

Preparation for Worship

Just as a mother feels the child grow in her and is not surprised on the day of the birth, but joyfully receives the one she learned to know during her waiting, so Jesus can be born in my life slowly and steadily and be received as the one I learned to know while waiting.

– Henri Nouwen

Voluntary Variations on Veni, Emmanuel Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006)

Greeting

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Introit Advent Message Martin How (1931-2022)

Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus,

Amen, come Lord Jesus. O come quickly, come Lord Jesus,

O come quickly, come Lord Jesus, O come quickly, come Lord come.

The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus, Amen, come Lord come.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

† Hymn 104 (see page 11)

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

† Prayer of Confession

Patient God,

We hear the voice of the prophet,

testifying to the light that all might believe.

But we listen with tolerance to the lies of oppressors.

We hear the song of Mary,

lauding the lowly and humble.

But we listen to a culture that values pride, possessions, and power.

We hear the eternal promise of your gospel,

proclaiming the salvation of the world.

But we listen to the endless news cycle reporting the desolation of the world.

Open our ears, O Gracious God,

to listen with reverence to your Word.

Forgive our skepticism

and soften our hearts to the promises of your kingdom until our ears hear and our hearts trust your gospel alone.

silent prayer

† Response



TEXT Ref. Taizé Community, 1984

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1984

Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

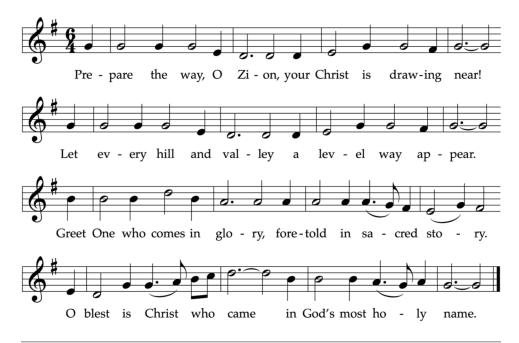
WAIT FOR THE LORD

8.8

† Declaration of Forgiveness

Believe the Good News. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

† Response



TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; translated by Augustus Nelson, 1958; adapted by Charles P. Price, 1980, alt. © 1982 Hope Publishing Company MUSIC: Then Swenska Psalmboken, 1697; arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN 7.6.7.6.7.6.6

† The Peace

Peace be with you. Peace be with all.

Conversation with Children

Infants - Age 4 may go to the Nursery in Room 106.

Prayer for Illumination

First Gospel Reading

Luke 1:46b-55

N.T. pg. 57

Holy wisdom, holy word. Thanks be to God!

Anthem

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987)

The tree of life my soul hath seen, Laden with fruit and always green; The trees of nature fruitless be, Compared with Christ the Apple Tree.

His beauty doth all things excel, By faith I know but ne'er can tell The glory which I now can see, In Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

For happiness I long have sought, And pleasure dearly I have bought; I missed of all but now I see 'Tis found in Christ the Apple Tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, Here I will sit and rest awhile, Under the shadow I will be, Of Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, It keeps my dying faith alive; Which makes my soul in haste to be With Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

Second Gospel Reading

John 1:6-8, 19-28

N.T. pgs. 91-92

Holy wisdom, holy word. Thanks be to God!

Sermon Who Are You? Keatan King

silence and stillness

† Hymn 96 (see page 11)

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

WINCHESTER NEW

Affirmation of Faith

from the Abbey of Iona

We believe that God is present in the darkness before dawn; in the waiting and uncertainty where fear and courage join hands, conflict and caring link arms, and the sun rises over barbed wire. We believe in a with-us God who sits down in our midst to share our humanity. We affirm a faith that takes us beyond the safe place: into action, into vulnerability and into the streets. We commit ourselves to work for change and put ourselves on the line; to bear responsibility, take risks, live powerfully and face humiliation; to stand with those on the edge; to choose life and be used by the Spirit for God's new community of hope. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;

for Thine is the Kingdom,

and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offering

Offertory

Variations on Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

O Lord our God, we give you thanks

for the hope and longing you instill in us through baptism.

By the power of your Holy Spirit,

keep us awake and make us ready

for the coming of your glorious realm

of righteousness, justice, and peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

† Hymn 100 (see page 12)

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

† Charge and Blessing

Please be seated in silence for the closing voluntary, or kindly depart quietly.

