“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 Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost and Breast Cancer Awareness 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 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 Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday
October 18, 2026

The Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw
The Homilist: The Rev. Patricia Downing
Testimonial: Suzanne Closson
Vergers: Dr. Naomi Johnon Booker, Eugene Golson and Karen Ragland
Music Ministry: St. Thomas Chancel Choir
Livestream/Sound Ministry: Marie Golson and Harold Townsend

****

Order of Service

The Opening Meditation The Verger

The Prelude St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Opening Hymn- "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun" **1982 Hymnal #544**

1) Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
does his successive journeys run;
his kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
till moons shall wax and wane no more.

2) To him shall endless prayer be made,
and praises throng to crown his head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
with every morning sacrifice.

3) People and realms of every tongue
dwell on his love with sweetest song;
and infant voices shall proclaim
their early blessings on his name.

4) Blessings abound where'er he reigns:
the prisoners leap to lose their chains,
the weary find eternal rest,
and all who suffer want are blest.

5) Let every creature rise and bring
peculiar honors to our King;
angels descend with songs again,
and earth repeat the loud amen.

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 *(sung)*
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 and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The First Reading: Exodus 33:12-23 Alice Young, Breast Cancer Survivor
A Reading from the Book of Exodus.
Moses said to the Lord, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

The Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But" he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." And the Lord continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."
The Reader: The Word of the Lord.
The People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 99 Pat Akins, Breast Cancer Survivor

Psalm *Refrain*: – "I Will Praise Your Name" **LEVAS # 274**
The Lord is King;
let the people tremble; *
he is enthroned upon the cherubim;
let the earth shake.

The Lord is great in Zion; *
he is high above all peoples.

Refrain:
I will praise your name for ever,
My King and my God.

Let them confess his Name, which is great and awesome; *
he is the Holy One.

"O mighty King, lover of justice,
you have established equity; *
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob."

Refrain:
I will praise your name for ever,
My King and my God.

Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God
and fall down before his footstool; *
he is the Holy One.

Moses and Aaron among his priests,
and Samuel among those who call upon his Name, *
they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.

Refrain:
I will praise your name for ever,
My King and my God.

He spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud; *
they kept his testimonies and the decree that he gave them.

O Lord our God, you answered them indeed; *
you were a God who forgave them,
yet punished them for their evil deeds.

Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God
and worship him upon his holy hill; *
for the Lord our God is the Holy One.

Refrain:
I will praise your name for ever,
My King and my God.

The Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Charlene Wiltshire, Breast Cancer Survivor
A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Church of the Thessalonians.
Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came

to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead-- Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.
The Reader: The Word of the Lord.
The People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn– "Leave It There" **Lift Every Voice and Sing LEVAS # 197 (vv. 1-2)**

1) If the world from you withhold
of its silver and its gold,
And you have to get along with meager fare,
Just remember, in His Word how,
How He feeds the little bird.
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
Refrain:
Leave it there, leave it there,
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
If you trust and never doubt,
He will surely bring you out;
take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

2) If your body suffers pain,
and your health you can't regain,
And your soul is almost sinking in despair,
Jesus knows the pain you feel,
He can save and He can heal,
take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
[Refrain]

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22 The Rev. Patricia Downing
The Priest: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
The People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.
The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.
The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.
The People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - "Leave It There" **LEVAS 197 (vv. 3-4)**

3) When your enemies assail,
and your heart begins to fail,
Don't forget that God in heaven answers prayer;
He will make a way for you,
and will lead you safely through;
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
[Refrain]

Refrain:
Leave it there, leave it there,
Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
If you trust and never doubt,
He will surely bring you out;
take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.

