

“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 **Fourth Sunday of Advent and Church School Christmas Presentation.**

On behalf of the Clergy, Wardens, Vestry and People of God, welcome to the historic **African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas**, founded in 1792 as the first black Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. The first rector of this historic parish, The Rev. Fr. Absalom Jones was also the first black Episcopal priest in the nation.

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, acceptance and faith. Today, as you worship in this place, may you experience and feel the presence of the Lord, and may you leave feeling renewed, refreshed and revived..

Faithfully,

Martini Shaw⁺

(The Very Rev. Canon) Martini Shaw,

17th Rector and

Dean of the Schuylkill Deanery

**The Fourth Sunday of Advent
Church School Christmas Presentation**

**December 18, 2022
10:00 am**

Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw
Homily: Church School Christmas Presentation
Seminarians in Residence: Kathryn Brossa & David King
Music Ministry: St. Thomas Chancel Choir

ORDER OF SERVICE

The Organ Prelude

St. Thomas Music Ministry

The Opening Hymn - "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

1982 Hymnal #56

1.) O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. **[Refrain]**

2.) O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who orderest all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go. **[Refrain]**

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

3.) O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe. **[Refrain]**

4.) O come, O Branch of Jesse's tree,
free them from Satan's tyranny
that trust thy mighty power to save
and give them victory o'er the grave **[Refrain]**

5.) O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high
and close the path to misery. **[Refrain]**

6.) O come, thou Dayspring from on high
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight. **[Refrain]**

7.) O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid thou our sad divisions cease
and be thyself our King of Peace. **[Refrain]**

8.) O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. **[Refrain]**

A Word of Welcome

The Rector

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

**Advent Wreath Ceremony
The Fourth Sunday of Advent**



Leader: Our God comes to live among us! With Mary,
His mother, let us celebrate His Birth!

All: O God, help us to trust as Mary did the Mystery of Your great
love for us!!

Reading: John 3: 16-21

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light came into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.

Leader: We light these four candles as a sign of our joy in Your choosing to enter into our humanity through the womb of Mary.

Four candles are lit this week. Pause for a moment of silence.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: *Loving God, we're excited and happy because soon we will celebrate again the birth of Your Son, Jesus. As we remember that first Christmas almost two thousand years ago, we are filled with joy and awe that You, our God, chose to be born of a woman as was each one of us. Deepen in us, we beg You, an appreciation of our shared humanity that we may live our lives together in the same Spirit as Jesus lived each day of His.*

*Let us go in peace To love and serve our God.
Let us strive for peace with each and every other.
Let us be at peace within ourselves.
Amen.*

The Penitential Salutation:

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

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. AMEN

The Decalogue

BCP 350

Celebrant: Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage.

You shall have no other gods but me.

People: Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

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

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Honor your father and your mother.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit murder.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit adultery.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not steal.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not be a false witness.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

The Confession

BCP 360

Celebrant: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us kneel and confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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

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 Kyrie eleison

BCP 356

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Celebrant: Lord have mercy.

The Proclamation of The Word

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Stephen Pugh

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18

Bobby Tillman

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Theresa Bramwell

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Gradual Hymn - "Love Take A Walk with Me"

1) Love take a walk with me

Love take a walk with me

Love take a walk with me

O Spirit, guide my feet

2) Grace take a walk with me

Grace take a walk with me

Grace take a walk with me

O Spirit, guide my feet

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

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

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily Hymn - "Love Take A Walk with Me"

3) Hope take a walk with me

Hope take a walk with me

Hope take a walk with me

O Spirit, guide my feet

4) Peace take a walk with me

Peace take a walk with me

Peace take a walk with me..

O Spirit, guide my feet

The Homily

Church School Christmas Presentation

Happy Birthday Jesus - Congregation please join in singing after the children sing the song first -

1) Happy Birthday Jesus
I'm so glad it's Christmas
All the tinsels and lights
And the Presents are nice

2) Happy Birthday Jesus
I'm so glad it's Christmas
All the carols and bells
Make the holiday swell

But the real gift is you

And it's all about you!

Happy Birthday Jesus

Jesus I Love You

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

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

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

We pray for a Holy season of Advent. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

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. Lord, in your mercy; **Hear our prayer.**

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

-8-

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. Lord in your mercy;

Hear our prayer

For those incarcerated: Guide them Lord in all they do with your Grace and Love and grant them your continual help. In all their problems, your guidance; in all their dangers, your protection and in all their sorrows, your peace. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For those who for whatever reason are unable to worship with us in the breaking of the bread, the source of our faith; **That they be sustained by our Lord's promise to be with us for all eternity.**

Prince of Peace help us.
God of Grace save us.

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

The Concluding Collect

The Celebrant

The Peace

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

People: And also with you.

The Holy Eucharist

Offertory Sentence and Offering

Offertory Musical Selection

St. Thomas Chancel Choir

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For you are the source of light and life; you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

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 for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

The Agnus Dei

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

People: Have mercy upon us.

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

People: Have mercy upon us.

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

People: Grant us thy peace.

Let us pray:

Celebrant and People: We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy; Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. **AMEN**

The Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

(All baptized persons are invited to receive communion. If you have not been baptized, please still come to the altar to receive a blessing. For those not baptized, please indicate by crossing your arms on your chest.)

Post- Communion Prayer

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

The Announcements

Recognition of Guests and Visitors

The Blessing of Birthdays, Anniversaries and Travel

The Blessing

The Closing Hymn- “Soon and Very Soon” (Christ is coming)

LEVAS # 14

1) Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Christ is coming, Christ is coming
we're goin' to see the King!

2) No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Christ is coming, Christ is coming
we're goin' to see the King!

3) No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Christ is coming, Christ is coming
we're goin' to see the King!

4) Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Christ is coming, Christ is coming
we're goin' to see the King!

The Dismissal

The Postlude

The St. Thomas Music Ministry