“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-fourth Sunday after Pentecost the observance of Veterans Day and the birthdays of The Reverend Fr. Absalom Jones and The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw.

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-fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Observance of Veterans Day and the birthdays of
The Reverend Father Absalom Jones and The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw
November 8, 2026

The Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw
Homilists: J.R. Brockman, Lt. Colonel, Aviation Branch, U.S. Army
and Kim Phillips, Sergeant, U.S. Army
Vergers: Dr. Naomi Johnson Booker, Eugene Golson and Karen Ragland
Music Ministry: St. Thomas Gospel Choir
Livestream/Sound Ministry: Marie Golson and Teri Tillman

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Order of Service

The Opening Meditation The Verger

The Prelude St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Opening Hymn- "We Have Come Into His House" **Lift Every Voice and Sing (LEVAS) #245**

1) We have come in-to His house and gathered in His Name to worship Him; We have come in-to His house and Gathered in His Name to worship Him; We have come in-to His house and gathered in His Name to worship Christ, the Lord, Worship Him, Christ the Lord.

2) So forget about yourself and concentrate on Him and worship Him; So forget about yourself and concentrate on Him and worship Him; So forget about yourself and concentrate on Him and worship Him; Worship Him, Christ, the Lord.

3) Let us lift up holy hands, and magnify His name and worship Him; Let us lift up holy hands, and magnify His name and worship Him; Let us lift up holy hands, and magnify His name and worship Him; Worship Him, Christ, the Lord

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:
O God, whose blessed Son came into the world that he might destroy the works of the devil and make us children of God and heirs of eternal life: Grant that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves as he is pure; that, when he comes again with power and great glory, we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The First Reading: Joshua 24:1-3, 14-25

R. Seth Williams, Major, U.S. Army
Judge Advocate General Corps

A Reading from the Book of Joshua.
Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors--Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor--lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

"Now therefore revere the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!" Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.
The Reader: The Word of the Lord.
The People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 78:1-7

Eugene Phillips, Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps

Hear my teaching, O my people; *
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable; *
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.

That which we have heard and known,
and what our forefathers have told us, *
we will not hide from their children.

We will recount to generations to come
the praiseworthy deeds and the power of the LORD, *
and the wonderful works he has done.

He gave his decrees to Jacob
and established a law for Israel, *
which he commanded them to teach their children;

That the generations to come might know,
and the children yet unborn; *
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;

So that they might put their trust in God, *
and not forget the deeds of God,
but keep his commandments;

The Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Kareem Ragin, Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army 75th Ranger Battalion

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Church of the Thessalonians.
We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.
The Reader: The Word of the Lord.
The People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn- "The Lord is My Light" **LEVAS #58**

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation,
whom shall I fear?
Whom shall I fear, whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life:
Whom shall I fear?
In the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, O in the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, in the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, whom shall I fear

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13
The Priest: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
The People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.
Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet

him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."
The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.
The People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - "The Lord is My Light" **LEVAS #58**

The Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation,
whom shall I fear?
Whom shall I fear, whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life:
Whom shall I fear?
In the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, O in the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, in the time of trouble,
He shall hide me, whom shall I fear

The Homily/Memorial Kim Phillips, Sergeant, U.S. Army and
J.R. Brockman, Lt. Colonel, Aviation Branch, U.S. Army

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 Albert Dandridge Esq., Staff Sargeant, U.S. Marine Corps

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.

On this Veterans Day Sunday, we give thanks to all who have served in the armed forces of our nation. Gracious God, bless our veterans and their families. Bring healing to those who carry wounds of body, mind, or spirit, and give us the will to stand beside them in the years after their service. Receive into your eternal care the veterans who have died and guide us all in the ways of justice and peace.
Silence
Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

For the elections now concluded; for those elected to public office, that God may grant them wisdom, humility, and integrity, ever mindful of the sacred trust bestowed upon them and the solemn responsibilities of their office; for those who were not elected, that they may be sustained by God's grace; and for all who labored in the electoral process, that their service may be honored. May God heal our divisions and guide us in the ways of justice, peace, and the common good.
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.

