

"Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" Jesus knew they were up to no good. He said, "Why are you playing these games with me? Why are you trying to trap me? Do you have a coin? Let me see it." They handed him a silver piece. "This engraving—who does it look like? And whose name is on it?" They said, "Caesar." "Then give Caesar what is his, and give God what is his." (Matthew 22: 17-21, The Message Translation)

Dear People of St. Philip's,

To state the obvious: our civic culture is moving head-on into one of the most contentious political seasons we have EVER had in the United States. Church members may have questions or concerns regarding how to remain a Christian community that cares for the political issues of the day (because they really do make a difference regarding our ability to "give God what is his") while retaining our intention to love all God's children as Jesus loved them, regardless of political views.

Jesus taught us that we are to remain focused on caring for the poor, reaching out to the marginalized, including the elderly, widowed, the foreigner, prisoners and orphans, as God commanded. At the same time, Jesus understood the importance of "giving to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's". We are to pay taxes in our personal lives, yet as a religious organization with a non-profit status with the federal government, St. Philip's Church is exempt from paying taxes. St. Philip's is never allowed to endorse any particular issue or political candidate, even if they are members of our church:\

*"Churches and other nonprofits are strictly prohibited from engaging in political campaigning. This prohibition stems from the requirements of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.... [Churches] Cannot display political campaign signs on church property."**

Recently local politicians have placed political signs on our church property. I have spoken with them and told them we are not allowed to display signs, even if we had EVERY candidate's sign on display. It is so tempting for well-meaning citizens to place a sign on our property because of our fantastic location along Scotts Valley Drive. But if we see a sign placed here we will move it to a place off our property or ask the candidate to take it away.

Churches and other 501(c)(3)'s ARE allowed to use their property as places to hold educational forums on political issues, but all candidates and political parties must be invited:

*[Churches are allowed to] "sponsor nonpartisan candidate debates or forums, so long as all legally qualified candidates are invited to appear and wide spectrum of issues are covered"**

*[www.ffrf.org/outreach/item/14005-churches-and-political-lobbying-activities]

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This Week: Oct 2 - 8

Wed., 11 am, **Theology Book Group**
Thu., 5 pm, **Food Pantry**, Foyer
Fri., 10:30, **Meditation**, Sanctuary
Sat., 5 pm, **Overnight Guests**, PH

SAVE THE DATE

Oct 8 ***Youth Feed Shelter Guests***
Oct 10 **Living with God**
Oct 15 **ECW Honored Women's Day**
Nov 4-5 **Diocesan Convention**
Nov 6 **Fran Soulé Memorial Service**
Dec 2,3 **No Room at the Inn**
Dec 4 **Cookie Decorating**

No Room at the Inn

A display of nativity scenes (crèches)

Planning meeting: Oct. 5, 3 pm
Vicky Granger - Jones's house
1230 Whispering Pines Drive

Cartons & Cash!

The food pantry seeks your egg cartons.
Cash donations are welcome also.
Our hungry neighbors thank you!

October Youth Group is Happening!



October 8--Saturday Cooking for the Rotating Shelter

Let's cook up a storm! There are no more appreciative dinner guests than our **Saturday Overnights**. Come have some fun and fellowship, and fulfill the call of Jesus to feed the hungry.

BRINGING HOPE

2016 ECW* Honored Women's Day

Saturday, October 15, 9:30-2:00, St. Andrew's, Saratoga

Bishop Mary To Lead Taking a Stand on Domestic Violence

Registration online by October 7th. Or take a registration form from the foyer bulletin board. Information: Diane Lovelace at DiLovelace@aol.com or 408/813-4080.

Donations: Bring NEW clothing for women or children.

St. Philip's Church has nominated Jane Ellis, Treasurer, to be honored this year!

Fran Soulé Memorial Services:

November 6th: A community celebration of Fran's life at our 10 a.m.
Service of Holy Communion.



Coffee Hour at St. Philip's: Sign up to be a host!

Sign up at <http://www.stphilip-sv.net/coffeehour>.

Announcements are due Thu. at noon at stphilips.sv@gmail.com

amazon smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Remember that amazon smiles on us when you shop with them.

Hospice Support: see bulletin board re: attending the Hospice Support meetings.

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This is why St. Philip's has hosted a community-wide forum on Affordable Housing which included politicians and citizens from all perspectives to join the conversation. Similar nonpartisan educational events are permissible, and may happen in the course of this Autumn season.

Scripture tells us there was great discomfort when Jesus proclaimed that the people are to engage in the support of the "Emperor" through the paying of taxes. In Jesus day the people of Israel had little or no say regarding the use of their tax money. But we live in a democracy that our country's founders created in order to give each and every adult citizen (well, it took a while to allow women and slaves full citizen status...) the opportunity to vote on the issues and for the leaders who decided how to use tax-payer money. Episcopalians are encouraged to fully understand political choices and then vote one's conscience. At St. Philip's we strive to follow in the Way of Jesus Christ, prayerfully considering how to be responsible citizens with our human government, all the while striving to live into Jesus' promise of God's peace, God's Shalom.

Peace to you in Christ,

Pastor Mary and Jim Blessing



NO POLITICS!

St. Philip's and Community Organizing

COPA Housing Team is working hard to understand our community's needs regarding all sorts of Affordable Housing. Recently the Teacher Housing Act of 2016* became law, allowing school districts to create affordable housing for teachers and school employees on school owned property. At present, St. Philip's prays regularly for our local school districts. Many seek ways to put our faith into action. To help our prayers, St. Philip's COPA team will host house meetings to begin conversations on ways to build relationships to accomplish creative housing solutions throughout our region, including for teachers. Speak to Pastor Mary or Senior Warden, Lori Kintz for details.



* leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?ill_id=201520160SB1413



“Make Your Wishes Known”
*A free seminar on Advance Directives, given
by Shirley Sapena,
of Hospice of Santa Cruz County*

October 18th ~ 12 noon – 1pm
St. Philip’s Episcopal Church

Free follow-up 1-1 consultation to
complete your Advanced Directive on
Oct. 25th, 10 to 12 noon at St. Philip’s

Valley Churches United Missions

VCUM wishes to thank us for the donated back packs and school supplies valued at \$250 for their back –to-school back pack drive. They say that being able to supply families with backpacks full of school supplies is an investment in our children and in our community’s future. The families, the children, and VCUM are grateful!



CHRISTMAS EVE IS A SATURDAY!

And we DO have Room at the Inn

*Our Rotating Shelter Guests
will be eating and sleeping at St. Philip’s
Saturday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve.*

On Sunday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day, one service at 10 AM.

**HELP IS NEEDED TO PLAN FOR A VERY SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF THE
BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST. *Contact Pastor Mary to Help Plan!***

The Fragile Earth: Episcopal Church Responds to Climate Change

Former Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori to be key note speaker in Berkeley at Episcopal Seminary, CDSP, **October 22, 10 am-3:30 pm**. All are invited to the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, 2451 Ridge Road for a day of theological reflection, discussion and worship exploring the church's response to the crisis of climate change. Bishop Katharine holds a Ph.D. in Oceanography in addition to her Master of Divinity degree. Pastor Mary will take a van full if you'd like to come. Details at this link:

<https://ssl.charityweb.net/cdsp/event/WIMEarth2016.htm>