



THE FEAST OF ABSALOM JONES

Liturgy of the Word Rite II

Sunday, February 15, 2026 - 8:00 & 10:00 am

The Rt. Reverend Anne B. Jolly, Bishop of Ohio

The Rev. Dr. Robin R. Woodberry, Rector

James W. Shiel, Director of Music

Paul W. Keriotis, Director of Spiritual Formation

Voluntary

There is a Balm in Gilead – Joe Utterback

AT THE PROCESSION TO THE ALTAR

The People stand for the Processional Hymn and remain standing through the Collect of the Day

Processional Hymn No. LEVAS 44 (v. 1-4) *Blessed Absalom – Lauda Anima*

1. Born in bond-age, born in shack - les, Born stripped of all dig - ni - ty,
 2. Seek-ing to ex - pand hor - i - zons, Bi - ble, pri - mer he did find;
 3. When in Phi - la - del - phia set - tled, He sought per-sons in great need,
 4. One fine morn-ing, while at wor - ship, Wrested from his knees in pray - er;

1. Abs' -lom Jones was bound, de - ter - mined, That he would one day be free.
 2. To each word he was at - ten - tive, Learn-ing, lest he fall be - hind.
 3. Ded - i - ca - ted to em - pow'r-ment, His own peo - ple did he lead.
 4. He, his friends, were thus e - vic - ted: "You no more may praise God here."

1. Bless-ed Abs' -lom, leads us, guides us, In the bonds of u - ni - ty.
 2. Bless-ed Abs' -lom, lib - er - ates us From the pri - son of our mind.
 3. Bless-ed Abs' -lom, pray that we from All in - diff' - rence may be freed.
 4. Bless-ed Abs' -lom, pray that we may Stand stead - fast and per - se - vere."

Opening Acclamation

Leader Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

The Leader says the Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Song of Praise: WLP 899 Glory to God in the highest – Carl Haywood

(Refrain)
Glory hallelujah, Lord we praise your Holy name,
Glory hallelujah, Lord we praise your Holy name.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heav'nly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, (Refrain)
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. (Refrain)**

Collect of the Day

Leader The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Leader Let us pray.

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

Please be seated.

The First Reading: Isaiah 42:5-9

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says God, the LORD,
 who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
 and spirit to those who walk in it:
I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness,
 I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
 a light to the nations,
 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
 from the prison those who sit in darkness.
I am the LORD, that is my name;
 my glory I give to no other,
 nor my praise to idols.
See, the former things have come to pass,
 and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
 I tell you of them.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 126 [sung by the choir]

In convertendo

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
 then were we like those who dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
 and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, *
 "The LORD has done great things for them."
The LORD has done great things for us, *
 and we are glad indeed.
Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
 like the watercourses of the Negev.
Those who sowed with tears *
 will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
 will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

The Second Reading: Galatians 5:1-5

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law. You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn no. LEVAS 58

Please stand as you are able.

The Lord is my light and my sal - va - tion, the Lord is my
 light and my sal - va - tion, the Lord is my light and
 my sal - va - tion; whom shall I fear?
 Whom shall I fear, whom shall I fear?
 The Lord is the strength of my life;
 whom shall I fear? In the time of trou - ble,

The Lord is my light – *Lillian Bouknight*

He shall hide me, O in the time of trou - ble,
 He shall hide me, in the time of trou - ble,
 He shall hide me; whom shall I fear?

The Gospel: John 15:12-15

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father."

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

Kathi Kovacic

The Nicene Creed

All stand.

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

The Prayers of the People for Epiphany

~written by Rick Pryce and posted on Rick Pryce. <http://rickpryce.wordpress.com/>

Musical notation for a hymn. The top staff is in treble clef and 4/4 time, with lyrics 'Oh, fix me; Jesus'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and 4/4 time, with lyrics 'Oh, fix me; Jesus'. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes. The third measure of the top staff has a fermata over the note. The fourth measure of the top staff has a fermata over the note. The lyrics 'fix me' are repeated in the first and second measures of both staves. The third measure of the top staff has the lyrics 'Jesus'. The fourth measure of the top staff has the lyrics 'fix me'. The bottom staff has the lyrics 'fix me' in the first and second measures. The third measure of the bottom staff has the lyrics 'Jesus'. The fourth measure of the bottom staff has the lyrics 'fix me'. The music concludes with a final measure on the top staff labeled 'Fine'.

