



CELEBRATING A FEW OF OUR HEROES



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(IS JUST NOT LONG ENOUGH)



**THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY  
LOVE SUNDAY  
February 8, 2026**

**The Historic African Episcopal Church  
of St. Thomas**  
6361 Lancaster Avenue (Absalom Jones Way)  
Philadelphia, PA, 19151  
(215) 473-3065  
[www.aecst.org](http://www.aecst.org)

**The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw**  
The 17th Rector

**The Reverend Fr. Daren E. Evans**  
Associate to the Rector

**The Reverend Fr. Gerald Collins**  
Associate Priest



Scan the QR code or text "AECST" to 73256 to support our church and our ministries.



Please click on the link provided for the  
**[Order of Service](#)**

## **“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  
**The Fifth Sunday After The Epiphany and Love Sunday.**

On behalf of the Clergy, Wardens, Vestry, and People of God, welcome to the historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. Founded in 1792 as the first Black Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., it is proudly a part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The first rector of this historic parish, The Reverend Fr. Absalom Jones, was also the first Black Episcopal priest in the nation.

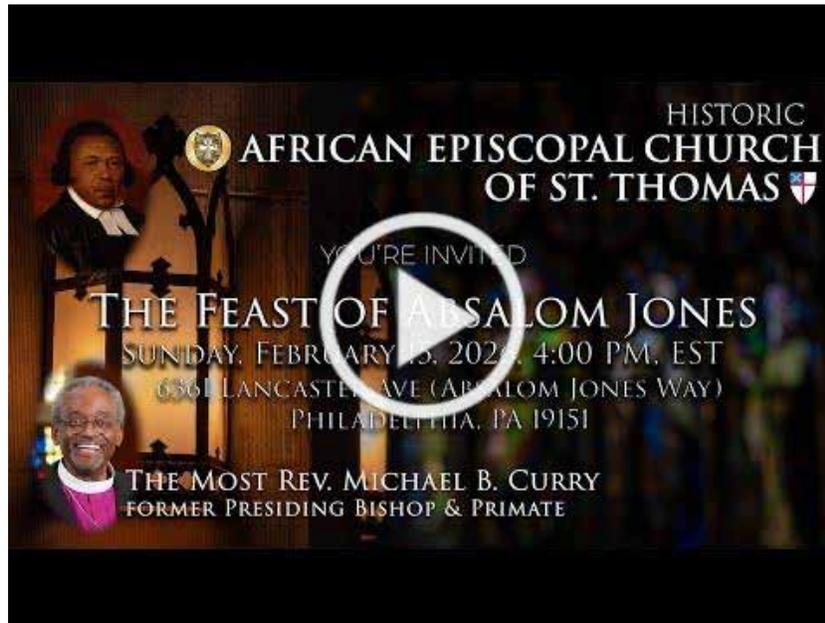
Our parish boldly proclaims the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are an active, mission-minded, and growing church family. Whomever you are and wherever you may find yourself on your spiritual journey of faith, you are always welcomed at St. Thomas Church, where we are joyfully and enthusiastically 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!

Wishing you a very Happy and Blessed New Year.

The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw,  
17th Rector and Dean of the Schuylkill Deanery

## A VIRTUAL INVITATION FOR YOU!

Please view and share & (NOTE 4:00 P.M.)



Video: Quentin Heyward  
(St.Thomas Videography Ministry)

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Our siblings at Overbrook Presbyterian Church are joyfully back in their church for Sunday worship. **It is VERY IMPORTANT that parishioners of St. Thomas NOT park** in their parking lot. They very graciously allowed us to use it during the past year when they were away due to a major fire in their church. We have been granted permission to **ONLY** use their lot on Sunday afternoon, February 15th for our Absalom Jones Celebration.

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### THE SISTERHOOD GUILD

will have their monthly meeting TODAY in the Absalom Jones House after service.

## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH NOTE - FEBRUARY 8 2026**

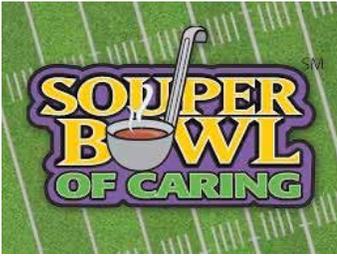
### **THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**

The Boy Scouts of America now called 'Scouting America' since the admission of girls, was founded in 1910. It was modeled on the Boy Scouts Association established by Lord Robert Baden-Powell in Britain in 1908. William Boyce, an American publisher during a trip to London England, was made aware of the program when an unknown Scout offered him assistance and refused a tip. Boyce returned to the United States and with help incorporated the Boy Scouts of America on February 8, 1910.

From the beginning, Boy Scouts of America was of the position to allow African-Americans into its ranks. Despite opposition in the South and elsewhere, since its beginning African Americans have been involved in Scouting. Matthew Henson, known for his role in the first successful expedition to the North Pole with Robert Peary in 1909, was a dedicated Scoutmaster.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a member of Troop 151 in Atlanta. Guion Bluford, the first African-American in space was an Eagle Scout. The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas was one of the first in the City of Philadelphia to have an African American Scout program starting in April 1915. Cub Scouting was formally launched by the Boy Scouts of America on April 1, 1930, to provide a program for younger boys (initially ages 9–11). St. Thomas was not only one of the first institutions in Philadelphia to start a Cub Scout program, but one of the firsts in the nation starting it's Cub program in 1931.

Submitted by: J.R. Brockman; Eagle Scout Class of 1972; Life Member NESAs; National Eagle Scout Association.



**THE GIRLS' FRIENDLY**  
will be selling homemade soup **TODAY**,  
Sunday, February 8th,  
\$10 a quart. Proceeds go to the Media Food Bank.

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## **FROM THE O.V. CATTO MINISTRY**

The desecration and dismantling of the enslaved memorial exhibit at The President's House Site, located at 6th and Market Streets, on Thursday January 23, 2026, was carried out in compliance with an executive order by the current President of the United States. This order mandates that federal agencies remove documents and exhibits depicting atrocities during the country's history, especially those illustrating the paradox of slavery and freedom. Key figures include the nine enslaved people that lived in the President's House as well as highlighting the community and abolitionist work done by Absalom Jones and Richard Allen.

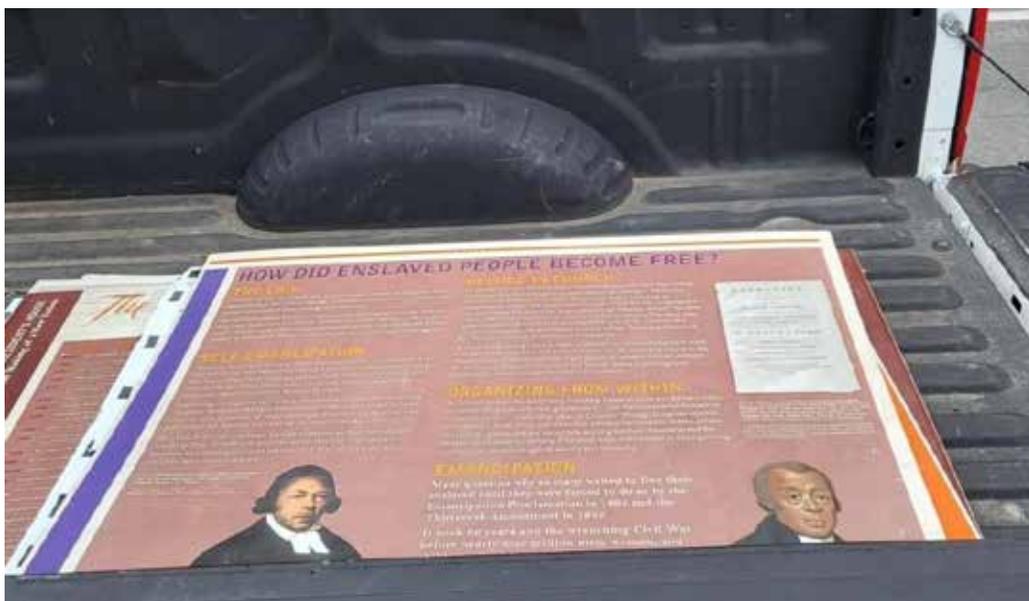
The City of Philadelphia, Avenging the Ancestors Coalition and other groups are seeking legal methods to restore and return historical documents and displays to their rightful location.