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 Posting of the Colors Scout Troop #133

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 Gospel Choir

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 Selection St. Thomas Gospel Choir

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 Veterans

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

The Final Blessing **The Celebrant**

The Closing Hymn - "This Little Light of Mine" **LEVAS # 221**

1) This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

2) Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

3) Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine.
Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine.
Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

The Dismissal

The Postlude St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Sunday Spearhead
Observance of Veterans Day and the birthdays of
The Reverend Father Absalom Jones and The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw
November 8, 2026

To Our Veterans
We give thanks and celebrate those who served in the Armed Forces of our nation.
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Bulletin Correction – Memorial Candles Acknowledgement
We wish to acknowledge memorial candles inadvertently omitted from last Sunday's Columbarium display. The candles were offered in loving memory of:

David Lawrence Rivers Sr., Ivory Elizabeth Mosley, John Clifford Mosley Sr., and John Clifford Mosley Jr., *donated by* **Victoria C. Mosley Rivers, Caryn Staci Rivers, and David L. Rivers II** and

Lydia R. Rooks, whose memorial candle was *donated by* **Cathy Stafford**.

We extend our apologies to the families and donors for this oversight and are grateful for their understanding.
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Birthday Celebration
Please join the Pentecost Committee for a reception in Anderson Hall immediately following Sunday's service as we celebrate the birthdays of The Rev. Absalom Jones, First Rector, and The Rev. Canon Martini Shaw, Seventeenth Rector, both born on November 6th. All are welcome.
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A Note of Thanks
Thank you church family for your thoughts, prayers and well wishes during my stay in the hospital and after. Thank you also to Father Shaw for visiting and praying for and with me. Peace and blessings to all --Arnott Trotman.
****

NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

- The 2027 Annual Stewardship Drive 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.

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THE SISTERHOOD GUILD

Can we bring back the tradition of being St. James School's Sweet Potato Church? The Sisterhood Guild is collecting cans of sweet potatoes for St. James School. This year's goal is 300 cans. St. James is trying to provide 300 meals for families in the community. The guild will have a tote bin at the rear of the church. The deadline to donate is *Sunday, November 8th*.

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CHOSEN 300 OUTREACH MINISTRY

The next volunteer/outreach opportunity is scheduled for Monday, November 16th at Chosen 300's 3959 Lancaster Avenue location. If you would like to volunteer and serve meals please meet the group at 5:30 PM. New volunteers are always welcome to attend.

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DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

Thanksgiving project - bring joy to families during the Thanksgiving season

- Daughters of The King will be collecting donations until November 15, 2026. The funds collected will be used to assist families with purchasing food for Thanksgiving dinner. No donation is too small, please prayerfully consider donating. Daughters will be collecting before and after church. Thank you in advance for your support.

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TREE OF LIFE PRISON MINISTRY (TOLPM)

Donations are being requested to help support the following initiatives:

- **Angel Tree Christmas Party**: This is the annual Christmas party for children who have an incarcerated parent. The party will be held Sunday, December 20th after morning worship. There are two (2) ways you can support this project;
    1. a financial donation, any amount, to offset the cost of preparing the meal for the families at the party; or
    2. during the month of November, we are asking you to support at least one child by purchasing a holiday gift that will be distributed at the Christmas party.

- **Family Support Assistance**: Children who have an incarcerated parent are often being cared for by a relative. The TOLPM will query families and determine what is most needed, food, clothing, children's books, etc. Funds will be used to help these families; including providing support to travel to St. Thomas for the Christmas party.

- **Tighty-Whities Project:** Incarcerated men are not always provided with a sufficient number of undergarments. The TOLPM is asking for donations for men's, WHITE ONLY underwear including Hanes (brand)Tag less T-Shirts, Hanes (brand) Tag-less briefs, and crew length socks. *All sizes are needed.* If you have questions contact J.R. Brockman at **brock.man@verizon.net** or call 609-381-9981.

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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

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CATTO MINISTRY UPDATE

Wow! You did it! Whether you walked, rode in a car with a friend or mailed in your ballot, you voted in record numbers! Thank you for participating and exercising *your right to vote*. Some of us set aside time to celebrate; but let's not forget there's work to be done. Remember, in six (6) short months you need to *vote* again.

If you are interested in joining this ministry email co-chairs Wendella Fox and Elaine Gillison at **cattoministry@aecst.org**.