4) When your youthful days are gone,

and old age is stealing on,
And your body bends beneath the weight of care;
He will never leave you then,
He'll go with you to the end;
take your burden to the Lord and leave it there.
[Refrain]

The Homily The Rev. Patricia Downing

Testimonial Suzanne Closson, Breast Cancer Survivor

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 Alexandra Rodriguez, Breast Cancer Survivor

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

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.
Silence
Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

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

Make us instruments of reconciliation and peace and teach the nations of the earth to walk together in the ways of justice, mercy, and love.
Silence
Lord, in your mercy.
Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, enfold in your love all who face breast cancer; grant them strength, healing, and hope. Sustain their families and caregivers, bless those who seek better treatments and a cure, and guide us toward care that is accessible to all. We give thanks for survivors and remember with love those who have died.
Silence

Lord, in your mercy.
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.
The Concluding Collect The Celebrant
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 Chancel Choir

The Great Thanksgiving *(sung)* **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 *(sung)*
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 *(sung)*
The Celebrant and the People
Jesus Christ has died.
Jesus Christ is risen.
Jesus 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 (sung)
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 *(sung)*
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 Selection St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Post Communion Prayer **BCP pg. 365**

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 Closing Hymn - “Where He Leads Me” **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, follow Me."

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.

3) I'll go with Him through the judgment,
I'll go with Him through the judgment,
I'll go with Him through the judgment,
I'll go with Him, with Him all the way.

4) He will give me grace and glory,
He will give me grace and glory,
He will give me grace and glory,
and go with me, with me all the way.

5) 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.

The Dismissal

The Postlude St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Sunday Spearhead
The Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday
October 18, 2026

CHURCH GROWTH!

Our wonderful church family continues to grow! We joyfully welcome **William (Bill) Burton** into our church family. Bill, we look forward to getting to know you. Bill's shepherd is Dr. Tim Barksdale.

****

Condolences to Nikkol Simms, Carlia Wallace, Demetrius Miller, Juanita Miller, Alliyah Miller, and Triniti Miller; Grandson Shaine Simms, Granddaughter Rayne Wallace and family on the death their father and grandfather, **Phillip Miller**. May the soul of Phillip rest in peace and rise in glory. Please pray for the family.

****

NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

- **The 2027 Annual Stewardship Driv**e has begun. Please prayerfully consider an increase in your 2027 Faithful Giving Pledge towards the vibrant ministries of St. Thomas. Remember that our individual goal should be to become a biblical tither, 10% of your time, talents and treasures. Are you working towards that spiritual goal? Please use the Giving Chart found on *page 22* to assist you with your Faithful Giving Pledge for 2027. Please bring your completed Faithful Giving card to the altar during the offertory, or directly submit it online using the link **https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScDERUxYZeOi_K4tSTrqKh6JVVnGNhwaTEd_4ndPNLYpM08tw/viewform** or QR code:

- Our exciting ministry plans and activities for the remaining three months of this year are in place. I am urging each parishioner to please ensure that your financial pledge for 2026 is current and up to date. We are hopeful that all pledges will be fulfilled by *December 31, 2026*. If you are unsure about your balance, please contact Judy Tillman, stewardship chair, as soon as possible at **stewardship@aecst.org**. Enormous thanks for your continued support and generous contributions.

- ***Thank you*** to everyone that purchased a pew memorial plaque that will memorialize your loved one. The Memorial Tribute Ministry will notify you once the plaques are ready for installation.

- **REMINDER**: **Do not park** in the Overbrook Presbyterian Church parking lot on Sundays! Their office has told us this rule is still being violated! Thank you.

- Following the call to worship the Verger, or designated person, requests that the congregation maintain a spirit of reverence and silence as we prepare our hearts and minds for the worship of Almighty God. Please refrain from conversation.

- As a sign of reverence and respect for the worship of God and others, kindly remain in the church for the entirety of the liturgy, unless you have an unavoidable reason to leave early. Please refrain from exiting

the church until after the closing hymn and the dismissal, as our worship is not complete until we are sent forth into the world to love and serve the Lord.

****

THE SISTERHOOD GUILD

- Will hold a meeting in the Absalom Jones House Sunday after service.
- Thanks to all who attended and supported the Pocketbook Bingo event on Saturday, October 10th. It was a day of fun and fellowship. Thank you for your continued support of our ministry.

****

AECST DIRECTORY- Suzanne Closson and Ashley Hines, Co-chairs
This project is in its final stages. If you did not take a picture and would like to have your contact information listed in the Church Directory please send your name, home address, telephone number and email address to Suzanne Closson at **msclosson@live.com**. The deadline is *October 30,2026.* Thank you.

****

AECST LEGACY PATH CAMPAIGN

Leave a lasting legacy at The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas.

Personalized commemorative bricks are now available for purchase and will be permanently installed on the church grounds. Each engraved brick honors a loved one, marks a special occasion, or reflects your commitment to the future of AECST.

