

“WELCOME TO THE MOTHER CHURCH”

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Give thanks unto Him and bless His name”

Psalm 100:4

Grace and Peace to you from God on this **the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, Health Ministry and New Members Sunday.**

On behalf of the Clergy, Wardens, Vestry and People of God, welcome to the historic **African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas**, founded in 1792 as the first black Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. The first rector of this historic parish, The Rev. Fr. Absalom Jones was also the first black Episcopal priest in the nation.

Our parish boldly proclaims the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are an active, mission-minded and growing church family. Whoever you are and wherever you may find yourself on your spiritual journey of faith, you are always welcomed at St. Thomas’ Church, where we are joyfully and enthusiastically committed to Jesus’ message of love, hope, prayer, acceptance and faith. Today, as you worship in this place, may you experience and feel the presence of the Lord, and may you leave feeling renewed, refreshed and revived. Again, welcome!

Faithfully,
Martini Shaw⁺
(The Very Rev. Canon) Martini Shaw,
17th Rector and
Dean of the Schuylkill Deanery

Sunday Spearhead
The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany,
Health Ministry and New Members Sunday.
January 29, 2023

Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw

Homilist: David King

Assisting: The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins

Seminarians in Residence: Kathryn Brossa & David King

Music Ministry: St. Thomas Voices of Comfort

Organist in Residence (Voices of Comfort) - Robert Davenport

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Prelude

Voice of Comfort Choir

The Opening Hymn - “Lift Him Up”

LEVAS # 159

1) How to reach the masses, those of every birth, For an answer
Jesus gave the key; "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,
Will draw all men unto Me."

Chorus: Lift Him up. Lift Him up. Still He speaks from eternity
and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men
unto me.

- 2) Oh! The world is hungry for the living bread, Lift the Savior up for them to see, Trust Him And do not doubt the words that He said, “I’ll draw all men unto Me.” **[Chorus]**
- 3) Don’t exalt the preacher, don’t exalt the pew, Preach the gospel simple, full and free. Prove Him and you will find that promise is true, “I’ll draw all men unto Me”. **[Chorus]**
- 4) Lift Him up by living as a Christian ought. Let the world in you the Savior see; Then all will gladly follow Him who once taught, “I’ll draw all men unto Me.” **[Chorus]**

A Word of Welcome

The Rector

The Opening Acclamation:

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. AMEN

The Collect for Purity

Celebrant: 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**

The Gloria in excelsis

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

The Proclamation of The Word

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

Dr. Toya Gordon

A Reading from the book of Micah.

Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel.

“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.”

“With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 15

Shonalie Roberts

Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle? *

who may abide upon your holy hill?

Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right, *

who speaks the truth from his heart.

There is no guile upon his tongue;

he does no evil to his friend; *

he does not heap contempt upon his neighbor.

In his sight the wicked is rejected, *

but he honors those who fear the Lord.

He has sworn to do no wrong *

and does not take back his word.

He does not give his money in hope of gain, *
nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

Whoever does these things *
shall never be overthrown.

The Second Reading:1 Corinthians 1:18-31
A Reading from Paul's letter to the Corinthians

The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn - "No, Not One"

LEVAS # 90 (Vss. 1-3)

1) There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!
None else could heal all our soul's diseases, No, not one! No, not one!
Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done;
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one.

2) No friend like Him is so high and holy, No, not one! No, not one!
And yet no friend is so meek and lowly, No, not one! No, not one!
Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done;
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!

3) There's not an hour that He is not near us, No, not one! No, not one!
No night so dark but His love can cheer us, No, not one! No, not one!
Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done;
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Dr. H. Lynn Starr

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - “No, Not One”

LEVAS # 90(Vss. 4-5)

4) Did ever saint find this Friend forsake Him? No, not one! No, not one!
Or sinner find that He would not take him? No, not one! No, not one!
Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done;
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!

5) Was e'er a gift like the savior given? No, not one! No, not one!
Will he refuse us a home in heaven? No, not one! No, not one.
Jesus knows all about our struggles, He will guide till the day is done'
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!

The Homily

David King, Seminarian

The Call to Christian Discipleship

The Nicene Creed

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

Dr. Timothy Barksdale

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

We pray for a Holy season of Epiphany. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

Grant Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

Guide the people of this land, and all of the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom. Lord in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

For those incarcerated: Guide them Lord in all they do with your Grace and Love and grant them your continual help. In all their problems, your guidance; in all their dangers, your protection and in all their sorrows, your peace. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For those who for whatever reason are unable to worship with us in the breaking of the bread, the source of our faith; **That they be sustained by our Lord's promise to be with us for all eternity.**

Prince of Peace help us.

God of Grace save us.

In the communion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thomas, Absalom, and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God; **To thee, Lord our God.**

The Concluding Collect

The Celebrant

The Confession

BCP 360

Celebrant: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us kneel and confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Silence)

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have

mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name.
AMEN

The Absolution

Celebrant: Almighty God, have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The Holy Eucharist

Offertory Sentence and Offering

Offertory Musical Selection

St. Thomas Voices of Comfort

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

For you are the source of light and life; you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Celebrant

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

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.

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Agnus Dei

Celebrant: Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world

People: Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world

People: Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world

People: Grant us thy peace.

Let us pray:

Celebrant and People: We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy; Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. **AMEN**

The Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

(All baptized persons are invited to receive communion. If you have not been baptized, please still come to the altar to receive a blessing. For those not baptized, please indicate by crossing your arms on your chest.)

Post- Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Announcements

Deadra Cannon - Rector's Warden

Recognition of Guests and Visitors

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

Presentation of New Members

The Blessing

The Closing Hymn - “ Blessed Assurance”

LEVAS # 184

1.) Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.

This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.

2.) Perfect communion, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight.
Angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. **[Refrain]**

3.) Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Savior am happy and bless'd,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. **[Refrain]**