Leader: Celebrating the coming of the One who brings the reign of God to all people, let us pray for the world God loves, the Church God calls, and all people according to their needs, as we sing... **Oh, fix me...**

God of light and darkness, through water and Word you shine your light into the darkness of our lives. We give thanks for this incredible gift. [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

God of love and hate, your love comes in spite of our animosity; you bring reconciliation to those who are divided. Strengthen us to be peacemakers. [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

God of hope and fear, you walk with us through the challenges which surround us. Wash away our anxiety by your promised presence and set us free from despair. [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

God of church and world, in baptism you unify yourself with our world, and bring your reign into being. Keep us from seeing your love as a hiding place. Motivate us to infuse the world with your justice. [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

God of health and illness, there is nothing that separates us from your love. Inspire us to bring your health to the sick, your promise to the dying, your encouragement to the discouraged, especially those we name before you now; Al Novak, Marge Louff, Deacon Peggy Davis, Gloria Duran, Janet Gladd, Virginia, and Raymond Takach, Leslie Gaskell, Jean Pinti, Eric Tracey, Faith Scarmuzzi, and Roger Carnahan. Are there others? [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

God of life and death, all that exists is from you, and for you. Enable us to trust your baptismal promise and serve this hurting world. We pray especially for all the departed souls. Are there those you wish to name? [singing] **Oh, fix me...**

We pray for those celebrating birthdays this week. Especially Todd Pippenger, and Anne Martin. Are there others? We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. We will exalt you, O God our King; **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

Leader: Hear the prayers of your people, O God, and inspire us with gratitude and abundance as we share our many gifts with You and the world You made. **Amen.**

Offertory Anthem: I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light – arr. Cathy Moklebust

Offertory Response: Praise God from whom all blessings flow – *Hatton*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise Him all creatures, here below,

Praise Him above ye heavenly host,

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Leader: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. ***Amen.***

Prayer for the Burial of Alleluias

Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, it is our joy to sing and say "Alleluia"
as a response to your conquering sin and death.
Now, during the days of Lent, we say farewell to "Alleluia"
so that we may take it up anew on Easter. ***Amen.***

All are invited to bring forth their alleluias and place in the box

Closing Prayer

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all evermore. ***Amen.*** *2 Corinthians 13:14.*

Recessional Hymn no. 460 – Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! – *Hyfrydol*

Postlude

Assisting with Worship Today:

Jim Crofford 8am & Jeff Heakin 10am – Lector

Kathi Kovacic 8am & Karen Andrus 10am – Worship Leaders

Karen Andrus – Prayers of the People

The Parish Choir, The Handbell Choir – Jeannine Morris, Director

Nancy Forrester & Peter Day – Ushers

Jan Henrey & Clare Adams 8am, Karen Andrus & Stacy Costley 10am - Altar Guild

The Massaro Family – Greeters

Lynn Peteritis & Linda Day – Coffee Hour

Deb Murphy, Aaron Woodberry – AV/Video

Today's Happy Baggers: MaryAnne Stefanick & Tobie Smith w/Lynn Peteritis

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

2026 Church Theme: Rooted in Christ. Renewed Together. Sent in Hope.

February Birthdays

3 rd -Gage Tomko	11 th -Janet Schweitzer	23 rd -Pam Brown
4 th -Tom Eastman	11 th -Darrell Marsh	23 rd -Jesse Massaro
4 th -Ryan Marsh	13 th -Nellie Doan	27 th -Kathy Adcock
8 th -Paul Keriotis	16 th -Todd Pippenger	
10 th -Norman Coupland	18 th -Anne Martin	

SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR CHILDREN is held each week during 10 am worship service. We use the Montessori-based curriculum, Godly Play. Interested children (K-5) are welcomed to join in the procession. Children return to the Sanctuary during The Peace so they may join their families for Holy Eucharist.

QUARTERLY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Beginning this year, we will celebrate wedding anniversaries quarterly during worship with a short renewal of intention, giving thanks for the gift of covenant and faithfulness.

Couples whose wedding anniversaries fall between January and March will be honored during the worship services on **Sunday, March 8**. Participation is optional, and all couples are welcome to take part as they are able. If you would like to be included, please fill out and submit the form included on page 12 or notify the church office with your names and wedding date.

PLEDGE ENVELOPES: If you did not get pledge envelopes and need them, please call the office at 330-372-4998 and speak to Carole Lewis, treasurer.

When the Annual Report was typed up, I (Tiffany) inadvertently left out a part of our Jr Warden John Panagis' report. He wanted to thank Joe Gladd for faithfully keeping our equipment in great shape throughout the year. Thanks Joe, we appreciate you.

John Panagis



The next Coffee and Conversations will be held on **Sunday, February 22nd.**

Topic: Understanding the Old Testament: Themes & Timelines

- **Theological Infusion:** Seeing the OT as the “soil” of our faith.

Open to all levels of biblical experience.

Interested in Baptism or Confirmation?

If you or your child is considering **Baptism or Confirmation** in the Episcopal Church, we invite you to take part in our upcoming preparation classes.