Your support strengthens our ministries, preserves our heritage, and helps ensure that St. Thomas continues to be a beacon of faith, hope, and love for generations to come. Each brick is $125. Please contact Victoria Rivers at **memorialtribute@aecst.org** for information. Design and Personalize Your Brick at:
https://share.google/OwnV8VD0cvLfbPcQQ

****

HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

- Early detection remains one of the most effective tools in the fight against breast cancer.
- Other than skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among American women.
- Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early when it is easier to treat. Mammograms can find cancer before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms.
- 1 in 8 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. But there is hope. When caught in its earliest, localized stages, the 5-year relative survival rate is over 99%.
- Advances in early detection and treatment methods have significantly increased breast cancer survival rates in recent years.
- Men also get breast cancer, but it is not as common. The lifetime risk of male breast cancer is about 1 in 755 men.
- Learn more about the importance of routine screenings and mammograms, understand when to begin screening based on age and risk factors, and discover ways to take charge of your breast health. Talk to your healthcare provider about screening or schedule a screening by calling Mainline Health at 484.580.1800.
- Go to **www.komen.org** for more information.

Welcome to Week 3 of your 4-Week Fall Walking Challenge!

We hope you enjoy walking while the weather is good.

- Be sure to check with your physician if you have any questions/concerns.
- Pick any 5 days this week to walk and use the other 2 days for rest.

Week 3: Building Stamina

- Goal: Walk 20 minutes per day, 5 days this week.
- Pace: Moderate. You should feel your heart rate pumping, but you shouldn't be gasping for air.
- Fall Tip: Make it social. Invite a friend or family member to join you on a weekend walk to catch up and look at the changing leaves.
- Scan the QR Code for the full 4 Week Program:

****

CATTO MINISTRY UPDATE

- **Mark Your Calendars! Make A Plan! Move Your Feet!**

  PA deadlines are fast approaching for the upcoming election
  -***Oct. 19th - Voter registration deadline***
  -Oct. 27th - Mail ballot application deadline
  -Nov. 3rd - Election Day

  Voting is your SUPERPOWER!

****

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

The Pilgrims on a Journey Adult Bible Study Group will hold an **Election Day Prayer meeting** on November 3rd at 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM, via Zoom. Anyone can participate and join the call.

The Zoom credentials are:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83742158811?pwd=QU84aktrVWE2NE00a1Y0c0NacjVMdz09
Meeting ID: 837 4215 8811
Passcode: 225298

If you are interested in joining the ministry, please email Fr. Jay, **associatepriest@aecst.org.**

****

AECST MINISTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- **NOTE: All ministries and organizations, effective November 1st**, ***the Church office is no longer able to provide printing services for flyers or notices for distribution to the congregation, including inserts to the Sunday Bulletin. Your organization must provide copies of the document and bring them to the church before Tuesday at 3:00 PM. A digital copy may be submitted for the Digital Spearhead.***

- Announcements for Sunday Bulletin and Digital Spearhead are to be submitted to the church office by Monday, 12 Noon (emailing **1792@aecst.org** is preferred). If there are any questions please contact Gladyce, 215-473- 3065.

- To request meeting space usage in the church or church campus, please submit the "request for meeting space" document two weeks prior to the event. If you have questions or need the document contact the church office.

****

OUR DEDICATED OUT OF TOWN FAMILIES

We give thanks to God for these active and dedicated members of St. Thomas who presently live in other cities, states, and countries, but remain connected weekly through various media platforms:

Constance Anderson- Florida
The Reverend Dr. Paul Bach and Dr. Julie Hergerather-Seattle, Washington
Deadra Cannon-Georgia
Dr. Tracy Collins-North Carolina
Nora Corbin-Illinois
Paula Cropper-North Carolina
Lee Daniels-New York/California
Stacey Davis-New York
Andrew and Lisa Renee Dumas-Portugal
The Rev. Fr. Daren Evans-Texas
Rashid, Christie, and Gabrielle Faisal-Michigan
The Reverend Dr. Wil Gafney-Texas
Bradley Hammond-Tennessee
Richard and Gwenda Hart-South Carolina
Yvonne Hyde-Carter-New York
Dr. Calvin Johnson-Florida
Bettie Jones-North Carolina
Richard Jones, Jr.-Virginia
Dr. Sheila Jones-Smith-South Carolina
Steven and Jameela Lewis-Colorado/California
Nohjay Nimpson-Texas
Zennetta Peters-North Carolina
Richard and Rebecca Scales-Florida
Shelly and Ann Stewart-Florida/Massachusetts
Jillian Theorgood- Georgia
Howard Tucker-Brazil/Philadelphia
Allison Young- Maryland