Voluntary

Final Verset on Gelobet seist du

Samuel Scheidt

SERVING TODAY

Pastors

Keatan King | Omar Rouchon | John Wurster

Liturgist

Steven Lawson

Musicians

St. Philip Choir | Sarah Bertrand, soloist | Jane Malczewskyj, conductor

Matthew Dirst, organist and interim choir director

FLOWERS

The flowers today are given by David and Joyce Fox to the glory of God and in celebration of their great granddaughter Emery Kate's second birthday today.

WORSHIP NOTES

Advent Candle lighting is led this week by the confirmation class of 2024: Ava Arlinghaus, Grayson Bratton, Sadie Fair, Isabella Ford, and Colby Stewart.

Today's Lectionary readings:

- Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 The spirit of the Lord is upon me; I will rejoice in my Savior.
- Psalm 126 When the Lord restored our fortunes, we shouted with joy.
- Luke 1:46b-55 My soul magnifies the Lord, who has done great things.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Rejoice, pray, give thanks; may God keep you until Christ's coming.
- John 1:6–8, 19–28 John came to testify to the light, so that all might believe.

MUSIC NOTES

Daniel Pinkham, longtime organist at King's Chapel in Boston, left a large body of music for the organ, including a colorful yet concise set of variations on "Veni, Emmanuel" that serves as today's **opening voluntary**. Its straightforward yet bracing musical language adds a sense of expectation and mystery to this familiar Advent melody.

Our **offertory** and **closing voluntary** are both drawn from the same set of versets (or variations) on Martin Luther's Advent chorale *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ* ("Praise be to You, Jesus Christ"). Its composer Samuel Scheidt was one of the leading lights of German Protestant church music in the first half of the 17th century. His organ music exploits the tonal resources of the North German organ—its abundance of piquant colors especially, which add variety and depth to individual lines in a busy contrapuntal texture.

Both of today's choral pieces come from 20th-century British composers who excelled in setting familiar texts with great sensitivity. Martin How, whose "Advent Message" serves as today's **introit**, taught for many years at the Royal School of Church Music, where he trained generations of young choristers. With a text that incorporates a well-known passage from the Book of Isaiah, this little gem bookends that prophesy with a brief choral refrain.

Elizabeth Poston was an accomplished pianist, academic, and a prolific composer of music for radio and television programs. Her setting of the anonymous poem "Jesus Christ the Apple Tree," one of her best-known carol settings and this morning's **anthem**, treats this text with loving simplicity, with varied voicing from verse to verse and multiple options for performance.

-Matthew Dirst

IN OUR PRAYERS

Pam Taylor and family upon the death of her brother Darryl Cazes on December 13.

St. Philippians and their families — Helen Deleon; Bob Ardell; Jan Ostendorf; Dick Nunn; Mark Takayama; Ben Dees; Shirley Coffman; Joe Harwood; Kathryn Harwood; Nancy Johnson; Beverly Baker; Beverly Hudson; Eleanor Grant; Judy Nunn; Molly Boren-Whitney; Carolyn Vestal; Don Padgett; Steve Adger; Judith Crane; Arlette Keene; Mezgebe Gebray; Alice Woodall-Chisholm — cousin of Mary McGuire; Sheila Kinsky and her children — sister of Bill Connolly; John Palisin — brother of Peg Palisin; Vera Moore — mother of Chuck Johnson; Carla Burns — cousin of Sharon Webb; Robert Kirtley — father of Amanda Kirtley; Susan Everhart — niece of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Ann Perenyi — mother of Lad Perenyi; Darryl Cazes — brother of Pam Taylor; and Ann Perkins Cloud — cousin of Stephen Paine.

Homebound — Elizabeth Arp; John Bobbitt; Joan Boelens; Edith Patterson; Joyce Randolf; George and Larraine Scott; Mary Sinderson; and Sondra Sullivan.

