

The Epistle

Monthly Newsletter of St. Philip Lutheran Church | January 2016



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Harry Potter and Evangelism

Now, that might seem like an unlikely pairing to you, but it really isn't and here's why.

In the Harry Potter movies, there was a main character whose name was rarely spoken, instead he was referred to as "You-Know-Who" or "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named." The character was so mean, evil really, that no one would speak his name for fear of death. This fear gave Voldemort so much control and power. It wasn't until Harry grew up and developed his powers to confront this evil that the man's name was finally spoken and then defeated.

The word "evangelism" seems to generate that same kind of fear in us. Within the church it's "the-word-which-must-not-be-spoken" or "the-action-which-must-not-be-taken." While the word itself means "good news," it's associated with the practice of telling others about Jesus. The image that often comes to mind when we think about evangelism is of street Evangelists yelling at people as they pass by about the judgment to come or TV Evangelists who use fear to convince people that they need a personal relationship with Jesus.

All of this causes us to avoid evangelism for fear of being like those other evangelists, or that our words will offend someone, or worry that we don't know enough about the Bible, or anxiety that we won't have the right answer to someone's question or the right response when someone challenges our faith. You see, we have a lot of baggage with this word!

Harry Potter and Evangelism (continued)

In *Unbinding Your Heart* we get a new definition of evangelism. The author, Martha Grace Reese, defines evangelism as “faith sharing.” It’s not at all about convincing someone to become a Christian or bombarding someone with words of judgment about their own faith or the lack thereof.

Instead evangelism is all about sharing the impact of our faith within the relationships we have and the people we encounter each day. It’s about naming the source of our faith, the source of our peace, the source of our joy, and the source of comfort in our lives.

In 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV), we read “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” Our study of *Unbinding Your Heart* will immerse us in the safety of a small group of people so that we can practice speaking about the reason for the hope that is ours every day. Through this experience, we’ll deepen our relationships with God and each other as we meet together weekly for prayer and caring conversations.

My hope and prayer is that you’ll participate in this transformative experience for both you and the congregation!

The What and Why of Unbinding Your Heart

The What...our whole-congregation study of *Unbinding Your Heart* is about “untying the knots that keep us from living exciting lives” ... with God and with each other. “It’s about unbinding the Good News that God adores us and everyone else, that God has shown this to us through Jesus Christ.”* It’s also a prayer journal with many forms of classic Christian prayer included in the daily prayers that accompany the study.

Untying and unbinding...so often we find ourselves knotted up with doubt, anxiety, and worry. These emotions can spur us to ask questions and seek solutions or they can paralyze us and keep us from living joyfully in the Good News that God loves us completely. By becoming more fully aware of God’s presence in our every days lives and by becoming more comfortable speaking about our faith with others the knots that bind our hearts will be untangled.

The Why...people in churches across the country are excited about what is happening in their congregations through the study of *Unbinding Your Heart*: deeper relationships with God, a rich, meaningful personal prayer life, and a new sense of God’s activity in their lives. People are saying they can be more ‘real’ with others as their relationship with God grows ... and that this extends to relationships within their families and with people in every area of their lives.

This extraordinary experience will transform us as individuals and as a congregation. As each one of us becomes more excited about God’s relationship and presence in our lives, St. Philip will become a more exciting faith community where the Good News of God’s love is made known through vibrant worship, engaging faith formation, joyful fellowship, and generous outreach and care of our neighbors.

Be sure to sign up today!

Complete the registration form at the Welcome Center or the rear of Kepley Hall

Go online to complete the electronic form on our website: www.st-philip.org

*Quotes are from the Introduction to *Unbinding Your Heart*, page 3.

Unbinding Your Heart Group Meeting Times

January 17 – Kick off Sunday

Small Groups begin meeting during the week of January 18. Mark your calendar for the start date of your small group. You don't want to miss the first session!

- Monday, 10 am – begins on January 18
- Monday, 6:30 pm – begins on January 18
- Wednesday, 6:30 pm – begins on January 20
 - Thursday, 10 am – begins on January 21
 - Sunday, 9:15 am – begins on January 24
 - Sunday, 11:15 am – begins on January 24
 - Sunday, 12:30 pm – begins on January 24

Unbinding Your Heart Kick-off Sunday – January 17, 2016 at 10:20 am

Who?

