

Pip's Squeak

December 24, 2017

Unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Dear people of St. Philip's.

Christmas celebrations are rolling right along—we've had our Lessons & Carols with San Agustin Catholic Church; we enjoyed the creative presentation of the nativity as told through our Children's Pageant; our teens gathered with teens from our Santa Cruz county churches for fellowship, a contest of wits on naming 40 Christmas songs, and gift exchange. Now we are to embark upon a marathon Sunday, December 24, with two Advent IV services in the morning, and two Christmas Eve services in the night, plus one Christmas morning service... and "Unto us a child is born...."

Even as we remember with joy the glories of that birth-night so long ago that Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Incarnate Word of God, came into our world—we have the everyday challenges of life set before us as well as the completely unexpected dramas that enter our lives. This week one of our most dedicated servants of those in need, Sally Sutter, had her morning devotions interrupted by the smell of smoke and a neighbor yelling FIRE! Before she knew it, she was up and out of her home, knocking on doors, yelling to the others, and assisting her elderly landlady down the road to safety. Sadly, in the room where the fire began, a newer tenant died in that fire. Sally is truly counting her blessings and grateful to all of you who have reached out to her with love, prayers and practical helps as she maneuvers her way through this startling, unexpected transition in her life. She didn't know that becoming homeless at Christmas-time was in her future.

By Thursday morning Sally was up and at St. Philip's early to meet up with others working to set up our weekly Second Harvest Food Pantry. She says engaging in the normalcy of this ministry that means so much to her helps to keep her grounded in the power of Jesus Christ living within this blessed community. And on this particular Thursday Sally's special talent and genuine interest in young children came to fruition as she offered gifts to kids who attended the pantry.

In this photo you can witness how Sally took the extra time to play with one of these little ones, right here, near our altar where we will gather on Christmas to commune with Christ, the baby born during the darkness of the world, who brought light and life to all. Jesus, the baby who grew into the man who "had nowhere to lay his head", yet called everyone to come to him, to lay their burdens upon him, and find their home in the Risen Christ, where ever they are.

May you, your family, friends and neighbors find the love of Christ and the light of his life filling you with all hope.

In Christ's infinite love,
Pastor Mary and Jim Blessing



This Week: Dec. 24 - 30
Today: 6:30 PM, **Family Service**
Today: 10:30 PM, **Midnight Service**
Mon., 10 AM, **Christmas Day Service**
No Meditation this week
Sat., **Overnight Shelter Group**

What's Happening

Save the Date
Jan., 8, **2nd Monday Book Group**
Jan. 9, **Bible Study resumes**
Jan. 28, **Annual Meeting**
June 3, **Bishop's Visit**



St. Philip's children told the Nativity Story...



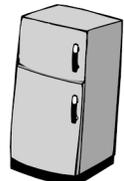
January 7, 10 AM Epiphany Service

The children will help Pastor Mary tell the Epiphany Story of 'Wise Ones from the East Blessing the Holy Family'. The Spadaccini family will prepare some form of King's Cake, and hide Baby Jesus for another to discover for next year's celebration!!



Food Pantry Receives a Re- frigerator!

We give thanks to a parishioner for their generous donation of a refrigerator for our Food Pantry! Our Food Pantry is getting ready to move into a new room here at St. Philip's that is safe and dry, with room for a refrigerator. With this donation, our Food Pantry can obtain many more fresh foods for our Food Pantry participants. **We are Blessed to be a Blessing!**





Christ is the Light of the World

Christmas Eve - December 24

8 AM Holy Eucharist

10 AM Holy Eucharist with music

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6:30 PM Musical offerings

7 PM Family Service,

w/ carols, stories, & communion

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10:30 PM Musical Offerings

11 PM Candlelight Service w/ Communion

Christmas Morning - December 25

10 AM Family Service,
w/ carols, stories, & communion

St. Philip the Apostle Episcopal Church
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Faith Formation

Winter Quarter Regional Youth Ministry Activities

First and Third Sundays of each month continue to be the Faith Formation gatherings of the Episcopal Church

Regional Youth Ministry, 6th-12th Grade:

January 7--4 PM, Faith Formation, St. John's, Aptos

January 21--4 PM, Faith Formation, Calvary Episcopal, Santa Cruz

February 4--4 PM, Faith Formation, St. John's, Aptos

February 18--4 PM, Faith Formation, Calvary Episcopal, Santa Cruz

March 4--4 PM, Faith Formation, St. John's, Aptos

March 18--4 PM, Faith Formation, Calvary Episcopal, Santa Cruz

Youth News

Faith Formation

Phase 1 construction work started!

Work begins with the following items:

Cross repair; Sanctuary atrium window and wall repair; Church Office wall and ceiling repair plus window into

Foyer; box in the pipework in the foyer and wall reinforcement; new Food Pantry drywall ceiling, and replacement of window by drywall, installation of humidity-sensing extractor fan; old food pantry ceiling repair. **Hurray!**

And our deepest thanks to all who made this possible!



We don't foresee any major disruptions, but we ask for your patience as this work proceeds.

If the front side door has a sign saying, "Locked for Construction," you can unlock the glass doors to enter.



"For we are God's fellow workers' you are God's field, God's building." 1 Corinthians 3:9

An Extraordinary Response!



Our Stewardship season has drawn to a close for now, and we have had an extraordinary response to our direct appeal for an increase in pledging from our church family.

For the pledges we have received to date, over 75% of pledging units have increased their pledge from last year. A pledge card symbolizes a commitment to St. Philip's and is extremely significant for the church, allowing us to plan for the next year.

For those parishioners completing their 2017 pledge or wishing to prepay their 2018 pledge, checks are due by **Sunday December 31st**. Please consult your tax advisor to see if you would benefit from prepaying your 2018 pledge due to the upcoming changes in the tax code.

Thank you again for your continued generosity to St. Philip's ministries and property.

Faithfully, Greg Kintz, Stewardship Chair