

# The Epistle

February, 2024

St. Philip Lutheran Church



## Pastor's Message

One of the things I have historically liked about the month of February is that it celebrates excellence in our American culture. It used to be the Grammys, the Super Bowl, the NBA All-Star Weekend, and the Oscars were aired in consecutive weeks in February (often in that order). So we were treated to excellence in music, pro football, pro basketball, and filmmaking. Lately, the Oscars have been pushed into March, a couple weeks removed from the others. And now that I'm older, the Grammys no longer have the same appeal to me as they once did, though I still try to tune in. (I may be turning into somewhat of a grumpy old man: "you call THAT music?" For the first time ever, I'm going to write in a newsletter article..."LOL!")

St. Paul writes to the Philippians, "Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any EXCELLENCE and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (4:8) (emphasis mine). Of course, St. Paul is not talking about excellence in cultural matters; he would not even have been aware of such subsequent concepts as professional sports or cinema. Rather, here he is speaking of spiritual matters. Excellence is defined as "the quality of being outstanding or extremely good"; it comes from the Latin word meaning "surpass."

Love is an excellent thing, for example. When St. Paul writes to the Corinthians his famous passage concerning love in chapter 13 of his first letter, he prefaces it by declaring, "I will show you a still more EXCELLENT way" (12:31) (again, emphasis mine).

February is also the traditional month of love, as we celebrate Valentine's Day on the 14th. This is a secular holiday, which once had its roots in the Christian faith. Regardless – and despite the rampant consumerism

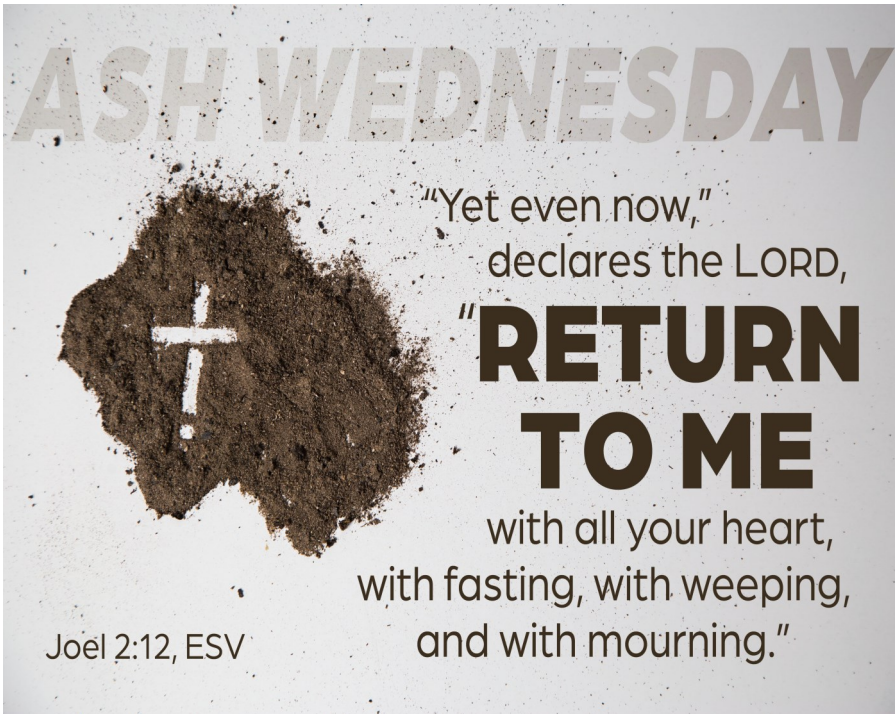
which now surrounds it – it is still an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the excellent gift of love. This year, February 14th happens to be Ash Wednesday, which serves as the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a 40-day season of repentance and contrition prior to Easter. It presents an EXCELLENT opportunity for introspection, deepened prayer, fasting, almsgiving, sacrifice, and works of love.

This year, we are offering you Wednesday evening Taizé worship services at 6:30pm in our sanctuary (except for Holy Week) and a daily devotional entitled "Gathered into One" which will be available soon. We will likely also have an opportunity to contribute to a meaningful gift to our local Camp Agape, though details are still being worked out as of this writing.