To learn more and participate process to restore this historical site and its accurate representation of our nation's history, you can join the Avenging The Ancestors Coalition (ATAC). Find more information and involvement opportunities at [www.avengingtheancestors.com](http://www.avengingtheancestors.com)

**While some attempt to erase history,  
please join us in celebrating history.**

The story of Bishop Richard Allen and Fr. Absalom Jones at the slave Memorial at the President's House just tossed into the back of a pickup truck in Philadelphia like trash (photo by Mijuel Johnson). We cannot allow the whitewashing of American history.

Please stay tuned for updates on the community response about this atrocity. [\*\*#WeMustResist#IAmAME\*\*](#)





We give thanks to individuals who joined our church family during 2025.

Nicole Bennett-Denson  
Dane Bowrin  
Isaac Nembhard  
Dominic Bowrin  
Vanessa Bowrin  
Jessica Brunt  
Melisse Brunt  
Christopher Burks  
Kayla Byrd  
Reginald Carter  
Diane Culmer  
Chris Davis  
Daine Decoursey  
Melissa Gray  
Elyse Harris  
Synethia Hill  
Evelyn John  
Michelle Mack

Dr. Stephen Mack  
Velma Morris-Nembhard  
Jacob Nembhard  
Robert Newton Davenport  
Doris Ohliger  
Chinwe Omyekere  
Nzogi Onyekere  
Kareem Ragin  
Cynthia Ray  
Smanha Richardson-Ingram  
Samaya Ingram  
Zacharia Ingram  
Zavier Ingram  
Fatima Sultan  
Maddox Sultan Robinson  
Toddrick Ricks  
Christin Veney  
Hamaas Veney  
Lorenzo Whitacker



Our prayers and condolences to Patrick and Musu Doe on the death of his brother, **Christopher Doe**. May the soul of Christopher rest in peace and rise in glory.  
Please pray for the family.

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**NEXT SUNDAY JOIN US FOR A BIG CELEBRATION!!**

**“Celebrating the Feast of Absalom Jones” -**

**Celebrant: The Right Reverend Daniel G.P. Gutierrez,**  
Bishop of the Diocese of PA;

**Guest Preacher: The Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry,**  
former Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church.

**Sunday, February 15, 2026, at 4:00 PM**  
**(This is the ONLY Service this day)**

Guest participants: Christ Church, Philadelphia, PA;  
St. Peter’s Church, Philadelphia, PA; and Mother Bethel African  
Methodist Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, PA;  
St. James School, Philadelphia and Bishop John T. Walker  
School for Boys, Washington, DC; VocalEssence Singers of  
This Age, Minneapolis, MN

**SPREAD THE WORD NOW!**



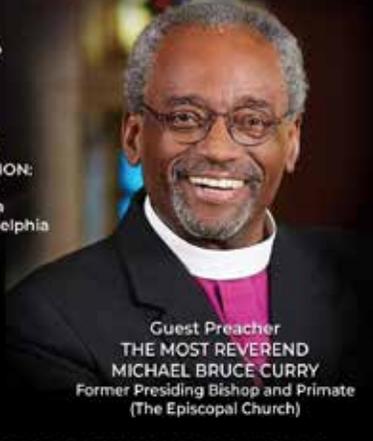

# Celebrating

## THE FEAST OF ABSALOM JONES

Sunday, February 15, 2026, 4:00 PM

**Celebrant**  
**THE RIGHT REVEREND  
 DANIEL G. P. GUTIERREZ**  
 (Bishop of the Diocese of PA)

**PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION:**  
 Christ Church, Philadelphia  
 St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia  
 Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, Philadelphia



