

“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 Palm Sunday: The Sunday of the Passion. We welcome Mr. David Kasievich, President/Head of St. James School; The Rev. Fr. Walter Thorne, our Homilist; students, parents, and staff from the St. James School will be worshipping with us today as we enter the Holiest Week of the Year.

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



Please use the QR Code to contribute to our church's ministries.

Palm Sunday
The Sunday of the Passion

April 13, 2025

The Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw

Homilist: The Rev. Fr. Walter Thorne

Assisting: The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans and The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins

Seminarian: Kathryn Brossa

Verger: Karen Ragland

Music Ministry: St. Thomas Chancel Choir, St. Thomas Gospel Choir and
Ambassador Choir of St. James School

Donkey: Pretzel

Donkey Riders: Ava Gordon, Lucas Jackson, Nia Mathurin,
Leo Maxwell Wexler, and Sarah Williams

Order of Service

The Liturgy of the Palms (To take place outside of the church)

The Holy Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

Fr. Daren Evans

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

The People: Glory to you Lord Christ.

After telling a parable to the crowd at Jericho, Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' 'Just say this, 'The Lord needs it.' " So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

The Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

The People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Fr. Walter Thorne and Seminarian Kathryn Brossa

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; *
his mercy endures forever.

Let Israel now proclaim, *
"His mercy endures forever."

Open for me the gates of righteousness; *
I will enter them;
I will offer thanks to the LORD.

"This is the gate of the LORD; *
he who is righteous may enter."

I will give thanks to you, for you answered me *
and have become my salvation.

The same stone which the builders rejected *
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the LORD's doing, *
and it is marvelous in our eyes.

On this day the LORD has acted; *
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Hosannah, LORD, hosannah! *
LORD, send us now success.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; *
we bless you from the house of the LORD.

God is the LORD; he has shined upon us; *
form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

"You are my God, and I will thank you; *
you are my God, and I will exalt you."

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; *
his mercy endures forever.

The Blessing and Distribution of the Palms- Canon Shaw

The Processional – led by Pretzel, the donkey, riders, clergy, acolytes, and choirs

The Opening Hymn-“All Glory Laud and Honor”

**Refrain: All glory, laud, and honor to thee, Redeemer King
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

1982 Hymnal # 154

**1) Thou art the King of Israel, thou David's royal Son,
who in the Lord's Name comest, the King and Blessed One. [Refrain]**

**2) The company of angles is praising thee on high;
and we with all creation in chorus make reply. [Refrain]**

**3) The people of the Hebrews with palms before thee went;
our praise and prayers and anthems before thee we present. [Refrain]**

**4) To thee before they passion they sang their hymns of praise;
to thee, now high exalted our melody we raise. [Refrain]**

**5) Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring;
who in all good delightest, thou good and gracious King. [Refrain]**

A Word of Welcome

The Celebrant

The Opening Salutation

The Celebrant: Bless the Lord, who forgives all our sins.

The People: His mercy endures forever.

The Collect for Purity

BCP 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 Kyrie

BCP 356

The Celebrant: Lord, have mercy

The People: Christ, have mercy

The Celebrant: Lord, have mercy

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 ever-living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

The First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Cynthia Muse

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens-wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

The Reader: The Word of the Lord.

The People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 126

Conchetta Brewer

Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble; *
my eye is consumed with sorrow,
and also my throat and my belly.

For my life is wasted with grief,
and my years with sighing; *
my strength fails me because of affliction,
and my bones are consumed.

I have become a reproach to all my enemies and even to my neighbors,
a dismay to those of my acquaintance; *
when they see me in the street they avoid me.

I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; *
I am as useless as a broken pot.

For I have heard the whispering of the crowd;
fear is all around; *
they put their heads together against me;
they plot to take my life.

But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. *
I have said, "You are my God.

My times are in your hand; *
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

Make your face to shine upon your servant, *
and in your loving-kindness save me."

**The Second Reading: Philippians 2:5-11
A Reading from the Book of Philippians.**

Tyrone Keller

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Reader: The Word of the Lord.

The People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn- “Were you There?”