The winner of this month's Super Bowl will lift the prized Lombardi trophy. It is named after legendary Green Bay Packers coach, Vince Lombardi, who once told his team, "Gentleman, we will chase perfection, and we will chase it relentlessly, knowing all the while we can never attain it. But along the way, we shall catch excellence." We do not chase perfection here, but because of the Holy Spirit, we have accomplished some excellent things as of late. Just today I discovered that, among other things, last month's average worship attendance (168 people) was the highest in the four years I've been here. So thank you for valuing worship and taking it seriously as a part of your discipleship – and for continuing to invite people to visit.

People of God, siblings in Christ, members of St. Philip: you are an excellent people. Because you have an excellent God. Continue, in Lent, to "think about excellent things." And to take advantage of the excellent opportunities we have here in this holy season.

Sharing the Love of Christ,  
Pastor Tim



## Worship Services with the Imposition of Ashes

Wednesday, February 14th  
1:00 pm & 7:00 pm.

Ash Wednesday is the Wednesday of the seventh week before Easter and the first day of Lent. The day is named for the practice of imposing ashes, a practice that many Lutheran congregations have found to be a very meaningful part of the Ash Wednesday liturgy.

Using ashes as a sign of repentance is an ancient practice, often mentioned in the Bible (e.g., Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Jeremiah 6:26; Matthew 11:21). The early Christians adopted the use of ashes from Jewish practice as an external mark of penitence.

~ELCA

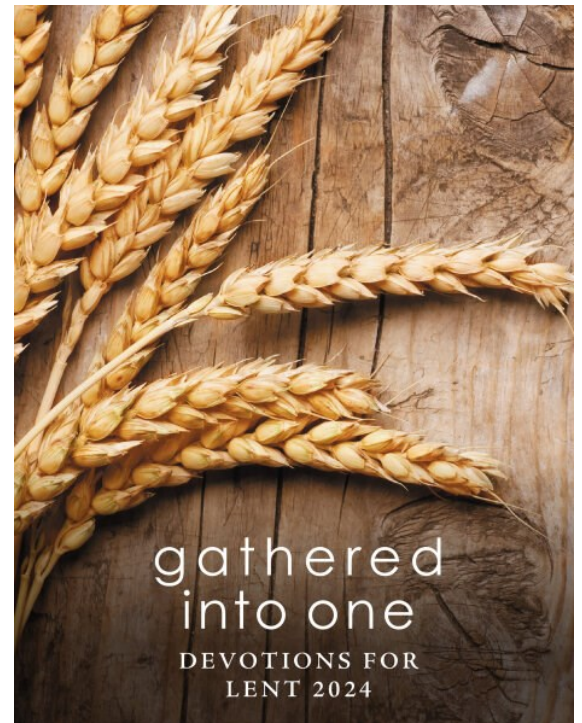
*The evening service will be streamed to Zoom & Facebook.*

## Gathered into One: Devotions for Lent 2024 by Yolanda Denson-Byers

Join the Church-Wide Lenten use of devotions as we recall the time Christ spent, shortly before the beginning of his public ministry overcoming temptation, (on our behalf), in the wilderness.

Gathered into One provides daily devotions for each day from Ash Wednesday to the Resurrection of Our Lord. Devotions begin with an evocative image and a brief passage from First Corinthians. The writers then bring their diverse voices and pastoral wisdom to the texts with quotations to ponder, reflections, and prayers.

Portions of First Corinthians appear in the Revised Common Lectionary during each lectionary year. The apostle Paul writes this letter to the church in Corinth after hearing of quarreling and divisions among the people. He teaches the Corinthians that each person has a unique set of gifts from the Holy Spirit, given for the common good, and reminds them that the church is the body of Christ, joined together with one bread, one cup, one baptism, one God, and one Spirit. This theme of unity amid diversity is as timely now as it was when Paul wrote to the Corinthians.



Pick up your copy starting February 11<sup>th</sup> from the Narthex or Kepley Hall.



## A Welcoming Presence

Are you looking for a way to serve in our church this year? There is a great need for greeters before the 11:00 service every Sunday.

It could not be easier! No training necessary.

All it requires is a willingness to be at church fifteen or twenty minutes before 11:00 and to say “hello”, “welcome”, or “good morning” to people as they arrive. It is really that simple...just be yourself. There is nothing to it and there is no wrong way to do it; and yet it is a powerful way to serve.

If you are interested please give it a try on Sunday. You can sign up on-line ([Click Here](#)) or through our website or call Jane Gue in the church office if you have any difficulty signing up. For further information please call Barbara Sullivan @ 919 271-3283. Thank you!