- Those who want to learn more about the Unbinding Your Heart experience
- Those who have already signed up to participate in the experience.

What?

- An introduction to Unbinding Your Heart and the small group process.
- An opportunity to ask questions and get more information
- An opportunity to sign up before the event gets started.
- Confirmation about your small group.

Where?

- Gather in Luther Hall for this conversation

What are small groups and why should I participate in one?

It is sometimes very difficult to get to know people in a congregation the size of St. Philip especially since we have 3 worship services. The reality is that worship isn't really conducive to helping us get to know each other. Because of the way the worship space is configured we sit facing front and looking at the back of the heads in front of us. Apart from the Sharing of the Peace, we rarely have the opportunity to interact with each other.

Committee meetings are a little better because we gather together around a common table and make eye contact with each other. The challenge with committee meetings is that we become so task focused that we really don't spend time hearing each other's stories. Together we may do what needs to be done but we really don't deepen our relationships with God and each other.

The small groups formed during our experience with Unbinding Your Heart will offer the relational setting in which we can get to know each more fully. We'll make connections with each other that will expand beyond the small group gatherings transforming small group members and the congregation at large.

Small groups help us get close enough to know each other, to care and share, to challenge and support, to laugh and weep together, to be accountable to each other, to watch over each other and to grow together.

Small groups are most effective when a loving and comfortable environment is established. Group members need to feel safe in the groups so that they can participate more fully. Some tips that will enhance our small groups and make the experience more meaningful to you and others:

- Small groups will be limited to no more than 8 people so that everyone has the opportunity to participate.
- Select a small group time that best fits in your schedule so that you can consistently attend the meetings.
- Avoid switching between groups. The presence of a new person in a group can upset the dynamics of the group.
- Make every effort to attend your group each week so that you don't miss anything. The groups will have conversations each week that will be difficult to reproduce.

Be sure to indicate your preference for a small group when you complete the sign-up form.

I don't sing...I don't play any musical instruments...I don't read music...but...

I'd like to do something to assist the Music Ministry of St. Philip!

If you enjoy doing data entry, St. Philip's Music Ministries would welcome your assistance as we catalogue the entire music library of the church. Each piece of music will be entered on an Excel spreadsheet with specific information that will aid in worship planning present and for the future of our congregation.

You can work independently as your personal schedule permits. Chat with Marcia, the Music Lady (or email her at marciakb@st-philip.org) about how YOU can take part in launching the SPLC Music Library Data Base!



Going Green

If you still need envelopes for the upcoming year contact Janis Lawrence. You will no longer be receiving the pink envelopes in the mail. You can contact her at JanisTango@nc.rr.com or 919-845-1684. You can also put a note in the offering plate. Make sure it includes your name and how many envelopes you will need. They will be printed up and ready for pick up at the welcome center within a week!



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

On behalf of the families in our program, we wish to extend our sincerest thanks to those of you who helped make Christmas extra special this year by providing gifts for our HOLIDAY SMILES program. The joy on the parents' faces as they picked up their presents was wonderful. Tears rolled down one mom's cheeks as she told us she was preparing to tell her two-year-old that because

they had just moved (into their own apartment!), Santa couldn't find them. Instead, she received a wonderful bounty of toys, clothing, and much-needed household items. Another mom asked for and received her own bicycle. "I haven't ridden in years," she smiled, "but I want to get out and exercise with my kids!" Parents are working hard to keep to a budget, and Holiday Smiles helps them do that.

HEADING HOME - HOME STRETCH

Our fall fundraising campaign is coming to a close and as of this writing, we're closing in on our \$50,000 goal, and we're very close to reaching our Stewards Fund matching grant goal of \$19,000 in new or increased donations. Thanks to all who have helped us raise vital funds which will help us expand our urgently-needed efforts to reduce the number of nights any child is homeless in our community.

We send our warmest wishes for a happy holiday and a blessed New Year.

Share and help us get the word out

Do you use Instagram? Connect with us (PLMFT). You'll also find regular updates on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/PLMFT), and on Twitter (@PLMFT).