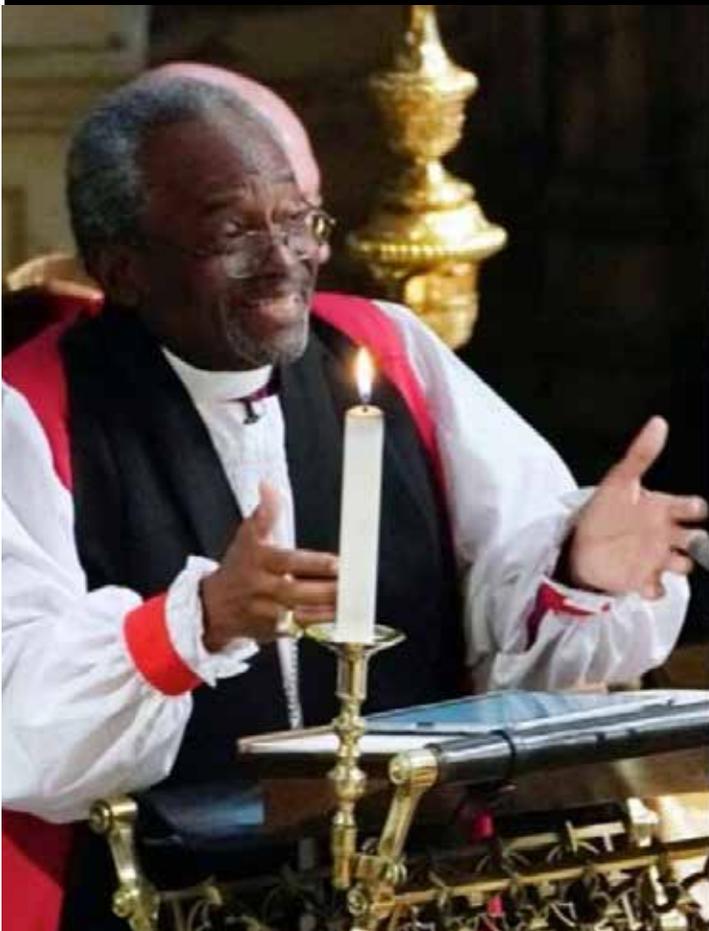
**Guest Preacher**  
**THE MOST REVEREND  
 MICHAEL BRUCE CURRY**  
 Former Presiding Bishop and Primate  
 (The Episcopal Church)



**Mardi Gras  
 JAZZ  
 MASS**

**THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS**  
 FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA | FOUNDED 1792

THE VERY REVEREND CANON MARTIN SHAW, 17TH RECTOR  
 THE REVEREND FR. DAREN E. EVANS, ASSOCIATE TO THE RECTOR  
 6361 LANCASTER AVENUE (ABSALOM JONES WAY) • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19151 • (215) 473-3065  
 WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST792



**THE JESSE F. ANDERSON SR. (JFA)**

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

**PRESENTS A**



**SUNDAY**

**February 15, 2026**

**1:00 - 3:30 PM**

**ANDERSON HALL**

**Mardi Gras**

**JAZZ**

**LUNCH**

**CONTEMPORARY MUSIC  
SILENT AUCTION & SPORTS MEMORABILIA**

**ADULTS \$25.00, YOUTH \$10.00,**

**CHILDREN UNDER 6 ARE FREE.**

**CONTACT THOMASINA HACK (215) 901-2773**

**PAULA LAMB (215) 620-7250**

**OR ANY JFA MEMBER FOR TICKETS.**



**ENJOY A DELICIOUS MEAL  
AND FELLOWSHIP  
BEFORE ATTENDING  
THE BIG CELEBRATION  
AT 4:00 PM.**

**THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS  
FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA**



**THE VERY REVEREND CANON MARTINI SHAW, 17TH RECTOR  
THE REVEREND FR. DAREN E. EVANS, ASSOCIATE TO THE RECTOR**

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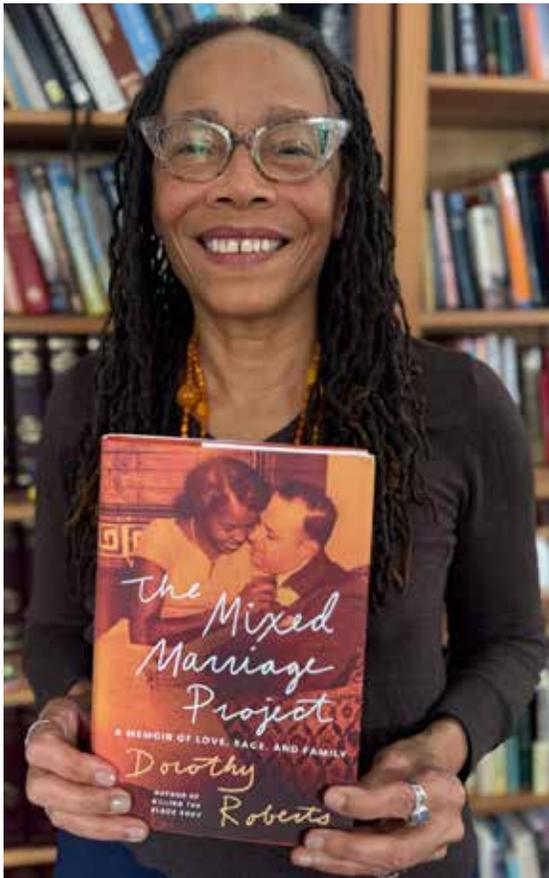
**WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792**