# The **BASICS** of

GENESIS EXODUS  
 LEVITICUS NUMBER  
 DEUTERONOMY  
 JOSHUA  
 JUDGE  
 RUTH  
 1SAMUEL  
 2SAMUEL  
 1KINGS  
 2KINGS  
 1CHRON  
 2CHRON  
 NICHOL  
 EZRA  
 ESTER  
 DANIEL  
 JOEL  
 OSEAH  
 MICAH  
 NEHAMIAH  
 ESTHER  
 JOB  
 PSALM  
 ECCLES  
 ISAIAH  
 JEREMIAH  
 EZEKIEL  
 HOSEA  
 AMOS  
 JONAH  
 NAHUM  
 HABAKUK  
 ZEPHANIAH  
 HAGGAI  
 ZECHARIAH  
 MALACHI  
 CHIR  
 MATTHEW  
 MARK LUK JOHN  
 ACTS  
 ROMANS  
 1CORIN  
 2CORIN  
 GALATIANS  
 PHILEMON  
 1THESSALONIA  
 2THESSALONIA  
 1TIMOTHY  
 2TIMOTHY  
 TITUS  
 PHILEMON  
 1JOHN  
 2JOHN  
 3JOHN  
 JUDE  
 REVELATION  
 BREW  
 JAMES  
 1PETER  
 2PETER  
 1JOHN  
 2JOHN  
 3JOHN  
 JUDE  
 REVELATION

## Pastor's Bible Study

Wednesdays in the Music Room or by Zoom

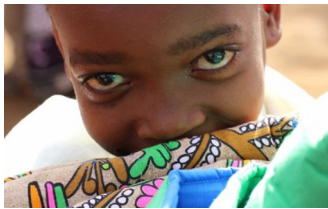
The topic this year is “The Basics of the Christian Faith.” How much do we really know and understand about our faith?

We are going to delve deeply into God’s Word as we study together a variety of topics. We meet weekly on Wednesdays at 10:30 am & 6:45 pm. *During Lent the evening class will meet following the Taizé service at 7:00 pm.*

Everyone is welcome to join; we hope to see you there!  
 Zoom in the Morning: [Click Here](#)  
 Zoom in the Evening: [Click Here](#)

### Lutheran World Relief Quilting Group

#### Volunteer to quilt for kids and families in need.



Often, when natural disasters strike or war drives families from their homes, our hearts ache with compassion but we don’t know how to help. If you’ve wondered how to volunteer to quilt for charity, look no further. Making Lutheran World Relief Mission Quilts is a tangible way to express love to our neighbors in need. Quilts can be used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor coverings. Each one reflects God's loving presence in a world rife with suffering.

The Quilters meet in the lower level of the education building. We are looking for willing hands who can use scissors, tie a knot and who enjoy a warm blanket—to help us on the 2nd, 4th & 5th Thursday mornings of the month at 10:00 am

Please consider becoming involved in this worthwhile endeavor. Contact Barbara Burdette for more information: [bburd45955@aol.com](mailto:bburd45955@aol.com)

### Families Together Needs Some Help

Families Together has an “Emergency Pantry” for families to take advantage of for things that they may need in their apartments/homes as they begin the process of moving from homelessness into a secure homing situation. They are in need of some high need items including Twin Size Bedding, Gently Used Pots/Pans, Toilet Paper/Paper Towels, Cleaning Supplies, Prepackaged Snacks, and Hygiene Items.

If you have any of these items, please consider donating them to Families Together to help families in our community in that way.

## PANTRY NEEDS:

- TWIN SIZE BEDDING
- GENTLY USED POTS/PANS
- TOILET PAPER/PAPER TOWELS
- CLEANING SUPPLIES
- PREPACKAGED SNACKS
- HYGEINE ITEMS

## Kingdom Kids (grades K-5)

Kingdom Kids is our Children's Ministry at St. Philip for all children in grades K-5.

This group meets once a month for an hour of fun as we play games, Bible study, music, craft, and do some service projects!

Following our get-together, we have a family dinner for all youth & their family members to participate in. For more information, please email [kai@st-philip.org](mailto:kai@st-philip.org)



### Kingdom Kids (K-5) February Schedule

Feb. 18 - Kingdom Kids (K-5)	4-5 pm
Family Dinner (K-12 + families)	5-5:30 pm

## Youth Group (grades 6-12)



Our Youth Group for grades 6-12 meets twice a month.