Friends of St. Philippians — Kenneth and Donna Benton – friends of William Rower; Magdalena Rustomji - friend of Mickey & Ken Meyers; Aleksandra Y. Skochilenko – Nancy Higgs; Caitlan Prescott – friend of Mary McGuire; Mary Watters – friend of Jacqueline Hamilton Taylor; Tom Barnett - friend of Robin and Gary Willis; Joyce Freudenberg and Annie & Sidney Roach – friends of Stephen Paine; Jacqueline Boyd – friend of Kate Burkart; 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

The Presbyterian Women in conjunction with their annual Christmas luncheon are collecting donations for the PW Thank Offering, blue envelopes are in the pew or anyone may donate to the fund by going to the <u>saintphilip.net</u> homepage and selecting *Make a Contribution*, then selecting PW Thank Offering as the fund. The Thank Offering provides grants up to \$50,000 to worthwhile programs each year. The recipients are always a mix of domestic and international projects, but all meet crucial needs. At least 40 percent of this offering funds health ministries, often helping the most marginalized members of God's community. The remaining percentage supports new or expanded projects and small capital improvement projects. Learn about the projects funded this year. https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/what_we_do/support-mission/thank-offering/.

Merry Christmas

Thank you to those who have contributed poinsettias this Christmas to adorn our chancel.

The list is continued on the next page.

e we remember: n & Orlean McCallum neth L. Anderson Jr. parents, William & Maurine Camfield and y & Alma Kindig parents, Don & Valerie Meyer	
parents, William & Maurine Camfield and y & Alma Kindig	
y & Alma Kindig	
parents Don & Valerie Meyer	
parents, Don & valence wieger	
y Howard	
Eugene & Ruth Howard	
Glen & Affie Tate	
Bill & Martha Runge	
Douglass L. Simmons	
Paxton Williams	
Fred C. Alcorn, my husband; Cecile & Carl Stuebing, my parents	
Cliff Cleveland, my beloved son	
Lillian Bantau, Dan Cooper, & Kathy Mason	
Don Davis, Ruth Ewing, & John Burnett	
Rita & John Hannah	
Our parents	
Jack & Ruth Ewing	
Jack Fox	
My mother, father, & brother	
Our mothers, Lunetta & Pattye Sue	
Our moms	
My mother, Pamela Kirtley	
Lee R. Larkin & John P. Larkin	
James Henry Leonard	
James H. Leonard	
Doris Leonard	
Stanley & Beedie Heaps	
Parents, Pete & Gussie Heilbron	
Our parents, Ross & Gertrude Neeley	
Our parents, Gene & Betty Moore	
Ellen Red, David Red & Dick Schissler	
My parents, Mary Ann & Tom Sands & my brother, Rod Sands	
Dick Schissler	
My husband, Bill Slick	

Given by:	Those we remember:	
Aileen Todd, Allison & Chris Newport	Harry Todd & James Newport	
Julie Wangler	My husband, Thomas Wangler	
Linda Weinmann	Don Weinmann	
Hope Wilmarth	Lance Wilmarth	
Jennifer Wilson	My mother, Helen Wilson	
Butch & Anne Wilson	Our parents: Ken & Marion Takehara and Mac & Beverly Wilson	
Ruena Wood & Family	Rev. Dr. Stuart Wood	
John Wurster & Deb Burks	Darnall Burks	
Given by:	Those we honor:	
Bob & Lee Ardell		
Linda Bevill	The wonderful staff of St Philip	
Sharon Coufal	Wilbert Parada & Dimas Parada Grandsons Gabi Vann & Andres Vann	
Liz Crowell	Nancy Scott	
Susan & Robert Estill	Mary Jane & Phillip McDaniel	
Jan Fox	Bennettt, Asher, & Shiloh	
David & Suzanne Kerr	St. Philip Choir	
Jane Larkin	Jim, Penny & Amelia Larkin	
John Lemen	Matthew Dirst	
Bonnie & Greg Moore	Our grandson Sebastian	
Cathy Patterson	Jane Malczewskyj & the Bell Canto	
Lynn & Stuart Red	Nan Schissler	
Jenilee Simmons	Sheryl Curtain & family	
Jenilee Simmons	Doug W. Simmons & family	
David & Hallie Spence	Mary Linda Williams	
Ruthie & Al Waldrop	Will, Lauren, Annie & Mary Louise Waldrop	
Ruthie & Al Waldrop	Nancy & Justin Marlen	
Ruthie & Al Waldrop	Virginia Waldrop	
Jennifer Wilson	My father, Victor Bill Wilson	

Thanks to all who have already made a 2024 pledge. Pledge cards can be placed in the offering plate Sunday or mailed to the church office. There is also an online option through <u>My-SaintPhilip</u>.

2023 pledge payments and additional gifts will help us bring this year's budget into balance.

