

“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 First Sunday after the Epiphany, the Baptism of our Lord (Renewal of Baptismal Vows)**.

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. Whoever you may be and however you may find yourself experiencing life's journey, do know that St. Thomas Church welcomes you. Again, welcome!

Faithfully,

Martini Shaw⁺

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

Sunday Spearhead
The First Sunday after the Epiphany
The Baptism of Our Lord
(Renewal of Baptismal Vows)

January 8, 2023

Celebrant and Homilist: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw

Assisting: The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins

Seminarians in Residence: Kathryn Brossa & David King

Music Ministry: St. Thomas Chancel Choir

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Organ Prelude

St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Opening Hymn - “No, Not One”

LEVAS # 90 (Vss. 1-2)
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! [Refrain]

Refrain:

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!

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 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.

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-9

Victoria Rivers

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

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 29

Wendella Fox

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, *

ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; *

worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders; *

the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; *
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; *
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe *
and strips the forests bare.

And in the temple of the Lord *
all are crying, "Glory!"

The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; *
the Lord sits enthroned as King for evermore.

The Lord shall give strength to his people; *
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

The Second Reading: Acts 8:14-17

Quincena Edmonds

A Reading from the Book of Acts

Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn - "Lift him Up"

LEVAS # 159 (Vss. 1-2)

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." **[Refrain]**

Refrain: 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." **[Refrain]**

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

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

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - "Lift Him Up"

LEVAS #159 (Vss. 3-4)

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". **[Refrain]**

Refrain: 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.

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." **[Refrain]**

The Homily

The Call to Christian Discipleship

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

BCP 304

Celebrant: Do you believe in God the Father?

People: I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

With God's help, I will continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship in the breaking of the bread, and in prayers.

With God's help, I will persevere in resting evil, and whenever I fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord.

With God's help, I will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

With God's help, I will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving my neighbor as myself.

With God's help, I will strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.
Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That this season of Epiphany will provide an opportunity for renewed faith in our Lord's healing power.

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 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 Gospel Choir

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:

**Jesus Christ has died.
Jesus Christ is risen.
Jesus 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

Recognition of Guests and Visitors

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

A Toast to the New Year

- Fr. Jay Collins; Dorothy Archey, Church School Superintendent ; Kelvin Johnson, Accounting Warden

The Blessing

The Closing Hymn- "Jesus The Light of the World"

1) Hark the herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world
glory to the new born King, Jesus, the light of the world.

CHORUS: We'll walk in the light, beautiful light, come where the dew drops of
mercy shine right, Oh, shine all around us by day and by night.
Jesus, the light of the world.

2) Joyful, all ye nations rise, Jesus, the light of the world.
Join the triumph of the skies, Jesus the light of the world,

3) Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Jesus, the light of the world.
Christ, the everlasting Lord, Jesus, the light of the world.

4) Hail, the heav'n born Prince of Peace, Jesus, the light of the world.
Hail, the Son of righteousness, Jesus, the light of the world.

**The Dismissal
The Postlude**

The St. Thomas Music Ministry