One Sunday we meet at 6pm and the other we meet from 5:30-6:30pm following a family meal for all youth & their families to participate in.

Additionally, Discipleship Academy (our Confirmation program) meets about once a month for a seminar course. Discipleship Academy is available for anyone grade 6+. For more information, contact [kai@st-philip.org](mailto:kai@st-philip.org)

### Youth Group (6-12) Spring 2024 Schedule

Feb. 4 - Youth Group (6-12)	6-7:30pm
Feb. 11 - Discipleship Academy: Wholeness & A Christian Life	12:30-1:45 pm
Feb. 14 - Ash Wednesday Worship	7pm
Feb. 18 - Family Dinner (K-12 + families)	5-5:30pm
Youth Group (6-12)	5:30-6:30pm
Feb. 23-25 - NC LYO Assembly (6-12)	
Register ahead of time	



## Kids in worship



Every Sunday, in both worship services, Kai calls the children together to hear the day's message in interactive and exciting ways!



# Faith & Fellowship

## Monthly Breakfast Group—

Tuesday 2/20 at 9:30 am

We will meet at Falls River Café

10630 Durant Rd. (use the Bojangles driveway to their parking).

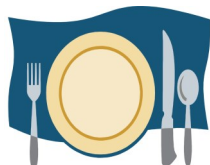
Spread the word and invite a friend for this casual time of fellowship and conversation!

Contact Frank Bouknight for more information. [bouknightf@yahoo.com](mailto:bouknightf@yahoo.com) or 919-302-1812

## Pub Ministry

Pub Ministry will meet on Tuesday 2/27 at 6:30 pm at VIVO Ristorante 7400 Six Forks Rd.

Contact Dave Wahlstrom at [dave00256@gmail.com](mailto:dave00256@gmail.com) to learn more.



FELLOWSHIP  
Supper Group

We will meet at 6:30 pm on 2/27/24 at Torero's 4721 Atlantic Ave.

Questions?

contact Carol Rogers [parakayaker@gmail.com](mailto:parakayaker@gmail.com)

Everyone is invited!!

## Adult Book Club

Everyone is welcome!

Our next meeting is on February 27<sup>th</sup> at 10am in the Parlor. We will be discussing *News of the World* by Paulette Jiles

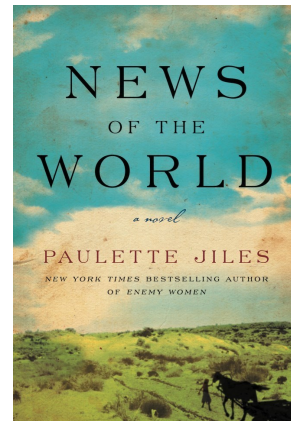
In the aftermath of the American Civil War, an aging itinerant news reader agrees to transport a young captive of the Kiowa back to her people in this morally complex, multi-layered novel of historical fiction from the author of *Enemy Women* that explores the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor, and trust.

Available at the Wake County Library.

Everyone is welcome, We hope to see you there!

Contact Kathryn Edwards for more info.

[itsmekge@gmail.com](mailto:itsmekge@gmail.com)



On the second Tuesday of the month we get together for a shared lunch, good conversation and a program.

This month's speaker will be our own Paul Augustowski! He will be sharing about his travels to Israel. Everyone is welcome to attend! **February 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am** in Luther Hall.

Please RSVP to Carole Mason in order to plan. 919-210-0727.



12:00 pm on Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>

At First Watch in Triangle Town Center

Please contact Martha Bouknight for the reservation.

919-782-0584 or

[Bouknightm@yahoo.com](mailto:Bouknightm@yahoo.com)

Every 1st Thursday!

Hope to see you there!



## St. Philip Lutheran Preschool

Registration for the 2024-2025 school year is now open! If you are interested in signing your child up or would like to tour the classrooms, please contact Leigh Anne Barham at 919-870-5841 or 919-818-9585. St. Philip Preschool has caring and nurturing teachers, a theme-based curriculum and large, inviting classrooms. Please tell your friends and neighbors about us!

January was a fun month as we talked about wintertime fun! We had “Pajama Day” one day and came to school wearing our pajamas and had a “slumber party!” Everyone enjoyed wearing their pajamas to school ...especially the teachers!