Financial Peace University

Tired of living in debt? Credit Card bills from Christmas piling up? Ring in 2016 by getting your finances in order, cutting up your Credit Cards, reducing debt and taking control of your money. Join us for a Financial Peace University course at St. Philip in Luther Hall starting March 28, 2016. Classes begin at 6:30 pm and last for 90 minutes so you're welcome to bring a brown bag dinner for yourself since this class starts near the dinner hour.

Start 2016 off right. Get your debt under control and live like no one else so you can live and give like no one else.

To assist members in keeping their commitment to the "Unbinding your Heart" Lenten study, no Ladies Lunches, Puzzle Afternoons, or Bus trips will be scheduled in January, February, or March.

Senior Ministry Committee Meeting is January 6, 10:00 am, in the church library. All are welcome



Men's Breakfast, 8:30 am on January 26th. Join us for Breakfast at Big Ed's in Quail Corners Shopping Center, 5009 Falls of Neuse Road.

Enjoy good food and fellowship. To reserve your place; talk to, call, or email Frank Bouknight (919-302-1812 or bouknightf@yahoo.com).

"The Spectacular, Incredible, Pre-Sabbatical, Buffet, Potluck, 'Come as you are', Blow-out Lunch is scheduled for January 14th in Luther Hall beginning at 11:30. Bring your favorite dish (homemade or purchased) **OR, in lieu of food**, make a freewill donation to Senior Ministry. To help us plan, please call or email Sandra Kelly if you are planning to attend (919-247-1038; sankelly55@hotmail.com). Are you bringing food? If so, it will be helpful to know, when you make your reservation, if you will be bringing; meat, salad, side (hot or cold) or dessert. Potlucks are always fun and we are planning some surprises. Mark your calendar and make your reservation now.



Calling all Middle and High School youth, it's time to get registered for the LYO Assembly!!!

February 26-28, \$95

Lutheran Youth Organization

The Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Assembly is held in Greensboro every year and includes music, worship, speakers, and breakout sessions with LOTS of other Lutheran youth in North Carolina. The cost for this weekend is \$95, St. Philip will be paying \$42 of every youth registration. We will meet at St. Philip at 5:30 on Friday. We will stop for dinner along the way and there will be snack purchasing opportunities throughout the weekend so be sure to send extra money with your youth. We will return to St. Philip by the end of 11:15 service on Sunday! Please RSVP to cathryn@st-philip.org. Registration deadline is January 5th.

St. Philip Lutheran Preschool News

December for the Preschool was a very busy, fun-filled month as we focused on the true meaning of Christmas. Each class had a birthday party for Jesus and a Christmas program was held on December 18.

Our Teacher Appreciation Committee, made up of preschool moms provided a beautiful brunch for teachers. It was enjoyed by all.

As you may remember, our enrollment had declined the past few years. In 2014-2015 we had 52 children enrolled, so we began an aggressive marketing plan for our preschool. We reached out to former parents and encouraged them to tell others about our wonderful preschool. We also invited them to make donations towards improvements for the playground. Their donations, love and prayers and the work of our Board and teachers increased our enrollment to 90 children and provided an improved playground area. We invite members of St. Philip Lutheran Church to prayerfully consider a donation to our school and be recognized as "Friends of St. Philip Lutheran Preschool Donor." Donations made for the 2015/2016 school year will go to current needs such as educational furniture and toys, an outside learning environment, or new playground equipment.

