

St. Philip's Lutheran Church Tidings

St. Philips Lutheran Church
8065 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel 93923

April 2025

UPDATE FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL:

Worship attendance has been up compared to 2024. We are grateful that the congregation has come together to support one another and our ministries. Everyone is contributing in some way, and it has been inspiring to see people return to church and engage in our life and worship. We have also enjoyed and been grateful for those from St. Timothy's who have been joining us for worship and for Bible study. We also give thanks for the regular visitors who participate in the life of St. Philip's. A new directory that includes both members and regular visitors will be available soon!

The church council continues to do their best to plan for continued spiritual development and worship in the context of uncertainty about how long Pastor Tony will be on leave. We are very grateful to Father Jon Perez from Epiphany Lutheran/Episcopal church in Marina for providing pastoral care.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The church mortgage balance of \$38,225 was paid off in mid-February by selling Apple stock, and the transfer has been recorded with Monterey County.

The overall financial health of St. Philp's is strong, with the revenues and expenses through March 24th balancing out. Offerings through March 24 totaled \$27,800, which is on par or slightly ahead of this time last year.

India

BY MARY KRAMER

India – who would have thought? Not me. While a trip to India was not on my bucket list, I am so glad that I made the trip. Long-term friends from work invited me to join them on a Sierra Club tour to northern India. While they are well-seasoned travelers, this was the first time that I ventured to such a place.

Impressions – noisy traffic, glad I don't have to drive while I am there, beautiful colors, kind people, crowded streets, beautiful structures built hundreds of years ago, talented artisans and craftsmen, lovely gardens, lots of animals that have the run of the place, extra security that separates male and female, tasty food, areas of wealth and areas of poverty, people doing work by hand.

We arrived in Delhi ahead of our tour and got an opportunity to visit some of temples, mosques, and gardens in the city. Shopping trips are dangerous as the fabrics live up



Taj Mahal at sunset from Moonlight Gardens



to their reputation of being beautiful. We got into the gardens of the Presidential Palace which was being opened to the public. The official tour continued with bus rides and rickshaw rides in the city, a visit to the memorial garden to Mahatma Gandhi.

We traveled to Agra to see Agra Fort (built in 1565), and the Taj Mahal in the evening from a distance in the Moonlight Garden and a sunrise trip the next day.

The Taj is as described – massive, beautiful. The delicate work that you see in walls is amazing. We learned that people today are still doing that delicate work of making marble pieces. Weeks and months go into making a piece.

After Agra, we traveled to Bjaratpur to visit a private hunting reserve, Keoladeo National Park and had our first excursion to look at animals – lot of birds of different types, a cobra hiding in a termite hill, cattle and deer. At the hotel here, we also encountered many other birds and a number of peacocks. We spent two days at the Ranthambore Reserve where we saw the much-anticipated tigers, many different types of deer, more peacock, crocodiles, turtles, lots of birds, a leopard, wild board, and the most adorable sloth bears.

Sloth bear in Ranthombore Reserve



Tiger in Ranthombore Reserve



Monkey in Kanda – keeping watch

From here to Japur, the pink city, for tours of the Palace and The Observatory. Structures build in 1728. Every “clock” told the same time. A tour of a carpet “factory”. Absolutely beautiful hand-woven carpets. Again, very detailed work that takes so much time.

A long day of travel from Japur to Delhi to Rapur and then a long ride to Kanha. We visited a local school near our hotel. Then we were off on the first of 5 game drives in the Kahna Reserve. Got luck again and saw tigers, working elephants (being used to do surveillance in the reserve), wild dog (these were hidden), and lots of deer. We ended our trip here with a return to Delhi with a very early morning flight the next day. Got to meet fellow travelers from all over the US. We had the best Indian guide whose name is Bablu. He was the best at spotting animals and taking care of this group of travelers. Glad I went and glad to be home.



Humayun's Tomb in Delhi



The Observatory in Jaipur – time was 3:30pm

Loving Thy Neighbor

My hands are failing me. Perhaps you've noticed the struggle I have with taking those little communion cups in my fingers on Sunday mornings. And so I've come to realize that I will never develop the passion that Carolyn had for sewing. She loved the craft and in fact had converted one of our bedrooms to her sewing and craft room; one wall of which was lined with bookshelves. Since Carolyn's death, I've slowly begun the process of sifting through some of her things. I have high hopes of turning the sewing room into another usable bedroom for those rare times when my home is filled with the laughter of house guests.

