



**AECST
FOUNDED 1792**

“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 **Second Sunday of Lent and Installation of Vestry and Other Offices.**

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. His remains and altar are in our possession.

Our parish boldly proclaims the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are an active, re-imagining 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 Second Sunday in Lent
Installation of Vestry and Other Offices

March 5, 2023

Celebrant and Homilist: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw

Seminarians in Residence: Kathryn Brossa and David King

Music Ministry: The St. Thomas Chancel Choir

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Prelude

The St. Thomas Music Ministry
1982 Hymnal #680

The Opening Hymn - "O God Our Help in Ages Past"

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 your 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 its 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,
soon bears us all away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the op'ning 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.

6.)

A Word of Welcome

The Celebrant

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgives my sins.

People: His mercy endures forever.

The Decalogue

BCP 350

Celebrant: Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God
who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me.

People: Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Honor your father and mother.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit murder.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit adultery.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not steal.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not be a false witness.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

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.

The Kyrie eleison

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you

Celebrant: Let us pray

The Collect:

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

The Proclamation of The Word

The First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

Clarence Rice

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121

Jenelle Wilson Johnson

I lift up my eyes to the hills; *

from where is my help to come?

My help comes from the Lord, *

the maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved *

and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *

shall neither slumber nor sleep;

The Lord himself watches over you; *

the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *

nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *

it is he who shall keep you safe.

The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, *

from this time forth for evermore.

The Second Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

Sherilynn Kimble

A Reading from Paul’s Letter to the Romans

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”) —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

The Gradual Hymn - “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior”

LEVAS # 139 (Vss. 1-2)

1.) Pass me not, O gentle Savior,
Hear my humble cry,
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

2.) Let me at a throne of mercy
Find a sweet relief;
Kneeling there in deep contrition,
Help my unbelief. [**Refrain**]

Refrain:

Savior, Savior,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

The Holy Gospel: John 3:1-17

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

The People : Glory to you Lord Christ.

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

The People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior"

3.) Trusting only in Thy merit,
Would I seek Thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit,
Save me by Thy grace. [**Refrain**]

LEVAS # 139 (Vss. 3-4)

4.) Thou the Spring of all my comfort,
More than life to me,
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?
Whom in heav'n but Thee? [**Refrain**]

Refrain:

Savior, Savior,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

The Homily

The Rector

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

Seminarian, David King

Leader: With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord,

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy, and people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For the good earth which God has given us and for the wisdom and will to conserve it Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air (or outer space), let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

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 all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord by thy grace. **Hear our prayer.**

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

The Offertory Sentence and Offering

The Offertory Musical Selection

St. Thomas Chancel 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.

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.

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: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

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.

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.

(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

Richard Jones - Rector's Warden

Installation of Vestry and Other Offices

Recognition of Guests and Visitors

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

The Blessing

The Closing Hymn-"Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow"

LEVAS #144

1) I can hear my Savior calling, I can hear my Savior calling, I can hear my Savior calling, "Take thy cross and follow me."

Refrain: Where He leads me I will follow, Where He leads me I will follow, Where He leads me I will follow.
I'll go with Him, with Him, all the way.

2) I'll go with Him through the garden, I'll go with Him through the garden, I'll go with Him through the garden. I'll go with Him, with Him all the way. [**Refrain**]

3) I'll go with Him through the judgement, I'll go with Him through the judgement, I'll go with Him through the judgement. I'll go with Him, with Him all the way. [**Refrain**]

4) He will give me grace and glory, He will give me grace and glory, He will give me grace and glory. I'll go with Him, with Him, all the way. [**Refrain**]

The Dismissal

The Postlude

St. Thomas Music Ministry