

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Happy New Year! January 2<sup>nd</sup> also marks the anniversary of my beginning to serve as your pastor. Can you believe we've already spent a year together? It is hard to imagine that it's been that long already. This provides a perfect time to reflect on this past year. Mary Kramer and Mike Berry have put the following list of questions together for me, and as a practice of reflection I will respond to them. I hope you enjoy.

### *What do you like about being at St. Philip's?*

What's not to like? I have found our community to be one of hope, love, and grace. From day one I have felt welcomed and supported. I have especially enjoyed the commitment to shared leadership, this is something I think is vital for a healthy faith community.

### *What do you like best about the Peninsula?*

Definitely the beach. Growing up in Seattle and vacationing on the Washington and Oregon coast I have a strong connection with the ocean consider myself blest to get to live in such a beautiful costal area.

### *What are the highlights of the past year at St. Philip's?*

The first that comes to mind are the four baptisms we have had. The second that comes to mind are the many coffees and meals shared with many of you. Getting to hear your stories walk with you in life is one of the biggest blessings of my call. If we haven't had a chance to visit in this manner yet let's make sure we do in the coming couple of months!

### *What is your involvement in the community?*

I am part of the Volunteer Chaplain Program at Chomp, I participate in a weekly Text Study with a number of Pastors from different churches on the Peninsula, I try to regularly attend Lion's Club Meetings in Carmel, I participate in Inter-faith Outreach of Carmel, and I am present as much as possible when we host I-Help. Always looking for more ways to be involved, so if you have suggestions pass them along.

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**CONGREGATIONAL  
ANNUAL  
MEETING!**  
**Sunday  
February 2nd  
Following Worship.**



## A WORD FROM THE SYNOD

Did you know that the Sierra Pacific Synod is the only ELCA synod with a Companion Synod relationship with the Lutheran Church of Rwanda? This relationship would not have been possible without the vision and servant hearts of Jackie Boynton and Cindy Tuisku. Almost 20 years ago they began to build what is now a full-fledged companion synod relationship, which includes many sister parishes. (Sister parish opportunities are still available! Contact us at [info@spselca.org](mailto:info@spselca.org) for more information.)

Because of our companion synod relationship, we sent a delegation to Rwanda in October to accompany our siblings in Christ on the 25th anniversary of the Lutheran Church in Rwanda. I was lucky to be one of the 16 members who spent a week in Africa getting to know people from the Lutheran Church in Rwanda as well as Young Adults in Global Mission serving there. During the trip we toured a women's cooperative and visited the Genocide Museum in Kigali, traveled to two rural Lutheran parishes in Gicumbi and Nyamata, visited the Leadership School, participated in the dedication of the cornerstone of a new Lutheran seminary, and joined in three Jubilee celebration worship services.

I knew that I would learn and grow during my travels, but I had no idea that the biggest lesson I would bring home would be JOY! Everyone I met was so happy to meet us and kept expressing their gratitude that we would be willing to travel from the US just to celebrate with them. Their joy in hospitality, joy in worship and incredible love of God inspired me to try to become more like them. Instead of being so concerned each day about what else I need to check off my list, I need to be present in the moment. My concern over what comes next, does not allow me to fully experience the joy of the current activity. I would challenge you to try and fill your life with JOY as well.

Kathye Hamm, SPS Communication Coordinator, member of Christ the King, Orangvale  
(from the Sierra Pacific Synod's "Synod Weekly" email published on January 1, 2020)

happy  
birthday

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

13<sup>th</sup> Pastor Tony  
17<sup>th</sup> Lowell Battcher  
21<sup>st</sup> Anna Watson  
30<sup>th</sup> Rebecca Berry



St. Philip's on Dec 22 as  
seen by Aryn Bewley

(Mary Kramer's  
grandniece).

Used by permission.

## INTERFAITH OUTREACH OF CARMEL UPDATE

IOC board thanks those who participated in the 11th Annual Community Thanksgiving Service. This years' service included speakers from previous grant recipients, the Carmel Mission Choir and the Monterey Peninsula Gospel Community Choir.