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HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

Below are some *free webinars* from the MindSpring Mental Health Alliance that you may find interesting:

November 9th | Raising Resilient Children: Nurturing Emotional Strength and Adaptability
The ability to navigate hardships with confidence & courage protects a person's long-term health and happiness. Explore strategies for building emotional strength and discuss practical techniques to help children navigate setbacks, manage stress, and develop a positive outlook on life in this one-hour seminar with a licensed therapist.
Register here
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9716886587868/WN_NlqhZv1qQVCMLjE3WPS9Sw

November 10th | Holiday Stress & Self-Care
The "most wonderful time of the year" doesn't always feel that wonderful. Demands on our time and energy often leave us feeling tired, disappointed, and depressed. Learn effective strategies to manage holiday stress, prioritize self-care, and get the support you need in this one-hour seminar with a licensed therapist.
Register here **https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9716886587868/WN_fp_Tbbc1RXSiiRZ661XlPQ**

November 11th |
Communicating Clearly Under Stress: Strategies for Tough Conversations
When stress rises, communication often becomes challenging – people speak faster, listen less, and react more strongly than intended. In this course, you'll discover how stress impacts communication and learn practical strategies to express yourself clearly, even when emotions are intense. This isn't about avoiding difficult conversations; it's about approaching them with confidence, making them safer and more productive for everyone involved.
Register here **https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9716886587868/WN_bJkfyMyIRnSPjfxxtXHpbQ**

Setting Healthy Boundaries in Relationships
Maintaining a balance between caring for loved ones and setting healthy boundaries for yourself can be challenging. Learn how to express your own needs without guilt, strike a healthy balance between caregiving and self-care, and tips for negotiating compromises with a licensed therapist.
Register here
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9716886587868/WN_dwtbAQNQTIG27l9FSY5jGA

November 12th | Attachment Styles: Tools for Emotional Safety, Communication, and Healthy Boundaries
Learn practical skills to build safer, stronger connections in everyday life. Whether you are navigating relationships at home, in a caregiving role or in your personal life, this session teaches tools that help you reduce reactivity, set clear limits, repair misunderstandings, and communicate needs in ways that build trust. Discuss grounding strategies, self-awareness, and step-by-step communication practices that support healthier and more stable relationship patterns. Part 2 in a 3-part series.
Register here
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9716886587868/WN_2LdG_0GBRMqcIstuwPbEsA
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CHRISTIAN FORMATION
The Pilgrims on a Journey, adult Bible study group meet Tuesdays at 7:00 PM via Zoom. If you are interested in joining the ministry, please email Fr. Jay, **associatepriest@aecst.org.**
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AECST MINISTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- **NOTE: 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. If you wish to have flyers included in the Sunday Bulletin, organizations must provide printed copies of the document and bring them to the church by 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.

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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

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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.

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The Readings for the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost November 8, 2026

The First Reading - Joshua 24:1-3, 14-25
Psalm 78:1-7
The Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
The Holy Gospel - Matthew 25:1-13

The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of November 8, 2026

Monday - Luke 14:12-24
Tuesday - Luke 14:25-35
Wednesday - Luke 15:1-10
Thursday - Luke 15:11-32
Friday - Luke 16:1-9
Saturday - Luke 16:10-18

This Week at AECST – November 8, 2026

Tuesday, November 10th

- 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, November 11th

- Church and Administrative Offices closed in observance of Veterans Day

Saturday, November 14th

- GFS meeting11:00 AM - 1:00 PM in the Undercroft
- Scouts Troop #133 meeting 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- Acolyte Rehearsal 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

In Hospital: Carl Dean- Einstein Hospital

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

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, Sr., 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

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 will be worshiping with us in celebration of their 80th Anniversary. Dr. Gwendolyn Boyd, Executive Director, The Links Foundation, Incorporated, will be the guest homilist.

November 22nd

- Annual Judicial Sunday - The Honorable Natasha Taylor-Smith, Judge Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, will be the guest speaker.
- Youth and Young Adults Sunday

November 29th

- The First Sunday of Advent
- Health Ministry Sunday



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.

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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.

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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**.

St. Thomas Scout Troop #133 of Scouting America is participating in the nationwide campaign of "Scouting for Food". This annual gathering of canned food and dry goods donations from across our community is then delivered to a homeless shelter for distribution to those in need. This year, we are partnering with Families Forward, a non-profit agency that provides emergency housing for up to 65 families experiencing homelessness, located at 111 N. 49th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139. If you are able, please bring your donations of canned food and dry goods to the church on or before NOVEMBER 22, 2026. That Sunday, the troop will gather the food, inspect it, and deliver it to Families Forward. Thank you for your generous support in this endeavor! *It's a great day to be a Scout!*

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GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY (GFS)

Come join the fun! The next meeting is November 14th in the Undercroft at 11:00 AM. All girls are invited.