**THE JESSE F. ANDERSON, SR (JFA)  
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

invites you to Mardi Gras Lunch, Sunday,  
February 15, 2026, from 1:00 - 3:30 PM in Anderson Hall.  
Join us for an afternoon of celebration, good food, music,  
silent auction, prizes and fun! Adults \$25.00,  
Youth \$10.00, Children under 6 are free.  
Contact Thomasina Hack (215) 901-2773,  
Paula Lamb (215) 620-7250 or any  
JFA Member for tickets.

Come enjoy a delicious meal and fellowship before  
attending the BIG CELEBRATION AT 4:00 PM.

**Don't forget your Mardi Gras beads!**



**CONGRATULATIONS TO DOROTHY  
ROBERTS SMALLS!**

Her book “The Mixed Marriage Project” will be released this coming Tuesday, 2/10.

The book tour will launch at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Parkway Central, 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA, on Wednesday, February 11th at 7:00 PM.

Go to <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/calendar/event/160973> for more information and to register.

# Welcome

We joyfully welcome  
Kayla Brown and TajMarie Thornton,  
who joined our church family last Sunday.  
Kayla's shepherd is Monica Lewis Jones and  
TajMarie's shepherd is Brenda Johnson.  
We look forward to getting to know them.



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## Please support Sarah!

Acolyte Sarah is a Daisy in Girl Scout Troop 71487. She will be selling Girl Scout cookies in Anderson Hall after service. Cookies are \$6 per box. Please stop by and show support by purchasing a box or two. Thank you!

# **From Philly DA to federal inmate, Seth Williams now has another new title: city jail chaplain**

**I**



One of St. Thomas' own - **R. Seth Williams** whose political career imploded when he was prosecuted on federal corruption charges, is now serving as a part-time chaplain at Riverside Correctional Facility. :

<https://ebx.sh/gCl4s>

## **HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS**

The AECST Health Ministry will be hosting a Zoom Presentation on **Thursday, February 19th** from **7:00 PM - 8:00 PM**.

Topic: “Understanding common respiratory illnesses and keeping our lungs healthy “

Presenter: Dr. Carole A. Guy

Dr. Guy is a pulmonologist in Newark, Delaware and is affiliated with multiple hospitals in the area, including Christiana Care Hospitals and St. Francis Hospital-Wilmington. Pulmonologists treat disorders of the lungs and respiratory system, including pneumonia, tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and emphysema. Dr. Guy received her medical degree from Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University and has been in practice for more than 20 years. She specializes in treating sleep issues, pneumonia, and pulmonary heart disease.-

### **Zoom Link:**

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/84022027638?pwd=pOTjlatwYXj1wRAibxxLyHmYnq7Wpl.1>

**Zoom Meeting ID: 840 2202 7638**

**Passcode: gXa1vY**



# Religious Freedom: Then & Now

Celebrating Philadelphia at 250

## THE BLACK RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Hosted By  
**Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**  
&  
**The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas**

Learn how Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, formerly enslaved, leaders and founders of the Free African Society, helped shape Black religious, social, and civic life in the colonial period. Their work—alongside movements such as Prince Hall Freemasonry—challenged racial injustice, built independent Black institutions, and laid foundations that continue to influence faith and Philadelphia.

As historic narratives disappear from public spaces, this program affirms the importance of preserving, sharing, and learning from the full stories of our past.



1:00 - 3:00 PM



Feb. 22, 2026



Mother Bethel AME Church  
419 S. 6th Street  
Philadelphia

FREE!