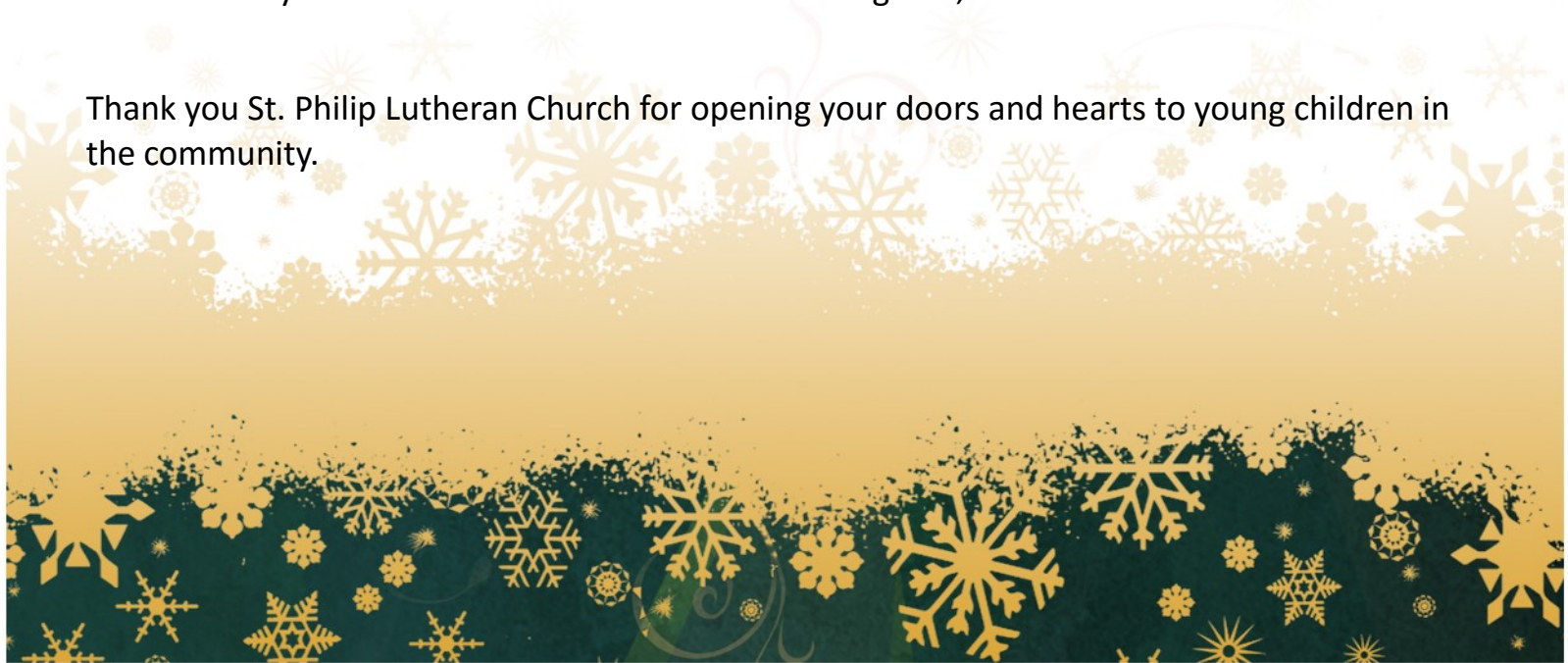
Upcoming Events

January 5 – Preschool Registration for current families and church members

January 15- Preschool Registration for new families.

January 30 – Winterfest – 10:00-12:00 featuring Elsa, Anna & Olaf

Thank you St. Philip Lutheran Church for opening your doors and hearts to young children in the community.



Sub Sales Order Form



Name _____

Please have ready by: 9:15AM 11:15AM
 10:15AM 12:15PM

Please use a separate order form for each sandwich!

Meat(s):

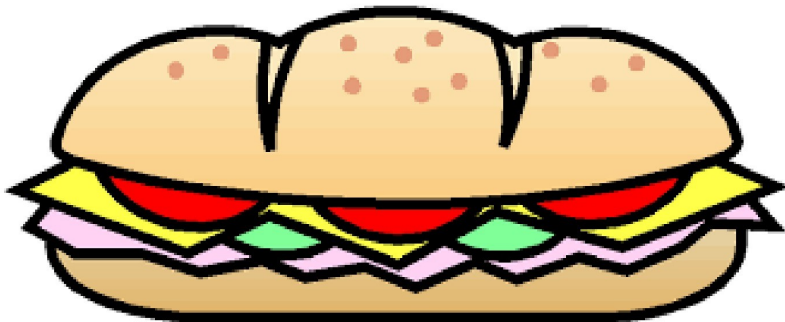
_____ Ham
_____ Roast Beef
_____ Turkey

Cheese:

_____ American
_____ Provolone

Toppings:

_____ Mayonnaise	_____ Mustard
_____ Oil & Vinegar	_____ Lettuce
_____ Tomato	_____ Onion
_____ Sweet Peppers	_____ Black Olives
_____ Pickles	