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.

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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

Flowers on the High Altar are in celebration of the birthdays of The Rev. Absalom Jones and The Rev. Canon Martini Shaw.

Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar are in memory of Beatrice Elaine Tomlinson given by Nikki and Norman Franke.

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 $_____

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 Shaw
The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins
The Rev. Patricia Downing

Vestry
Tim Barksdale
Deborah Booker-Matthews
William Burke
Deborah Camp-Frye
Deadra Cannon
Albert Dandridge
Clara Mae Daniels
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 (Bobby) Tillman

Membership
Patricia Akins
Dorothy & Michael Archey
Paul Bach & Julie Hergenrather
Brenda Battle
Jennifer Bell
Susan Ben
Guy Booth
Ricardo Bostic
I. Page Bowser, Jr.
Theresa Bramwell
Conchetta Brewer
Lorita Brockington
Alfreda & J.R. Brockman
Jane & Robert Brown
Marilyn Brown
Phyllis Brown
Charlotte Card
Phyllis B. Cater
Eleanor Chestnut
Suzanne Closson
Lynada Coleburn-Bryant
Tracy Collins
Gwendolyn Cottman
Karen M. Davis
Stacey N. Davis
Sukona & Eddie Davis
Carl Dean
Andrew & Lisa-Renee Dumas
William & Quincina Edmonds
Larry & Deidré Farmbry
Loretta Ferguson
Wendella Fox & Herb Wetzel
Barry Frye
Irenda Gates
Edward & Kathryn Geiger
Hossein Gharavi & Stephenie Smith
Barbara L. Glenn
Swanie Goldsmith
Marie Golson
Clarice Grant
Arlene Gray
Michele Green
Derek Griffith
Tyrone & Teleia Gunby
Thomasina Hack
Nicole & Walter Harris
Roosevelt & Gail Harris
Deborah Harrison
Richard Hart
Maurice Hayes
René Hayes
Denise McDaniel Henderson
Synethia Hill

2027 Faithful Giving Cards
(continued)

Fleta Howell
Robert Hugh
Donald & Patricia Hunt
Kim Hyde
Yvonne Hyde-Carter
Diann Jacox
Simone Jeffers
Evelyn C. Johns
Bobby Johnson
Frank Johnson
Naomi Johnson Booker
Vernetta Johnston
Bettie Jones
Sheila B. Jones
Tyrone Keller
Reggie & Sherilynn Kimble
Jurdina Koilor
Nancy C. Lee
Steven & Jameela Lewis
Karen Leys
Michelle Lofton
Adriene Logan
Alonda Lord
C. Adjoa Love-Dorsey
James Lowe
Winston Lowe
Pat Lynch
Thomas Lynch
Constance Lyons
Stephen & Michelle Mack
Derrick McBride
Stacey McCoy-Ndiaye
Michael McIntosh
Laura McNeill
Regina Meacham-Devero
Velma M Morris-Nembhard
Mueni Mwanzia
Vincent & Lisa Napoleon
Chinwe Onyekere
Deborah Otey
Carolyn Paige
Tiana Pankey
Kim Phillips
Mary Ann Phillips
Michael Pyles
Kareem Ragin
Dolores Redmond
Clarence H. Rice
Victoria Rivers
Cassandra A. Ruffin
Nicole Ruffin
Barbara Savage
Georgia Sawyer
Sheila Sawyer-McCullough
Rebecca & Richard Scales
Leah Sheppard
Kayma Sherman
Arlene Singletary
Anita Smith
Dorothy Smith
Catherine Stafford
H. Lynn Starr
Shelly & Ann Stewart
Michele & Arthur Sudler
Lynda Tapper Smith
Calvin Thompson
Arnott Trotman
Justin & Lee Anne Trotman
Louise Trotman
Joe & Alycia Tucker
Robin Vann-Lynch
Karen J. Vaughn
Barbara Wiley
Michelle Wilkinson
Rufus Seth Williams
Stephanie Williamson
Lorna Wilson
Jenelle Johnson-Wilson
Charlene M. Wiltshire
Wanda A. Wood
Khalita N. Wright
Paula Wright
Alice Young