Our Parent/Teacher conferences will be held at the beginning of February. Valentine’s Day will be celebrated as we share our love with our families and friends!

Thank you, St. Philip Lutheran Church for opening your doors and hearts to young children in our community! We LOVE you ALL!!

You may contact Leigh Anne Barham at 919-870-5841 or 919-818-9585 for more information.



## The Bells of St. Philip needs You!

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to ring bells? Well an opportunity is here for you! We need new ringers to pick up bell notes that there aren’t enough people to play them. You’ll learn how to ring and will be able to play during worship.

No previous experience necessary, just come ready to have some fun & the desire to try a new way to praise God!

Practice is at 5:00 Sunday afternoons—join us!

Questions? Contact Regan Chuhran at:

[chuhrare@gmail.com](mailto:chuhrare@gmail.com)





## Christ Caring for People through People

That's the motto of Stephen Ministry. The Stephen Minister's role is to bring God's love into the lives of people who are going through a time of transition or experiencing a crisis.

### What do Stephen Ministers do?

They listen, care, support, encourage, and pray with and for a person who is hurting. And during this confidential, one-to-one, caring relationship, God's healing love comes pouring through.

If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time—large or small—and could benefit from the caring presence of a Stephen Minister, talk to Pastor Tim or a Stephen Ministry Leader.

**Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!**

Stephen Leader:

[Kathy Blum](#)



### A note from our Synod Staff



### Save the Date!



March 16th

8:30 am—12 noon

### A Note from Families Together staff





# Message from Finance Committee

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Let's take a moment to reflect on our financial results for 2023 as we embark on this new year.

Total income for the year was \$591,617, or \$14,243 better than plan and up more than \$47,000 over the previous year. Expenses were \$560,442, or \$16,928 under plan, after funding all budgeted reserves. Income exceeded expenses by \$31,171 which bolstered our general reserves. It is worthy of note that in addition to exceeding our total income plan for the year, at the time of this writing members had also generously contributed enough to cover most of the cost of our new security system.

So, thanks to all of you and praise God for another year of blessings as we expanded our ministries and outreach. Even greater opportunities for growth are coming our way in 2024 as evidenced by the budget approved by the Congregation in December. With your continued commitment and God's help, we will rise to our calling.

Blessings,  
Jim Beck  
Finance Chair

## A New Look—

Our online financial partner, Vanco, has updated and improved their website where you go to give to St. Philip from the church's website. We think you'll find it much more user friendly. If you have questions or difficulties with the site, please contact the church office.



Giving				December, 2023 Financial Summary		
	Actual	Plan	%			
December 2023	\$ 46,857	\$ 48,616	96%			
Year to Date	\$591,617	\$577,374	102%			
Category	Current Month Actual	Current Month Plan	%	YTD Actual	YTD Plan	%
<b>Income</b>						
General Fund	\$46,742	\$ 44,876	104%	\$589,474	\$ 832,490	71%
Other Income	\$ 115	\$ 3,740	3%	\$ 2,143	\$ (255,116)	-1%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 46,857</b>	<b>\$ 48,616</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>\$591,617</b>	<b>\$577,374</b>	<b>102%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
	\$ 67,062	\$ 51,513	130%	\$ 560,446	\$577,374	97%
<b>Net Gain/(Loss)</b>						
	\$ (20,205)	\$ (2,897)		\$ 31,171	\$ -	