SCAN TO RSVP



[Click Here](#)

### Moderators



Rev. Carolyn C. Cavaness  
Pastor of Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church



The Rev. Canon Martini Shaw  
Rector of The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas

*Religious Freedom: Then & Now* is an initiative exploring 250 years of interfaith engagement and understanding in Philadelphia. Learn more at [interfaithphiladelphia.org/religiousfreedom](https://interfaithphiladelphia.org/religiousfreedom)



## **AS HISTORIC NARRATIVES DISAPPEAR FROM PUBLIC SPACES, TELLING THE FULL STORY MATTERS MORE THAN EVER.**

Join Mother Bethel AME Church and The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas for a powerful conversation on Black religious life in colonial Philadelphia—and the legacy that still shapes our city today.

Learn how Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, formerly enslaved leaders and founders of the Free African Society, built independent Black institutions, challenged racial injustice, and laid foundations for Black religious, social, and civic life - alongside movements like Prince Hall Free masonry.

Moderated by Rev. Carolyn C. Cavaness,  
Pastor, Mother Bethel AME Church  
The Rev. Canon Martini Shaw, Rector,  
The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas  
February 22, 1:00 – 3:00 PM  
Mother Bethel AME Church, 419 S. 6th Street,

**FREE! RSVP Here:**

<https://www.interfaithphiladelphia.org/.../black.../>

This is the first in our year-long series as part of Religious Freedom: Then & Now. Look out for more!

Come learn, reflect, and help keep these stories alive.  
Mother Bethel AME Church The Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas - AECST Arch Street Quakers Congregation Mikveh Israel Community Christ Church, Philadelphia Historic St. George's United Methodist Church & Museum Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Episcopal Church Old Pine St Presbyterian Church Old Saint Joseph's Catholic Church  
#Semiquincentennial #America250 #history #Philadelphia #philly #philadelphiahistory #America250PA #Philly2026 #visitphilly #PHAmbassadors

**Clergy and members of St. Thomas gather at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral for a Vigil For Peace.**



**SISTERS OF ST. THOMAS JOIN US**  
**MONDAY, February 9, 2026 – 7:00 PM**

You are warmly invited to join the Women's Ministry; a space for connection, encouragement, and spiritual growth as we begin planning for this year's Women's Ministry celebration. The Women's Ministry draws breath from bringing women together across generations to serve and use our gifts in service to God. Together we will work to strengthen one another, uplift our church in faith, and walk boldly in the purpose God has called us to do. To receive meeting information, contact: Monica Lewis Jones, [mblj03@gmail.com](mailto:mblj03@gmail.com)

In Peace and Anticipation

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**NOTE TO ALL GUILDS/ORGANIZATIONS/MINISTRIES:**

The 2026 Parish Meeting is on

**Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM.**

Please submit a one-page, year-end report (formatted in Word) to the church office, on or before

**Friday, February 6, 2026.**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

During the Annual Parish Meeting, votes will be cast for candidates for Vestry, Auxiliary Vestry, Delegates to the Diocesan Convention, and a Representative to the Diocesan Convention.

Candidate Profiles can be found [here](#).

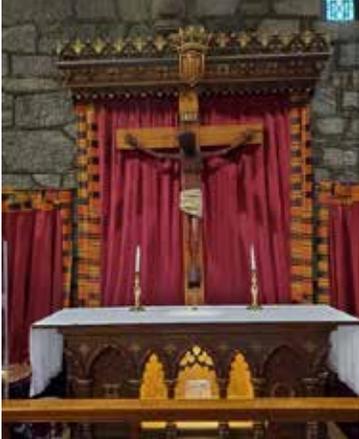
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**PLEASE SUPPORT ME!**

Acolyte Sarah is a Daisy in Girl Scout Troop 71487. She will be selling Girl Scout cookies in Anderson Hall after service. Cookies are \$6 per box. Please stop by and show support by purchasing a box or two. Thank you!

