessary.



Elizabeth Nyuma and her daughters, Oretha and Mabel, own and operate Afri Harvest Farm. Originally from Lofa Kante, Liberia, Elizabeth's parents were killed during the [Second Liberian Civil War](#) (1999 – 2003).

Afterwards, she fled with her children to a refugee camp in neighboring Sierra Leone. After five years in the camp, their family permanently resettled in Houston.

Elizabeth speaks English and Kissi fluently. While Elizabeth wasn't lucky enough to complete her schooling, as a teenager she dove straight into business and farming. Growing— for subsistence and her livelihood — has been a lifelong occupation for Elizabeth. Because of her skill as a farmer, she sustained her family in the refugee camp. Today she continues to support her family, and nourishes the broader Houston community, through her growing acumen.



Elizabeth's garden is located at **8702 Lipan Road**. We hope you can join us as we give a hand in Elizabeth's garden. Gloves and tools will be provided. Just bring your refillable water bottle. Closed toe shoes are required. Plant It Forward has asked that we sign up here. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-work-day-at-blossom-heights-tickets-1320296374999?aff=oddtcreator> And please be sure to complete a liability waiver found at [bit.ly/pifwaiver](https://bit.ly/pifwaiver).

After the farming, we will tour a warehouse where farmers' produce is sold if there is sufficient interest. If you have any questions contact Tina Bryan at 281.536.8816 or email [tinairene@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tinairene@sbcglobal.net). And for more information on Plant It Forward's very impressive program please check out their website here <https://plantitforward.farm/>. You can find the farmers and their produce at several of our local farmers markets.



## MUSICAL CONNECTIONS: SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT

MUSIC AT  ST. PHILIP

All human beings seek connection. It's part of our DNA. Musicians are no different, but the connection they seek I would consider is three-fold: connection with the audience, connection with their fellow performers, and connection to the music itself. For musicians that perform regularly or as their profession, it is exceedingly rare that all three coalesce in one moment, but chasing that moment is what is most exciting.

From the perspective of both the performers and audience, are countless variables that go into finding these connections, not least of which is the innate way a particular piece of music speaks to you. In choral music, there are even more variables still, considering quality of text, how the composer pairs text with their music, the blending of voices in the choir, leadership of the conductor, acoustics of the room...the list goes on and on. You can spend a lifetime chasing the moment where everything aligns just right.

A "shining" example of one such alignment is "Sure on this Shining Night," a serene setting of a James Agee poem included in Morten Lauridsen's set of *Nocturnes*. Through its beautiful melodies, lush piano writing, and most importantly, a commitment to the amplifying the mood and expressions found in the text Lauridsen creates the opportunity for connection: the pianist and conductor to the choir, each chorister to each other, and the choir to the listener. And, who doesn't love the key of D-flat major.

Enjoy a wonderful performance of Lauridsen's "Sure on this Shining Night" by the LA Master Chorale, and if you were unable to attend the St. Philip music program's concert on May 4, check out the live-stream! The St. Philip choir also sang this piece beautifully.

[https://youtu.be/JK7IFAoE\\_3s?si=uYPgeUqv2bIZ8hGh](https://youtu.be/JK7IFAoE_3s?si=uYPgeUqv2bIZ8hGh)

Justin Langham, D.M.A.  
Director of Music



MUSIC AT  ST. PHILIP

hosts

# A PIANO RECITAL

featuring

## OSIP NIKIFOROV

Works By Bach, Rachmaninoff,  
Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Strauss, and Liszt

**Sunday, May 18 | 3:00 PM**

FOLLOW US ONLINE  
Music at St Philip 



## A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS & A CALL TO PRAY

The congregation is being asked to submit recommendations for persons to serve as Ruling Elders (Session), Trustees, and on the Central Mission Endowment Council.

We ask that the congregation wrap this process in prayer. Take some time to pray over the names in the church directory. Who do you believe exhibits spiritual leadership to take St. Philip to the next step? Who has a contagious passion for God? Who might enlarge our vision, empower our members, and embrace a bit of risk? How about you?

### Thank you for your help! Your 2025 Nominating Committee:

Selena Brinegar (chair), Omi Ford, Sara Jean Jackson, Jane Lee, Dick Nunn, Gay Van Osdall

Please use the online form by scanning the QR code or going to <https://giving.myamplify.io/App/Form/747420bf-e507-4fbd-9ed4-d0c439560931>. **Self-nominations are welcome.** In making recommendations, please elaborate on personal qualities, involvement in our church, and why you consider this person a good candidate for church leadership. If you are recommending a Ruling Elder, please indicate the ministry area(s) you think they would best serve: Education; Finance; Mission; Peacemaking & Social Justice; Personnel; Property; Stewardship; Welcome & Membership; or Worship & Music.