PLEDGES AS OF 11/29/2023

Year	# of pledge cards	Pledged	Difference from 2023
2024	125	\$1,011,202	(\$126,640)
2023	141	\$1,137,842	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cover art by Micah Meyers.

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The Affirmation of Faith comes from The Iona Abbey Book of Worship.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE ON RECESS BEGINNING DECEMBER 24 AND RETURN JANUARY 7

GODLY PLAY – Ages 3 – Kindergarten – Room 104 ELEMENTARY – Grades 1-5 – Room 105 YOUTH – Grades 6-12 – Room 205

FAITH & LIFE – Room 200 – An adult class exploring how what we believe informs how we live. Using the short stories in *The Gift of Hard Things: Finding Grace in Unexpected Places* by Mark Yaconelli, participants will read a short text in class and then engage in conversation as a group. There are no materials required and no preparation is needed.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY—Room 204—We resume our study of the Kingdom of Judah at 2 Kings 18 with the story of King Hezekiah in Dr. Robert Alter's *Ancient Israel, The Former Prophets* (2013). Join us from **9:30 a.m.** – **10:40 a.m.** 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.

CHURCH & SOCIETY—Room 201—Join us from **9:30 a.m.**—**10:40 a.m.** with presentations in person and by Zoom. Church & Society will not meet the Sundays Dec. 24 or Dec. 31. - Church & Society will resume classes Jan. 7 - "The State of St. Philip Presbyterian Church - Looking back at 2023, looking forward to 2024" - presented by the Rev. Dr. John Wurster. Email Mickey Meyers if you would like to join any of the classes: churchsociety_stphilip@comcast.net.

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL—We will have Children's Chapel the second and fourth Sundays after *Conversation with Children*. In the Children's Chapel, our young disciples learn the whos, whats, wheres, whens and whys of worship, while praying, singing, 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.

ST. PHILIP DURING THE WEEK

LAMBETH STUDY-Keatan King leads young adults in study every Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. It is a time of study, reflection, and prayer. If you would like more details, email Keatan King at:

keatan@saintphilip.net.

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY — Wednesday Bible Study with John Wurster is on recess until **January 10, 2024.**

WOMEN'S MONTHLY BOOK CLUB—This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. The next meeting is **Jan. 11** at 7:00 p.m. and we will discuss *Exiles* by Jane Harper. Watch your email for details of the next meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nina Lambright at: nnl@lambrightlaw.com.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP—This class is on recess beginning Dec. 22 through Jan. 5. 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 a.m. We are studying *They Walked With God* by Max Lucado. The book talks about 40 people in the Bible and how God used them. It lets us know that he has a place for us too. If you would like to join them please contact Gary Gardner at ggardne148@aol.com.

MONDAYS IN ADVENT—LECTIO DIVINA ON ZOOM—Final class—Dec. 18 at 9:00-9:20 a.m.—What is Lectio Divina? The ancient desert fathers and mothers believed that scripture was like a love letter written to us by God. Thus, the meditative, guided scriptural reflection known as Lectio Divina ("divine reading") assumes that God speaks to us intimately, God is already praying in us, and we'll experience a profound encounter with the heart of God, rather than an intellectual study of scripture. To prepare, you are encouraged to choose a comfortable place to sit wherever you are (at home, work, in the car) and all participants will have video off and sound off during the Zoom. If you would like to participate email Keatan at:

keatan@saintphilip.net.

ADVENT AT ST. PHILIP Everyone is invited to attend the final midweek Advent services, on Wednesday, December 20. The service begins at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary. Lunch is available in the Gathering Area at 12:30. These services of scripture and song are grounded in the Advent themes of hope and expectation. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will also be celebrated. Prepare the way of the Lord!

CHRISTMAS AT ST. PHILIP

DECEMBER 24

11:00 a.m. — *Let Heaven and Nature Sing* A Christmas service of readings, art and music.

