

“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 **Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.**

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 USA, and proudly a part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. 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 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,
The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw
17th Rector and
Dean of the Schuylkill Deanery



Please use the QR Code or Text “AECST” to 73256 to contribute to the church ministries.

**The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 16, 2026**

**The Celebrant: The Rev. Ula Ruddock
Assisting: The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins
Homilist: Dr. Jay Fluellen, Chancel Choir Director
Verger: Eugene Golson**

Music Ministry: St. Thomas Summer Ensemble

Livestream/Sound Ministry: Marie Golson, Ryan Chatman and Dominic Bowrin

Order of Service

The Mediation

Verger Eugene Golson

The Prelude

St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Opening Hymn- “O God Our Help in Ages Past”

1982 Hymnal #680

**1) O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:**

**2) Under the shadow of thy throne thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.**

**3) Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
from everlasting thou art god, to endless years the same.**

**4) A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.**

**5) Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.**

**6) O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.**

A Word of Welcome

The Celebrant

The Opening Salutation

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Pg. 355

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

The People: And blessed be God’s kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

The Collect for Purity

BCP Pg. 355

The 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

The Celebrant and the People

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

The Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

The People: And also with you.

The Celebrant: Let us pray:

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The First Reading: Genesis 45:1-15

Quincina Edmonds

A Reading from the Book of Genesis.

Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Send everyone away from me.” So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

The Reader: The Word of the Lord.

The People: Thanks be to God.

Psalms 133

Bobby Tillman

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, *
when brethren live together in unity!

It is like fine oil upon the head *
that runs down upon the beard,

Upon the beard of Aaron, *
and runs down upon the collar of his robe.

It is like the dew of Hermon *
that falls upon the hills of Zion.

For there the Lord has ordained the blessing: *

life for evermore.

The Second Reading: Romans 11:1-2, 29-32

Theresa Bramwell

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome.

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

The Reader: The Word of the Lord.

The People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn– “No, Not One”

Lift Every Voice and Sing (LEVAS) #90 (vv. 1-3)

**1) There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one! No, not one!
None else could heal all our souls' 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 15:10-20, 21-28

The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins

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

The People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” He answered, “It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.” She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.” Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

The People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn – “No, Not One”

LEVAS # 90 (vv. 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

Dr. Jay Fluellen, Chancel Choir Director

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 worshipped 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

Ed Geiger

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 they may be delivered from their distress.

We pray for those who are incarcerated and their families, as well as those who may have been affected by their actions.
We lift our prayers, O Lord.

Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

The Concluding Collect

The Celebrant

Almighty and everlasting God, whose providence has sustained your people throughout every generation: Receive these prayers we offer with thankful hearts, and grant that, trusting in your mercy and guided by your Spirit, we may continue to serve you faithfully; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Confession

The 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 is kept)

The Celebrant and the People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by 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

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

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

The People: And also with you.

The Holy Eucharist

The Offertory Sentence and Offering

The Celebrant

Offer your gift now via text: Text "AECST" to 73256

Or use the QR Code on page 1

The Musical Offertory Selection

St. Thomas Summer Ensemble

The Great Thanksgiving

BCP Pg. 361

The Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

The People: And also with you.

The Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

The People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

The People: It is right to give God 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 forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

The Sanctus

The Celebrant and the 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:

The Memorial Acclamation

The Celebrant and the People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The 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 forever. **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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

The People: Therefore let us keep the feast. **Alleluia.**

The Agnus Dei

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

The People: Have mercy upon us.

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

The People: Have mercy upon us.

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

The People: Grant us thy peace.

The Prayer of Humble Access

Let us pray: 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.

The Distribution of Communion

All baptized persons who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, are invited to receive the Holy Sacrament. If you only wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms on your chest.

The Communion Selections

St. Thomas Summer Ensemble

The Post Communion Prayer

The Celebrant and the People:

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.

Sending Forth of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors

The Celebrant: In the healing name of Jesus and with the compassionate embrace of this parish family, I send you forth bearing these Holy Gifts to those to whom you go today, so that they may share with us in the Communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

The People: We who are many are one body, and we all share one bread and one cup.

The Announcements

Richard Jones, Rector's Warden

The Recognition of Visitors and Guests

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

The Final Blessing

The Celebrant

The Closing Hymn – "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

LEVAS # 136

1) I have decided to follow Jesus.

I have decided to follow Jesus.

I have decided to follow Jesus.

No turning back. No turning back.

2) Though no one join me, still I will follow.

Though no one join me, still I will follow.

Though no one join me, still I will follow.

No turning back. No turning back.

3) The world behind me, the cross before me,

The world behind me, the cross before me.

The world behind me, the cross before me.

No turning back. No turning back.

The Dismissal

Fr. Collins

The Postlude

St. Thomas Music Ministry