[LEADER NOMINATION]

### RULING ELDER

In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities for leading the congregation, those who undertake the ministry of Ruling Elder should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. As members of the Session, they are responsible for the spiritual oversight of the congregation and for oversight of all the programs and ministries of St. Philip.

Currently serving as Elders:

Class of 2025—*Dan Boston, Laura Burgess, Maggie Dement, William Howard, Mary Thornton McGuire, Gary Whitney, Nancy Beck Young.*

Class of 2026—*Selena Brinegar, Kate Burkart, David Castro, Ada Fuller, Kurt Grether, and John Hartman.*

Class of 2027—*Lee Ardell, Tina Bryan, Sherri Dees, Pam Keever, Sarah Victorian, Al Waldrop, and Denise Wilborn.*

### TRUSTEE

The duties of the trustees are to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property on behalf of the congregation; and to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the congregation.

Currently serving as Trustees are *John Van Osdall, Casey Lambright, and Pam Taylor.*

### CENTRAL MISSION ENDOWMENT COUNCIL

Members of the council decide the disbursements of the Central Mission Endowment Fund (CMEF). Persons serving on the council should be interested in mission outreach with available time for site visits.

Currently serving on the council are *Bob Ardell, Betsy Boston, Ada Fuller (Session Rep), Roderick James, John Lindsay, Peg Palisin, Mike Queen (Mission Committee Rep), Jeanette Wennenveser, and Jennifer Wilson.*

If you prefer you can email your nomination and information to chair Selena Brinegar at [Selena.brinegar@gmail.com](mailto:Selena.brinegar@gmail.com). Nominations are due by **June 2**.

## IN OUR PRAYERS

*St. Philippians and their families*— Debra Unruh; Sue Howard; Stewart Coffman; Bonnie Moore; Rollie McGinnis; Russell Bahruth; Jeremy Mattern; Scott Easterly; Bill Holden; David Winship; Bob Ardell; Richard Johnson; Philip McDaniel; Charlotte Kibler; Carolyn Vestal; Diane Clarke; Susan Huffman; Barbara Cavanaugh; Mary Herlitz; Dick Nunn; Ben Dees; Joe Harwood; Kathryn Harwood; Nancy E. Johnson; Eleanor Grant; Judy Nunn; Molly Boren-Whitney; Don Padgett; Steve Adger; Judith Crane; Arlette Keene; Mezgebe Gebray; Katie Forbes, daughter of Marise Robbins-Forbes; Jacqui – cousin of Angelina Fonseca-Grewal; Terese Murphy - cousin of Gary Gardner and Peg Palisin; Guinn Blackwell-Eagleson and partner John Bonica; Vera Moore – mother of Chuck Johnson; Ann Perenyi – mother of Lad Perenyi; and Lillian Perkins – aunt and Ann Perkins Cloud—cousin of Stephen Paine.

*Homebound*—Elizabeth Arp; Beverly Baker; John Bobbitt; Joan Boelens; Jan Ostendorf; Edith Patterson; Joyce Randolph; George and Lorraine Scott; Mary Sinderson; and Sondra Sullivan.

*Friends of St. Philippians*—Marianne Keeswood – friend of Kate Burkart; Ann Eustler & Janet Rowlands – friends of Mary Mcguire; Audrey Eubank Harris, Jay Stokes & Anna Domonte, friends of Curt & Sharon Webb; Marianne Hash – friend of Jane Cooper; Mary Watters and Mindy Cooper-Smith – friends of Bill and Jacqueline Hamilton Taylor; Claude Bowden – friend of Peg Palisin and Gary Gardner; Kenneth and Donna Benton – friends of William Rowe; Patty Ryan and Tom Barnett - friends of Robin and Gary Willis; Jackie Janacek, Bill Ward, and Joyce Freudenber— friends of Stephen Paine; Betsy Shear Lewis – friend of Laney Miller; and Shirley Stubblefield—friend of Barbara Runge.

If you have a pastoral care need or a prayer request you would like to share, please email: [deacons@saintphilip.net](mailto:deacons@saintphilip.net)

**Prayer List is a powerful tool for bringing comfort, healing, and peace to those in need. So, let's keep it up to date and continue to lift up our brothers and sisters in prayer.**

## CONTRIBUTIONS

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 next edition of the Philip-Eye will be available:

**Tuesday, June 3—Deadline May29—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](mailto:philipeye@saintphilip.net) or call 713-622-4807 and ask for Lorrie.



MATTHEW 25



MORE LIGHT  
PRESBYTERIANS



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