Sub Sales February 7th

Who makes the best subs in the world? It is the St. Philip Youth!! Sign up now for your sub! Free will donations are welcome and any proceeds

will go toward sending the youth to the National Gathering in Houston, TX in 2018! Be sure to mark on the order form if you would like to pick up your sub at 9:15, 10:15, 11:15, or at 12:15. Return completed order forms to the marked file outside of Cathryn's office, the Gathering Room, across from the library or return your order via e-mail to me (cathryn@st-philip.org). We very much appreciate all the support you give to our youth!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Kristine Dutton	1/1	Janice Carpenter	1/13
Christine Grantham	1/2	Alayna Carlson	1/15
Tina Kupsky	1/2	Liam Pongracz	1/15
Nyah Schroeder	1/3	Tim Casadonte	1/16
Pam Harrell	1/4	Susan DeSantis	1/16
Greg Kupsky	1/4	Claire Muller	1/16
Brad Halferty	1/5	Derek Swartz	1/16
Paul DeSantis	1/7	Carolyn Cesare	1/18
Mark Krynock	1/7	David Hensley	1/19
Herschel Miller	1/7	Elle Milo	1/19
Grace Bennett	1/8	Carol Wessler	1/20
Janet Thoren	1/8	Evelyn Flora	1/21
Julius Cesare	1/9	Anne Travis	1/21
Sydney Grantham	1/9	Erica Andrews	1/23
Mary Lee Steinke	1/9	Julie Helmey	1/23
Rob Wiener	1/10	Cindy Wolfe	1/24
Crystal Ridenhour	1/11	Kathryn Shermer	1/25
Kathy Casadonte	1/12	Kristina Vinsel	1/26
Lynn Kavcsak	1/12	Amy Halferty	1/30

Happy Anniversary

Mauri & Karen Gifford	1/1/1968	48
Brad & Amy Halferty	1/6/1996	20
Kelly & Kathy Croft	1/10/1997	19
Harry & Marion Iverson	1/22/1966	50
Anne & Carlton Howard	1/23/2009	7
Charles & Lynn Kavcsak	1/26/1985	31



JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10:00 AM Al-Anon 7:00 PM AA OFFICE CLOSED	2 7:00 PM AA
3 8:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 9:10 AM Crossing 10:20 AM Sunday School 11:15 AM Worship Service with Communion	4 10:00 AM Bible Study	5 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Property Team 7:00 PM TEC 7:00 PM Worship & Music	6 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel 10:00 AM Sr. Ministry 6:00 PM GROW Meal (Luther Hall) 6:30PM MS & HS Youth Groups 6:45 PM Joyful Noise Kidz Choir 6:45 PM Bible Study 7:30 PM Adult Choir	7 6:15 PM SPOT 6:30 PM Crossing Team 7:00 PM Finance	8 10:00 AM Al-Anon 7:00 PM AA	9 10:00 AM Brown Bag Ministry 7:00 PM AA
10 8:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 9:10 AM Crossing 10:20 AM Sunday School 11:15 AM Worship Service with Communion	11 10:00 AM Bible Study	12 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:30 AM Saints & Sinners 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	13 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel 6:00 PM GROW Meal (Luther Hall) 6:30PM MS & HS Youth Groups 6:45 PM Joyful Noise Kidz Choir 6:45 PM Bible Study 7:30 PM Adult Choir	14 6:30 PM Crossing Team 6:30 PM Girl Scouts	15 10:00 AM Al-Anon 7:00 PM AA	16 8:00 AM Habitat Build Day 7:00 PM AA
17 8:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 9:10 AM Crossing 10:20 AM Unbinding Your Heart Kick-Off 11:15 AM Worship Service with Communion	18 10:00 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Unbinding Your Heart 5:30 PM PLMFT 6:45 PM Unbinding Your Heart	19 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	20 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel 6:00 PM GROW Meal (Luther Hall) 6:30PM MS & HS Youth Groups 6:45 PM Joyful Noise Kidz Choir 6:45 PM Unbinding Your Heart 7:30 PM Adult Choir	21 10:00 AM Unbinding Your Heart 4:30 PM Salvation Army	22 10:00 AM Al-Anon 7:00 PM AA	23 10:00 AM Brown Bag Ministry 7:00 PM AA
24 8:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 9:10 AM Crossing 9:15 AM Unbinding Your Heart 10:15 AM Congregational Meeting 11:15 AM Worship Service with Communion 11:15 AM Unbinding Your Heart	25 10:00 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Unbinding Your Heart 6:45 PM Unbinding Your Heart	26 6:30 PM Women's Group	27 9:30 AM Preschool Chapel 6:00 PM GROW Meal (Luther Hall) 6:30PM MS & HS Youth Groups 6:45 PM Joyful Noise Kidz Choir 6:45 PM Unbinding Your Heart 7:30 PM Adult Choir	28 10:00 AM Unbinding Your Heart 1:00 PM Sr. Team 6:30 PM Girl Scouts	29 10:00 AM Al-Anon 7:00 PM AA	30 9:00 AM Building Up 10:00 AM Pre-school Winterfest 7:00 PM AA
31 8:00 AM Worship Service with Communion 9:10 AM Crossing 9:15 AM Unbinding Your Heart 10:20 AM Sunday School 11:15 AM Worship Service with Communion 11:15 AM Unbinding Your Heart						