****

MUSIC MINISTRY CORNER



- Come celebrate the Holidays with Waltier Blocker and the St. Thomas Gospel Choir as they return to the Kimmel Center for "A Philly Holiday Spectacular." In addition to STGC, the concert will feature vocalists Ryan Shaw and Morgan James, The Philadelphia Boys Choir, The Philly Pops Chorus, The Philly Pops Orchestra and a special visit from Santa Clause! Concerts dates are as follows:

  Friday, December 11th - 7:30 PM
  Saturday, December 12th - 2:00 PM
  Sunday, December 13th - 7:00 PM

  Tickets may be purchased through **phillypops.org** or by calling the Kimmel Center box office at 215-893-1999

- The St. Thomas Chancel Choir is a dynamic music ministry that sings on 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month, in addition to special services. We welcome anyone who loves to sing, regardless of age or skill level. The choir sings a wide variety of musical styles, including anthems, Spirituals, and Gospel, among others. Our rehearsal schedule is as follows:

Saturday, November 7th - 10:00 AM
Saturday, November 21st - 10:00 AM
Saturday, December 5th - 10:00 AM
Saturday, December 21st - 10:00 AM

- Vocalists and Musicians Wanted! You are invited to join the professional recording St. Thomas Gospel Choir. The Gospel Choir (STGC) is directed by Waltier Blocker and sing on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month, in addition to special services. Rehearsals are every Wednesday at 7:30 PM in Anderson Hall.

****

The Readings for the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
October 18, 2026

The First Reading - Exodus 33:12-23
Psalm 99
The Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
The Holy Gospel - Matthew 22:1-15-22

The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of October 18, 2026

Sunday - Matthew 16:13-20
Monday - Luke 9”51-62
Tuesday - Luke 10:1-16
Wednesday - Luke 10:17-24
Thursday - Luke 10:25-37
Friday - Luke 10:38-42
Saturday-Luke 11:1-13

This Week at AECST – October 18, 2026

Tuesday, October 20th

- Adult Bible Study with Fr. Jay via Zoom 7:00 PM
- OPC Advocacy Outreach Group Meeting in the Undercroft 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Wednesday, October 21st

- St. Thomas Gospel Choir Rehearsal in Anderson Hall 7:30 PM

Friday, October 23rd

- Retired Person’s Ministry meeting in Anderson Hall from 11:30 - 1:00 PM

Saturday, October 24th

- Daughters of the King meeting in Anderson Hall from 8:30 - 12:30 PM
- GFS meeting from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM in the Undercroft
- Acolyte Rehearsal at 1:30 PM in the Church

SICK AND SHUT-IN / SPECIAL PRAYERS REQUESTS

In Rehab: - Verger Stephen Hannum - St. Francis Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

In Long Term Care Residences: Helena Allen - Simpson House; Gwendolyn Langford - Arden Courts of Cherry Hill; Ola Bass - Atria, Lafayette Hill

At Home: Robert Brown, Cornelia Camp, Regina Meacham Devero, Vernette Dow, Virginia DuBrey, Patricia Walker-Ellison, D. Lynn Joell, Karen Ragland, Joyce Stewart

Special Prayers: Carmen Brown, Edita Gauthney, Joan Hall, Richard Jones Jr., Dr. Santee Ruffin, Cathy Stafford, Carolyn Summers, Daryn Stewart, Justin Trotman, Lisa Woodley, Charlene M. Wiltshire, Bettie Jones, Thomas Harris, The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach, Gail Harris, Roosevelt Harris, Jr., Garry Jones, Bill Burton

We pray for those who are incarcerated and their families, as well as those affected by their actions.