Sorting through her books I've come across a workbook entitled, 40-Day Journey with Martin Luther. I figured it'd be the perfect read during this Lenten season. The book is basically a deep dive into The Small Catechism, which for someone such as myself, one that never attended church until I had met Carolyn, provides an abundance of understanding and thought-provoking questions. Questions not only for myself but for the congregation as well. How many times have we read, said, and heard the 10 commandments? Thou shalt not commit murder, adultery, steal, etc., etc., etc. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, Luther explains the commandments in greater detail in his 40-day journey and I've come away with a different way of thinking about them. They are all largely based or connected by the simple thread of Loving thy Neighbor.

All of that to say that as your neighbor, Carolyn and I have been graced by the love and support you've offered these past 14 months. Your visits, the food deliveries, the phone calls, the greeting cards are all powerful examples of Loving thy Neighbor. And I can't begin to express my appreciation and the honor it is to be your neighbor, a neighbor that will one day, perhaps have an opportunity to be a good neighbor to you.

Thank you.

Neighbor Mike

I-Help Update

Each year, I-Help is a part of the Monterey County Gives campaign sponsored by Monterey County Now and The Community Foundation for Monterey County. In 2024, the monies donated and the grant given totaled \$100,150! The first \$75,000 donated was match by Community Foundation at 18.2%. I-Help says this is the largest grant ever received from this process and thanks everyone who donated. In the monthly update from John Nicholls, director of the men's program, he says that they are serving 20-25 men and that 5 had recently found housing. St. Philip's continues, after 32 years, to serve a meal and provide housing on the second Tuesday of each month. With changes in the leadership of the groups that provide the meals, we are looking at joining the groups.

If you gave money, thank you! If you provide food, thank you! If you haven't participated but would like to, contact Mary Kramer.

Some of our faithful volunteers!!

SUMMARY OF MARCH 30TH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

Members and friends of St. Philip's gathered after worship for a one-hour session to explore the congregation's ministry needs and spiritual education, as well as our vision for being more inclusive and accessible and more engaged in the community. We also discussed what we expect from a pastor. Lauren Hill led this productive activity, which provided input to George and Sharon in preparation for their meeting with the synod. A follow-up congregational meeting is planned for April 27, when we also hope to have more information about our pastoral situation. Thanks to all who participated.

PASTORAL UPDATE:

Pastor Tony's disability leave has been approved by the insurance company, which is now covering his salary and benefits. George and Sharon will meet with synod reps in early April to share congregational perspectives on our situation and to get assistance with moving forward.

WORSHIP NEWS

In the midst of the Lenten season, worship opportunities help us prepare for the celebration of Easter, time to rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord. This year St. Philip's is sharing with Epiphany Episcopal/Lutheran Church for midweek Lenten services, with soup suppers at 6:30 and Holden prayer service at 7. St. Philip's was host on March 12th and 26th, with Epiphany hosting March 19th, April 2nd and 9th. Holy week services will be shared, with Maundy Thursday service at Epiphany and Good Friday service at St. Philip's. On Easter Sunday, St. Philip's will again begin using the Haugen liturgy as "Alleluias" are brought back into worship...celebrating Christ is Risen!

During this time of uncertainty, the worship committee continues to meet to select worship hymns, help plan meaningful Sunday worship experiences with appropriate bulletins, and enlist many volunteers to help. Thank you to the following people who have volunteered to bring the Sunday messages each week, filling in for pastors: Sharon Anderson, Lowell Battcher, Laureen Hill, and Emily Rustad. Thank you to all who continue to faithfully serve in so many ways, ministering to each other. The council has been working to find ways to include communion in our services, whenever we have an ordained minister available. In the future, it will be offered at least twice a month, with the goal of again being every Sunday. Each Sunday, we share Christ's peace to all who gather.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES:

- **Palm Sunday**, April 13, 2025: worship with communion at St. Philip's @ 10 am
- **Maundy Thursday**, April 17, 2025: Worship at Epiphany in Marina @ 7 pm
- **Good Friday**, April 18, 2025: Worship at St. Philip's @ 7 pm
- **Easter Celebration** with special Music: Sunday, April 20, 2025 at 10 am at St. Philip's

SYNOD ASSEMBLY- NEW FORMAT!

The 2025 Sierra Pacific Assembly will happen in three parts, with regional in-person gatherings in May to build community, and the business portions online in July and October. If you are interested in attending any of the sessions, please let Sharon or George know. We need to identify two voting members who can attend all three parts. The registration deadline is April 26th.

Part 1: Regional On-site Gatherings-May:

Open to anyone! You may choose which gathering you would like to attend to learn and grow together with other Lutherans. We will spend time in worship and conversation, enjoy a lunch together, and connect with one another as we journey together in faith.