The grant applications for the 2019 should be announced late 2019. Grants go to organizations working with homelessness, transitional housing for women & children, elder care and homeless prevention.

A new board member joined the board in November and officers were elected. See the newsletter on the bulletin board in the narthex. More information about IOC can be obtained at [www.ifaithcarmel.org](http://www.ifaithcarmel.org). Information about the benefit shop, Joining Hands can be obtained at [www.joininghandsbenefitshops.org](http://www.joininghandsbenefitshops.org)

*Submitted by Mary Kramer*

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our new Pastor's Discretionary Fund! We have raised \$724 so far. These funds will be used to respond quickly to requests for help. These requests often range from help with gas, to food, to a place to stay for the night. Thank you!

**ST. PHILIP'S  
STAFF & COUNCIL**

**Pastor**

Rev. Tony Rhodes

**Pianist & Organist**

Justice Post

**Janitorial Staff**

Luz & Jose Perez

**President:**

Mike Berry

**Treasurer:**

Sharon Anderson

**Secretary**

Susan Alexander

**At Large**

Alan Pedersen

**Property Chair**

Keith Johnson

**Financial Secretary**

Anke Rickter

## A NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR CONTI...

*How do you envision St. Philip's changing in the next year or two?*

It is my hope that this next year we can spend a significant amount of time working together as community to develop a clearer mission/vision and goals. It is my hope that we will be able to clearly communicate to ourselves as well as those outside our walls who we are a community of faith, and what we value.

*What do you believe has been your greatest challenge during your first year as our Pastor?*

One of the greatest challenges for most pastors in their first year at a new church is developing a routine/pattern to their schedule /work. We try and spend the first year and sometimes part of the second year listening/learning about the church and its community, learning about the broader community, getting to know the synod and our fellow pastors, all while getting our home and personal life settled. A lot of this work doesn't fit into a nice typical routine/pattern so I sometimes have to take some time to try and take a broader look at the calendar to make sure it is all being juggled appropriately. There have been a few drops throughout the year but I think I am starting to get it smoothed out.

This all the space we have in this months issue for these types of questions, but do not fret, we will soon have the Annual Meeting Packet complete and available and you will find more reflections in that packet.

I also wanted to take a moment to say Thank you, Thank you, Thank you for the wonderful Christmas Gift that I received on Christmas Eve.

Blessings,  
Pastor Tony



**Pictures from Christmas Eve Worship**



## I-HELP UPDATE

The program continues its work of sheltering both men and women. In the month of November 3 men and 4 women involved with the program found housing. The average number of men being housed each night was 16 and the average of women being housed each night was 12. Half of the men in the program are employed. St. Philip's contribution to this program is housing the men on the 2nd Tuesday and 5th Tuesday of each month and serving dinner on the 2nd Tuesdays. See the newsletter in the narthex for the latest information. A monthly I-HELP Community Forum is held at First Presbyterian Church of Monterey on the 2nd Thursday of the month for 12-1pm. *Submitted by Mary Kramer*

## THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

A church simply can't survive without the dedication of many volunteers and its important that we recognize those people. So, lets take a moment to say thank you to those volunteers that helped us make the Advent and Christmas Season special. Lesley & Barb for making new blue Advent parameters, Katie & Lesley for taking care of the poinsettias, Keith for getting the narthex tree, Alan & Lesley for setting up the Sanctuary tree, all of you who helped decorate the church so festively, Carolyn & Mary K for the delicious soup/chili lunch during our decorating party, Anke for baking communion bread, Mike Alga for providing a warm welcome and running the sound system, and all of those that do many things that go unseen. Thank you!



### ST. PHILIP'S ADOPTS A HIGHWAY!

With leadership from Alan Pedersen We have become part of the Litter Removal Adopt-a-Highway program. We are responsible for a section of Carmel Valley Road not far from church. Keep your eyes and ears open for information on the next clean up date and time.