These classes are an important time to explore the meaning of Baptism and Confirmation, learn more about the Episcopal Church, and reflect on the promises we make in our life of faith. They also offer space for questions, conversation, and discernment in a supportive setting.

Preparation Classes will be held at 11:30a on:

- March 1, March 8, March 15, March 22

Baptism will take place on **Easter Sunday, April 5**, during the **10:00 a.m. service**, as we celebrate new life in Christ.

Confirmation will be celebrated at the **Regional Gathering on Saturday, May 30, 3:00 p.m.** at **Christ Episcopal Church, Hudson, Ohio.**

If you are interested or would like more information, please speak with Mother Robin, Paul Keriotis, or contact the church office. All are welcome—whether you are new to the church or returning after time away.



Let's welcome our new Vestry members who were elected at the 190th Annual Meeting. Congratulations Andrew Sowers, Kevin Knowlton, and Amy Prezioso. We are grateful for your willingness to serve as a leader of Christ Church!

We also extend our gratitude to those going off Vestry; Kellie Cleland, Sandee Skovran, and Linda Day. Your service and leadership have been invaluable and very much appreciated. **THANK YOU!!**

LENT 2026

SHROVE TUESDAY: The Brotherhood will host our Annual Pancake Supper on **Tuesday, February 17, from 5-7pm**. All are welcome...Invite a friend. There will be a free-will offering.



ASH WEDNESDAY liturgies will be held on Wednesday, **February 18, at 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.** in the Chapel. Please join us as we begin observing this holy season of Lent.

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS IN LENT

5:30pm Light Supper in the Narthex
6:00pm THE CHOSEN Episode w/ Table Talk:
February 25
March 4
March 11
March 18
March 25



Lenten Saturday Instructed Eucharist: Understanding the Mystery

Saturday, March 21st, 10:00 AM ~ The Chapel

As part of our Lenten journey, you are invited to a Saturday morning of reflection and learning. We will begin with a light breakfast at **10:00 a.m.** in the Library, followed by a teaching session on the **Episcopal Eucharist in the Chapel**. This *Instructed Eucharist* will explore how our ancient tradition continues to shape and nourish our faith today.

Tuesday, February 17th @ 5:00 p.m.



Join Us After the Pancake Dinner – Special Zoom Presentation

Following our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner this Tuesday evening, you are invited to remain in the Parish Hall, (or head home and log in) as we join a special Zoom program hosted by the Howland Historical Society in honor of our nation's 250th anniversary.

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

7:00 p.m. (shown on the Parish Hall screen)

Dr. Linda Rice, Professor of English at Ohio University (Athens, OH), will present:

“Between Liberty and Slavery: Black Lives in the American Revolution”

*Howland Historical Society
History Program
Tuesday, February 17, 2026
7:00 PM
via Zoom Meeting*

*In keeping with the celebration of 250 years as a
nation we are presenting a program by:*

*Dr. Linda Rice
Professor of English,
Ohio University, Athens, OH*

*“Between Liberty and Slavery: Black Lives
in the American Revolution”*

A part of American history little known to most people

We invite you to join us at:



*zoom.us/join
Meeting ID: 813 6604 5086
862995*

Information: 330-502-5098



ASH WEDNESDAY liturgies will be held on Wednesday, February 18, at 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. in the Chapel.

Please join us as we begin observing this holy season of Lent.

Burying the “Alleluia” During Lent

After Christmas, we put the lights, crèche, and star away. We know where they are; we anticipate putting them up again (at the right time); but we would not want them up all year! When we retire something familiar for a season, recovering its use has a way of making it "new" for us. It has a way of giving emphasis to what precedes and follows it. Taking a rest from something gives shape and rhythm to life, to worship, to relationships – even to our relationship with God.

Some churches, in keeping with this principle, bury or "hide" the *Alleluia* during Lent. There is a long tradition for suspending the use of *Alleluia* from either the Last Sunday after Epiphany or Shrove Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday) until the first service of Easter.

Such a practice enriches and shapes our prayer and our sense of discipline as we anticipate Easter. The Lenten practice of the discontinuance of the *Alleluia* is a purposeful self-denial that provides contrasts in the landscape of our praise and prayer before God.

Today we let our "Hallelujah" lie dormant for six weeks and await the time to again burst out in joyful and ecstatic affirmation of the Resurrection.

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/burying-the-alleluia-during-lent>

Blessed Absalom Jones



Absalom Jones was born on November 6, 1746, into slavery in Sussex County, Delaware. He taught himself to read out of the New Testament, among other books. When sixteen, Absalom was taken to Philadelphia by his slave master, after selling his mother and siblings. There he attended a night school for blacks, operated by Quakers. At twenty, he married another slave and purchased her freedom with his earnings.