*If you have prayer requests and wish to be added to this list, the church office, or email **1792@aecst.org***

UPCOMING SUNDAYS

October 18th

- Breast Cancer Awareness Sunday - please wear something pink

October 25th

- Youth & Young Adults Sunday
- Members of the South Jersey Chapter of Links, Incorporated worshipping with us
- Church School Trunk or Treat in the parking lot after service

November 1st

- Celebration of the Feast of All Saints/All Souls

November 8th

- Observance of the Birthdays of Blessed Absalom Jones, 1st rector; and Fr. Shaw, 17th rector, both born on November 6th
- Observance of Veterans Day

November 15th

- Members of the Links, Incorporated worshiping with us in celebration of their 80th Anniversary

November 22nd

- Annual Judicial Sunday
- Youth and Young Adult Sunday

November 29th

- The First Sunday of Advent
- Health Ministry Sunday

youth

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS' NEWS

IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE RECTOR
St. Thomas celebrates children and youth not only as the church of TOMORROW, but also the church of TODAY! We welcome and encourage their full presence and participation in our Sunday worship.

****

Church School begins at 10:00 AM in the Undercroft. All Students must be registered in order to attend Church School. Please use the QR Code to register your child for this Church School year.

Interested in help our children grow in their faith and understanding of God's love? Become a **Church School Teacher.** Please use the QR Code below to apply. No teaching experience required.

****

SCOUT TROOP #133
The Scout program has resumed! All children are welcome to participate. If you know of a child interested in exploring, learning new skills and developing confidence, the Scout Program might be for them.

The Cub Scout Program is open to children in grades 1-5 and meet from 2:00 - 4:00 PM on Saturdays.

The Scout Program is open to children 11-17 years old and meet are on Saturdays from 1:00 - 3:00 PM in the Undercroft. For more information contact Scout Master Howard Chapman at **howchaman@gmail.com**

****

GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY (GFS)
GFS is in full swing. The next meeting is October 24th in the Undercroft at 11:00 AM. All girls are invited to join.

If you would like to join GFS as an adult Sponsor or be on the mailing list for future events, please contact our Branch Advisor, Nikkol Simms at **njsimms@verizon.net** for the schedule.

****

AECST ACOLYTE MINISTRY

Attention Young Adults:

Becoming an Acolyte is a meaningful way to deepen participation in worship and connect to the liturgy. It's not just for the kids. Email Nikkol Simms at **njsimms@verizon.net** or call, 267-934-3016. You can also email Juanita Miller at **juanitamiller91@gmail.com** or call, 267-283-8011 to discuss any questions and interest in this ministry.

****

ALTAR FLOWERS

To order flowers, please return this form (please print) with payment to Alfreda Brockman or the Church Office. You can also order via the church website to order and pay for flowers; **http://www.aecst.org/donations.htm**

_ I would like to place flowers on the High Altar- $80 each.

_ I would like to place flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar- $70 each.

_ I would like to place flowers on the Columbarium- $60 each.

In memory of _____

In Thanksgiving for_____

Given by_____ Envelope_____ Amount $_____

****

ALL SAINTS/ALL SOULS MEMORIAL CANDLES

All Saints/All Souls Observance: November 1st

On Sunday, November 1st we will observe the Feast of All Saints and All Souls. You are invited to bring photographs of your loved ones to place on the Columbarium.

You may also dedicate a Memorial Candle in honor of a loved one:

- $2.00 per single name
- $4.00 per married couple

To participate, please submit your completed form and payment to Alfreda Brockman, or mail them to the church office. **The deadline is Wednesday, October 28th.**

(*Please Print*)

I would like to dedicate a Memorial Candle to:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Given by _____ Envelope # _____ Amount $_____

Realm Announcement

"…BUT I DON'T WANT TO USE REALM"

Some of you have this thought in the back of your mind; but your church data is already there! Church administrators and financial managers are reconciling your donations, email addresses and phone numbers by using REALM Connect.
New methods and changes can be challenging for all of us. The REALM and Stewardship teams are here to assist you through the process.
Download the Realm Connect app today. It's available to Apple iOS and Android users. If you have questions please email realm@aecst.com or stewardship@aecst.com we will get you connected!

****

HOW CAN YOU BE FAITHFUL
TO GOD AND THE CHURCH THROUGH STEWARDSHIP?