May 10: CHICO, Faith Lutheran Church,
9:00 am -3:30 pm

May 17: WALNUT CREEK, St Matthews
Church, 9:00 am -3:30 pm

May 31: FRESNO, Hope Lutheran Church,
9:00 am -3:30 pm

Part 2: Online Business Gathering-June 14, 9:00 am-Noon

Voting members will gather online to do

the business of the church. We will hear reports on the various ministries of our Synod and the ELCA. We will consider resolutions and hold elections.

Part 3: Online Budget Gathering-October 18 9:00 am-Noon

Voting members will gather one more time to consider, discuss, and vote on the budget.

Cost = \$25 for people who only attend Part 1; \$60 for voting members who attend all three parts.

HAL DAHLEN MEMORIAL SERVICE

Hal Dahlen passed away on Mar 17, 2025. A memorial service will be held at St. Philip's at 1 pm on Saturday, April 26th.

Sierra Pacific Synod Lay Preaching Course

– an update.

Six members of St. Philip's are taking part in this course being offered by the Synod. Those participating are Sharon Anderson, Laureen Hill, Lowell Battcher, Barbara Battcher, George Issac, and Mary Kramer. This course, being led by Rev. Dr. Shauna K. Hannan, Professor of Homiletics at Pacific Lutheran Seminary. She is using her book "The Peoples' Sermon – Preaching as a Ministry of the Whole Congregation" as the basis for the course.

Easy to say, the course has opened us all up to a different way of looking at scripture and its interpretation. You have heard us stress the "I wonder, I notice" invitations as you listen to the lessons. This is but one way of looking at scriptures differently. Even taking the verse numbers out of the passage, realigning paragraphs, highlighting certain words, or arranging the words of the text in a different fashion can lead to a different understanding. The other focus is that preaching is not a "solo" endeavor, but one that requires knowing and hearing from the community to which someone is preaching.

From Barb – "It was good to include an example of formatting. It was encouraging to meet with people of other churches, with some of the same issues we have at St. Philip's. We learned of other ways for effective Bible study or other group forums. Always good to meet with others to discuss various differing ideas while still being unified."

The group of attendees to this online course includes lay people and pastors from throughout the Synod. We will have a one-on-one visit with Dr. Hannan prior to the last class session on April 7.

An example of reformatting:

Luke 17:11-19 11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, 13 they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16 He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18 Was none of them found to return

and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE THE 17TH CHAPTER.

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee.

As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him.

Keeping their distance,

they called out, saying,

"Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

When he **saw** them, he said to them,

"Go and show yourselves to the priests."

And as they went, they were *made clean*.

Then one of them,

when he **saw** that he was . . . *healed*,

turned back,

praising God with a loud voice.

He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet

and thanked him.

And he was a Samaritan.

Then Jesus asked,

"Were not ten made clean?

But the other nine, where are they?

Was none of them **found** to return and give praise to God
except this foreigner?"

Then Jesus said to him,

"Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

BIRTHDAYS

April

| | |
|------|--------------------|
| 2nd | Ursi Eisinger |
| 3rd | Jacob Berry |
| 6th | Matt Trotter |
| 10th | Sharon Anderson |
| | Dawsyn Grace Berry |
| 17th | Sherry Chapman |
| 21st | Susan Alexander |



May

| | |
|------|------------------|
| 12th | Barbara Battcher |
| 29th | Mike Berry |

COUNCIL MEMBERS

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| George Isaac | President |
| Sharon Anderson | Treasurer |
| Mike Berry | Property |
| Susan Alexander | Secretary |

April 2025

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| | | 1 | 2 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 3 | 4 8:30 am Food Bank 9 am Gardening Team | 5 |
| 6 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 7 | 8 4 pm Men's Dinner | 9 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 10 | 11 9 am Gardening Team | 12 |
| 13 10 am Palm Sunday 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 14 | 15 | 16 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 17 7 pm Maundy Thursday at Epiphany | 18 8:30 am Food Bank 9 am Gardening Team 7 pm Good Friday Service | 19 |
| 20 10 am Easter 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 21 | 22 | 23 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 24 | 25 9 am Gardening Team | 26 Hal Dahlen Memorial |
| 27 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 28 | 29 Men's Shelter Only | 30 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | | | |

May 2025

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| | | | | 1 | 2 8:30 am Food Bank 9 am Gardening Team | 3 |
| 4 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 5 | 6 | 7 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 8 | 9 9 am Gardening Team | 10 |
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| 18 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 19 | 20 | 21 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 22 | 23 9 am Gardening Team | 24 |
| 25 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee/ Social Hour | 26 | 27 | 28 2 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm AA | 29 | 30 9 am Gardening Team | 31 |