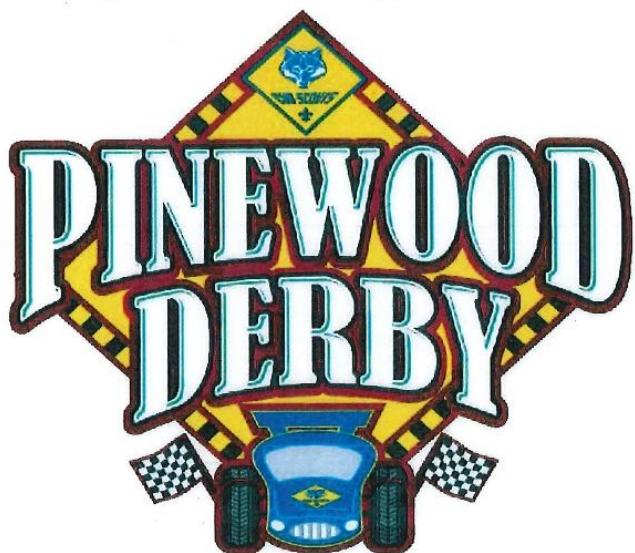
Jones bought his own freedom in 1784. At St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, he served as a lay minister for its black membership. The active evangelism of Jones and that of his friend, Richard Allen, greatly increased black membership at St. George's. The alarmed vestry decided to segregate blacks into an upstairs gallery, without notifying them. During a Sunday service when ushers attempted to remove them, the blacks indignantly walked out as a body. In 1787, black Christians organized the Free African Society, the first organized Afro-American society, and Absalom Jones and Richard Allen were elected overseers. Members of the Society paid monthly dues for the benefit of those in need. The Society established communication with similar black groups in other cities. In 1792, the Society began to build a church, which was dedicated on July 17th, 1794.

The African Church applied for membership in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania on the following conditions:

1. That they be received as an organized body
2. That they have control over their local affairs
3. That Absalom Jones be licensed as a lay reader, and, if qualified, be ordained as a minister.

In October 1794 it was admitted as St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. Bishop White ordained Jones as a deacon in 1795 and as a priest on September 21, 1802. Jones was an earnest preacher. He denounced slavery and warned the oppressors to "clean their hands of slaves." To him, God was the Father, who always acted on "behalf of the oppressed and distressed." But it was his constant visiting and mild manner that made him beloved by his own flock and by the community. St. Thomas Church, Philadelphia, grew to over 500 members during its first year. Known as "the Black Bishop of the Episcopal Church," Jones was an example of persistent faith in God and in the church as God's instrument. Jones died on February 13th, 1818, in Philadelphia.

**Feb 26, 2026
6pm-8pm**



Cub Scout Pack 4011

Christ Episcopal Church, 2627 Atlantic St.

50/50 Raffle, Chinese auction, Concession Stand

****we also have a Blackstone grill we will be raffling
off this year!!****



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Name of Couple	Anniversary Date	Total Years Celebrating	Phone

**Please submit form: place in offering basket or
drop off at the Church Office**

Big Provincial Gathering 2026

July 31 - August 1, 2026

Host: St. Luke's, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Province V will be hosting the fourth Big Provincial Gathering in the summer of 2026.

YOU ARE INVITED!

The Big Provincial Gathering (BPG) is an opportunity to meet new people and connect with others who share your ministry passions. It is structured like a "ministry fair" so that people may host workshops and conversations to share program and resource ideas with others. Pre-event trainings will run from Thursday afternoon through Friday morning, The main event will begin at Friday, July 31, 12 noon ET and end mid-day on Saturday, August 1, 2026.

Provincial Youth Event

There will be a Provincial Youth Event offered as part of the BPG. There will be some time that youth will have dedicated programming and then time that all are gathered together.

Building an Inclusive Church Toolkit

A 6-week Zoom training!

Feb 8, 15, 22, 2026 and Mar 1, 8, 15, 2026

5-6:30 pm ET / 4-5:30 pm CT

The logo consists of the words "Building an Inclusive Church" in a stylized, colorful font. Each word is composed of multiple letters in different colors: "Building" (blue, green, yellow, red), "an" (blue, green), "Inclusive" (red, blue, green, yellow, purple), and "Church" (orange, yellow, blue, green, red).

The Building an Inclusive Church Toolkit is a step-by-step guide to help facilitate a welcoming journey in faith communities working on extending a specific welcome to people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. A team from [ReconcilingWorks](#) will lead a course to give you tools to share this resource with your worshiping community.

The toolkit will be provided as a .pdf and Province V will provide a color-printed copy of the toolkit for each person registered.

[Registration](#) is required. Attend as many sessions as you can.

Here is the registration link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ew0-JwsqT7WCt4PknNKjVQ>