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, For God loves a cheerful giver." II Corinthians 9:7

The Stewardship Committee of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas recognizes that stewardship may take form in several ways: your time, talent, or treasures. The one commonality is that each of us must prayerfully ask God to guide us in making the right choices and have faith that He will guide us to the right decision.

Our church has a tremendous congregation that is thriving and growing. The ministries that we have serve all of God's children near and far. These endeavors require all three forms of stewardship, but especially your sharing of treasure. Prayerfully consider donating to one or all the special requests below.

Other ways to continue to be Faithful to God and the Church through Stewardship:
1) Sunday Offering Plate

2) Church website - http://www.aecst.org/donations.htm the button on the page that represents where you'd like your payment to be applied for, i.e., pledge, the AJ House, Easter, etc.

3) Members and visitors who previously donated through GIVI will use **Realm Connect**. If you donate via the church website, either directly or by using the QR code, you will see a new webpage and a corresponding QR code.

4) **Cellphone:** Text "AECST" to 73256 to donate.

A CHART TO ASSIST WITH FAITHFUL GIVING

Holy Scripture commends a minimum tithe of
10% of our earnings.
Where are you on your spiritual journey?
(suggested guidelines)

Yearly Income	2%	5%	10%
$10,000.00	$200.00	$500.00	$1,000.00
$15,000.00	$300.00	$750.00	$1,500.00
$20,000.00	$400.00	$1,000.00	$2,000.00
$25,000.00	$500.00	$1,250.00	$2,500.00
$30,000.00	$600.00	$1,500.00	$3,000.00
$40,000.00	$800.00	$2,000.00	$4,000.00
$50,000.00	$1,000.00	$2,500.00	$5,000.00
$60,000.00	$1,200.00	$3,000.00	$6,000.00
$70,000.00	$1,400.00	$3,500.00	$7,000.00
$80,000.00	$1,600.00	$4,000.00	$8,000.00
$90,000.00	$1,800.00	$4,500.00	$9,000.00
$100,000.00	$2,000.00	$5,000.00	$10,000.00
$110,000.00	$2,200.00	$5,500.00	$11,000.00
$120,000.00	$2,400.00	$6,000.00	$12,000.00
$150,000.00	$3,000.00	$7,000.00	$15,000.00
$175,000.00	$3,500.00	$8,750.00	$17,500.00
$200,000.00	$4,000.00	$10,000.00	$20,000.00

2027 Faithful Giving Cards

Enormous thanks to these individuals who have submitted their 2027 Faithful Giving Pledge.
Is your name included yet? Please submit yours today by using the QR Code below.

The Clergy Leadership
The Rev. Fr. Martini
The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins
The Rev. Patricia Downing

Vestry
Tim Barksdale
Deborah Booker-Matthews
William Burke
Deborah Camp-Frye
Deadra Cannon
Albert Dandridge
Mary Dean
Elaine C. Gillison
Eugene Golson
Pamela Johnson
Richard Jones
Monica Lewis-Jones
Judith Simkins-Booth
Judith Tillman

Auxiliary Vestry
Sharon Bullock
Ronnie Collins
Gwenda Hart
D. Lynn Joell
Kelvin Johnson
Monica Johnson Taylor
Brenda Johnson-Best
Cynthia Muse
Darryle Tillman

Membership
Michael & Dorothy Archey
Susan Ben
Ricardo Bostic
Theresa Bramwell
J.R. & Alfreda Brockman
Eleanor Chestnut
Gwendolyn Cottman
Carl Dean
William & Quincina Edmonds
Lorretta Ferguson
Barry Frye
Edward & Kathryn Geiger
Barbara L. Glenn
Marie Golson
Richard Hart
Fleta Howell
Simone Jeffers
Bobby Johnson
Naomi Johnson Booker
Sheila B Jones
Reggie & Sherilynn Kimble
Steven & Jameela Lewis
Winston Lowe
Pat Lynch
Derick McBride
Michael McIntosh
Laura McNeill
Deborah Otey
Cassandra A. Ruffin
Leah Sheppard
Kayma Sherman
Catherine Stafford
H. Lynn Starr
Arthur & Michele Sudler
Karen J. Vaughn
Rufus Seth Williams
Paula Wright