**LEVAS #37 (vv. 1-2)
Lift Every Voice and Sing**

1) Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

2) Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

The Gospel Narrative according to Luke 23:1-49

Led by students from St. James School

J'Lynn Savage, 8th Grade

Journey Sorrell, 7th Grade

Lonnie Johnson, 8th Grade

Gabby Brown, 7th Grade

Tina Ellis, 8th Grade

Amirah Abdullah, 6th Grade

Mekenzie Edmond, 7th Grade

Mi'Ayr Culbreth, 5th Grade

Jordyn Johnson, 5th Grade

Narrator: Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying,

Priests: We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king.

Narrator: Then Pilate asked him,

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Narrator: He answered,

Jesus: You say so.

Narrator: Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds,

Pilate: I find no basis for an accusation against this man.

Narrator: But they were insistent and said,

Priests: He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place.

Narrator: When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies. Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them,

Pilate: You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.

Narrator: Then they all shouted out together,

Crowd: Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!

Narrator: (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting,

Crowd: Crucify, crucify him!

Narrator: A third time he said to them,

Pilate: Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.

Narrator: But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified, and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

ALL STAND

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said,

Jesus: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?

Narrator: Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said,

Jesus: Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.

Narrator: And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying,

Priests: He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!

Narrator: The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying,

Soldiers: If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!

Narrator: There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.' One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying,

Criminal 1: Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!

Narrator: But the other rebuked him, saying,

Criminal 2: Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.

Narrator: Then he said,

Criminal 2: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Narrator: Jesus replied, Jesus: Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.

SILENCE

Narrator: It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said,

Jesus: Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Narrator: Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said,

Centurion: Certainly this man was innocent.

Narrator: And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Narrator: Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath, they rested according to the commandment.

The Homily Hymn- "Were You There"

LEVAS #37 (vv. 3-4)

3) Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

4) Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

**The Homily
The Call to Christian Discipleship**

Fr. Walter Thorne
The Celebrant

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him, all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate
from the Virgin Mary and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN.**

The Prayers of the People
Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Malkam Yates

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

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

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

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

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

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

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

The Concluding Collect

The Celebrant

The Confession

BCP 360

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 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

The Celebrant

Almighty God, have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
AMEN

The Peace

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

The People: And also with you.

A Musical Selection

St. Thomas Gospel Choir

The Holy Eucharist

Offertory Sentence and Offering

Offertory Musical Selection

Shayla Oliver, 8th Grade

Sa'Naja Mitchell, 6th Grade

Jordyn Johnson, 5th Grade

London Rivers, 5th Grade

Ari Robbins, 5th Grade

Ambassador Choir of St. James School

Malaysia Cuffee-Pompey, 4th Grade

Isha Holman, 4th Grade

Jayden Jones, 4th Grade

Jayson Smith, 4th Grade

Carli Taylor, 4th Grade

The Great Thanksgiving (Sung)

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 with Angels and Archangels and 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)

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 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, forever and ever. AMEN.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

The People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

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

The Post-Communion Prayer

The Celebrant and the People:

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Sending Forth of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors

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

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

The Announcements

Richard Jones, Rector's Warden

The Youth Announcements

Landon Leys

The Recognition of Visitors and Guests

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

The Final Blessing

The Celebrant

The Closing Hymn- "Down At The Cross"

LEVAS # 28

**1) Down at the cross where my Savior died. Down where for
cleansing from sin I cried; there to my heart was the blood applied;
Glory to His name. Glory to His name. Glory to His name!
There to my heart was the blood applied. Glory to His name.**

**2) I am so wondrously saved from sin. Jesus so sweetly a
bides within; there at the cross where He took me in; Glory to His name.
Glory to His name. Glory to His name: There to my heart was
the blood applied. Glory to His name.**

**3) O precious fountain that saves from sin, I am so glad I have entered in;
There Jesus saves me and keeps me clean;
Glory to His name. Glory to His name. Glory to His name.**

**4) Come to this fountain so rich and sweet;
Cast your poor soul at the Savior's feet;
Plunge in today, and be made complete;
Glory to His name. Glory to His name. Glory to His name.**

The Dismissal

The Postlude

St. Thomas Music Ministry