Candlelight Services

4:30 p.m. - A Whimsical Telling of the Birth of Jesus

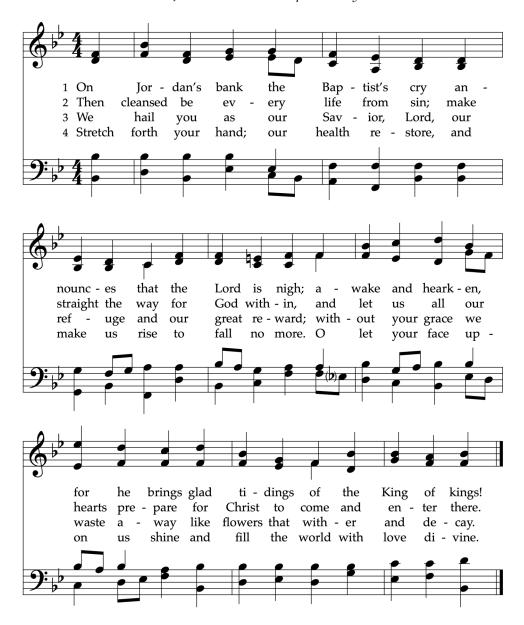
7:00 p.m. - Communion Service with the St. Philip Choir



Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, this more contemplative text considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

TEXT: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863, alt. MUSIC: Melchior Teschner, 1614; harm. William Henry Monk, 1861

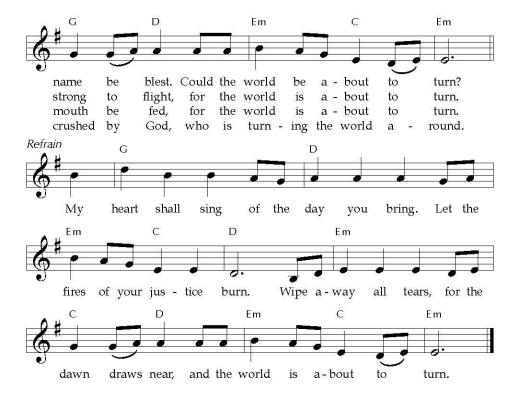
VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN



This hymn shows how once-unconnected parts can work together. The text about John the Baptist was written in Latin in the 18th century and translated into English in the 19th century. Similarly, the 17th-century melody was adapted to its present form in the 19th century.



prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46–55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.

TEXT: Rory Cooney, 1990 MUSIC: Irish melody; arr. Rory Cooney, 1990 Text and Music Arr. © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc. STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

Return to page 5





Welcome to Worship at St. Philip

Please register your attendance by scanning the QR code or by visiting the Guest Book tab at saintphlip.net.

As FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST,
we seek to be an inclusive,
grace-filled community,
engaging the world with open minds,
willing hands and generous hearts.

WE LONG

for deeper faith, vibrant hope and boundless love for everyone, every day, everywhere.

Thank you for joining us today! We hope that you find our worship together to be joyous, meaningful, and thought-provoking. **Children of all ages** are welcome to worship with their families. Activity bags containing worship aids for children are available in the narthex on the way into the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available throughout the morning from 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 our Nursery in Room 106 of the Education Building along the Sunday School Classroom hallway on the first floor. An usher or a greeter will be happy to direct you there.

A Hearing Loop is installed within the sanctuary. If you have a hearing aid equipped with a telecoil, please activate your "T switch" to hear the worship service most clearly. If you need assistance with hearing the service clearly and do not have a t-coil equipped hearing aid, please ask an usher for wireless headphones. LARGE PRINT COPIES OF TODAY'S HYMNS ARE IN THE NARTHEX.

Connect with St. Philip through <u>saintphilip.net</u> and our social media. To join our e-mail list for regular news updates, send a note to <u>lorrie@saintphilip.net</u>.

If you are interested in joining St. Philip Presbyterian Church by profession of faith, by reaffirming your faith, or by transferring your membership, please speak with one of the ministers today or call the church office during the week. The Session meets the third Sunday of each month after the 11:00 worship service in Room 100 for the purpose of receiving new members.

Worship with us, whenever, wherever. Our 11:00 a.m. Sunday service is live-streamed at saintphilip.net. We also live-stream a midweek prayer on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. Services can be viewed live or later in our video archives.

Contributions, pledge payments, communion gifts and other donations to support the Church can be made anytime through our website, text "SPPC" to 73256 and follow the prompts, or sent to the Church Office at 4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056.

ATTENTION STOCK DONORS!

Frost Bank is St. Philip's broker service. We ask you to call: Yvette Webb at Frost Bank – 713-388-1231 for transaction information. Our account number is #037-293183.

Please let the bookkeeper know you are making a stock donation. You may email bookkeeper@saintphilip.net.

If you have any questions, you may always contact Rhonda Sands, rsands2701@aol.com or 713-315-0096.