St. Philip Lutheran Church—2015 Spending Plan

A Fully Funded Ministry Spending Plan!

Thanks be to God!

November 30
Goal: \$449,364
Actual: \$451,294

September 30
Goal: \$356,793
Actual: \$344,824

July 31
Actual:
\$264,222

God has blessed us
with all that we
need to do the work
of ministry in this
place!

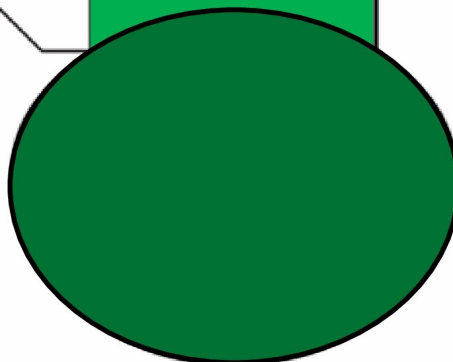
December 31
Goal: \$495,650
Actual:

October 31
Goal: \$403,079
Actual: \$403,279

August 31
Goal \$310,508
Actual: \$306,862

Your generosity in
the first half of
2015 got us this
far!

*For your information, the
approved monthly financial
reports are now in a note-
book at the Welcome Center .*



Building Up Event - January 30, 2016

Building Up the Body of Christ has been a focus for this past year and continues to shape the ways that we are church together at St. Philip.

On **Saturday, January 30th from 9am - 1pm**, congregational leaders are encouraged to attend this unique, interactive, and informative event. This includes council members, committee chairs, small group leaders, task force leaders, others who serve in leadership positions, staff members, and those who desire to serve as a leader.

The purpose of the event is to support, develop, and enable ministry leaders to help unleash the assets and gifts within St. Philip for building up the Body of Christ.

The event will be facilitated by The Rev. Doug Kearney, a pastor in the North Carolina Synod who serves as a consultant to congregations. The Mutual Ministry team is sponsoring the event. Please call or email the church office to let us know that you are attending so that we can make sure to have enough materials on hand. Speak to Pastor Pam or Paul Grantham if you have questions or need more information.



St. Philip Lutheran Church
7304 Falls of Neuse Road
Raleigh, NC 27615



Like us on
[Facebook](#)

Deadline for the January Epistle is
Tuesday, December 15.

Submissions should be sent to
Natalie at admin@st-philip.org.
Submissions received after the
15th may be sent out in the
weekly E-News.

Deadline for E-News and BBN is
Wednesday at 12:00 noon.

Sunday Morning Schedule:

8:00 a.m. Traditional Service
9:10 a.m. Crossing Service in
Kepley Hall
10:20 a.m. Sunday School
11:15 a.m. Traditional Service

Office Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm
Website: www.st-philip.org

Rev. Pam Northrup
Senior Pastor
pastorpam@st-philip.org
919-987-0102
(in case of emergency)

Cathryn Hewett
Director of Faith Formation
Cathryn@st-philip.org

Marcia Klinder-Badgley
Director of Music Ministries
marciakb@st-philip.org

Natalie Williams
Office Administrator
admin@st-philip.org

Y'Sang Milo
Custodian