The 2023 Annual Budgeted Revenue needed to meet expenses is \$577,374



# FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 12:00 pm Ladies Lunch 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm NA 7:00 pm Voices of Praise	<b>2</b> 10:00 am Al Anon 7:00 pm AA	<b>3</b> 2:00 pm Shiloh Choir 7:00 pm AA
<b>4</b> 9:00 am Crossing Contemporary Worship 10:00 am Augsburg Class 11:00 am Traditional Worship 1:30 pm Shiloh Restoration 5:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Youth Group	<b>5</b> 1:30 pm Staff 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Property Team	<b>6</b> 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	<b>7</b> 9:30 am Senior Adult Ministry 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study 6:30 pm NA 6:45 pm Pastor's Bible Study	<b>8</b> 10:00 am Quilting Group 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm NA 6:30 pm Finance 7:00 pm Voices of Praise	<b>9</b> 10:00 am Al Anon 4:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm AA	<b>10</b> 10:00 am Brown Bag Ministry 2:00 pm Shiloh Choir 7:00 pm AA
<b>11</b> 9:00 am Crossing Contemporary Worship 10:00 am Augsburg Class 11:00 am Traditional Worship 1:30 pm Shiloh Restoration 12:30 pm Discipleship Academy 12:30 pm Congregation Council 5:00 pm Handbells	<b>12</b> 1:30 pm Staff 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 6:00 pm Stephen Ministry	<b>13</b> 11:30 am Saints & Sinners 7:00 pm Boy Scouts 7:00 pm Preschool Board	<b>14 ASH WEDNESDAY</b> 1:00 pm Worship 6:30 pm NA 7:00 pm Worship	<b>15</b> 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm NA 7:00 pm Voices of Praise	<b>16</b> 10:00 am Al Anon 4:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm AA	<b>17</b> 2:00 pm Shiloh Choir practice 7:00 pm AA
<b>18</b> 9:00 am Crossing Contemporary Worship 10:00 am Augsburg Class 11:00 am Traditional Worship 1:30 pm Shiloh Restoration 4:00 pm Kingdom Kids 5:00 pm Kid/Youth Dinner 5:00 pm Handbells 5:30 pm Youth Group	<b>19</b> 1:30 pm Staff 6:00 pm Girl Scouts	<b>20</b> 9:30 am Breakfast Group 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	<b>21</b> 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study 6:30 pm NA 6:30 pm Taizé Worship 7:00 pm Pastor's Bible Study	<b>22</b> 10:00 am Quilting Group 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm NA 7:00 pm Voices of Praise	<b>23</b> 10:00 am Al Anon 7:00 pm AA  <b>LYO Assembly</b>	<b>24</b> <b>LYO Assembly</b> 10:00 am Brown Bag Ministry 1:00 pm Mark Tarquinio service 2:00 pm Shiloh Choir 7:00 pm AA
<b>25</b> 9:00 am Crossing Contemporary Worship 10:00 am Augsburg Class 11:00 am Traditional Worship 1:30 pm Shiloh Restoration 5:00 pm Handbells	<b>26</b> 1:30 pm Staff 7:00 pm Worship & Music	<b>27</b> 10:00 am Book Club 6:30 pm Fellowship Group 6:30 pm Pub Ministry 7:00 pm Boy Scouts	<b>28</b> 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study 6:30 pm NA 6:30 pm Taizé Worship 7:00 pm Pastor's Bible Study	<b>29</b> 10:00 am Quilting Group 6:30 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm NA 7:00 pm Voices of Praise		





## Sunday Morning Worship

9:00 am – Crossing Contemporary

11:00 am – Traditional style

In Person, Zoom & Facebook

Rev. Tim Poston  
Senior Pastor  
[Pastor@st-philip.org](mailto:Pastor@st-philip.org)

Kai Thurow  
Outreach & Youth Ministries  
Coordinator  
[Kai@st-philip.org](mailto:Kai@st-philip.org)

Regan Wang  
Director of Worship & Music  
Ministries  
[chuhrare@gmail.com](mailto:chuhrare@gmail.com)

919-846-2992  
[www.St-Philip.org](http://www.St-Philip.org)

Jane Gue  
Office Administrator  
[admin@st-philip.org](mailto:admin@st-philip.org)

In person Office Hours:  
Mon, Wed, & Fri  
9:00 – 4:00  
Tues & Thurs (Virtual) 9:00–4:00

[Facebook](#)  
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Church, Raleigh



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[@St\\_PhilipELCA](#)



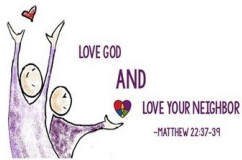
Instagram  
[stplcraleigh](#)



## St. Philip Lutheran Church

7304 Falls of Neuse Road  
Raleigh, NC 27615  
919-846-2992

[www.St-Philip.org](http://www.St-Philip.org)



WE SHARE THE LOVE OF CHRIST!

## Black History Month



The African Descent Ministries of the ELCA is celebrating Black History Month with season two of Talks at the Desk, a video series that explores diverse expressions of the church.

A new video will premiere each Wednesday in February at 7:30 pm Central time. Watch them live on [YouTube](#) or [Click here to watch now.](#)

Join us to hear youth, young adults, rostered leaders, elders and friends of our communities share their own sacred stories.