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY  
NEW MEMBER RECOGNITION  
BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND AMERICA250**







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THE HISTORIC  
AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
OF ST. THOMAS  
**2026 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

*Please  
Join Us*

**SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 21, 2026 - 10:00 AM**

*"Celebrating 234 Years  
of Active Ministry & Service"*

**HIGHLIGHTING AND CELEBRATING  
OUR 2025 MINISTRY ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
AND EXCITING PLANS FOR 2026**



THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS • FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA  
THE VERY REVEREND CANON MARTINI SHAW, 17TH RECTOR  
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WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792



**CHOSEN 300 “HAVE A HEART” -**  
For the homeless, sheltered,  
and underserved.

The 2026 fundraising campaign for Chosen 300 has begun “Heart Month.” The funds will provide meals that are served at Chosen 300’s west Philadelphia location.

Checks should be made payable to: **AECST Chosen 300.** Please include Chosen 300 and your envelope number on the memo line.

Mail checks to: St. Thomas Church  
6361 Lancaster Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19151  
Attention: Chosen 300

You may also place your check in the collection plate or donate online: [www.aecst.org](http://www.aecst.org)

Click on “donations,” and then select “Chosen 300.”  
If you have any questions, please email: [scmci@aol.com](mailto:scmci@aol.com)



# A GREAT DAY OF FUN!!!

The snow and ice did not keep our young people away.







## **NEWS FROM THE CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY COMMITTEE**

In addition to our member and family photographs, the new pictorial St. Thomas Church Directory will include:

- our bountiful history
- a special in memorial page  
(listing members who have transitioned since 2017)
- greetings from the rector
- group photographs of AECST ministries

### **A new category has been created entitled: “With Love and Blessings.”**

You can add your name to this section with patron, business or ministry ads. It would be wonderful to have your support and expressions of gratitude included in the directory.

**Patron ads** - \$5.00 per name

#### **Business or Ministry ads:**

- Full page \$150.00 - 8x10” portrait
- 1/2 page \$75.00 - 8x5” landscape
- 1/4 page \$50.00 - 4x5” portrait
- 1/8 page \$35.00 - 4x 2 1/2” landscape

Email: Camera ready ads to: [churchdirectory@aecst.org](mailto:churchdirectory@aecst.org)

Checks may be mailed and payable to:  
The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas  
6361 Lancaster Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19151

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## **ATTENTION: All Groups/Ministries/Organizations and Fellowships**

- Announcements and flyers for the Sunday Bulletin and digital Spearhead should be received on Monday by 12:00 Noon. If you have any questions, please contact Gladyce in the church office, (215) 473-3065.
- Please submit a "**Request for Meeting Space**" form to the office for all meetings in the Church, Anderson Hall, Absalom Jones House, parking lot and/or the Great Lawn two weeks prior to the event. Please refrain from approaching the sextons. The church office maintains the calendar for all events. If you have any questions or need a form, please contact the church office at (215) 473-3065 or email [1792@aecst.org](mailto:1792@aecst.org).
- **Presidents of Guilds/Ministries and Organizations:** Please submit the names of the people in your guild or organization, to the Directory Committee, in alphabetical order in a horizontal format, using Word, document to: Patricia Hunt, [dhunt37261@aol.com](mailto:dhunt37261@aol.com) by February 1, 2026

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Are you receiving the weekly electronic Spearhead? If not, please email Gladyce DuBrey at [1792@aecst.org](mailto:1792@aecst.org) with your mobile number and email address.

## **UPCOMING SUNDAYS**

### **FEBRUARY 8TH**

~Love Sunday~ (observance of Valentine's Day)  
wear something red

~Girls Friendly Souper Bowl Sunday~  
Soup Sale after church in Anderson Hall

### **FEBRUARY 15TH**

~Celebration of the Feast of Absalom Jones~  
4:00 PM service  
You are invited to wear your Mardi Gras beads for this  
celebration.

~Jesse F. Anderson, Sr. Annual Scholarship Fund~  
Mardi Gras Lunch  
1:00 - 3:00 PM in Anderson Hall

### **FEBRUARY 22ND**

~Youth and Young Adult Sunday/Scout Sunday~  
~Lunch at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church~ 12:00 PM  
~Philly250/AMERICA250 Special Interfaith Program~  
at 1:00 PM, Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church

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## **THIS WEEK AT AECST**

### **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH**

~OPC Advocacy Outreach Group Meeting~  
6:00 -9:00 PM in the Undercroft

~Pilgrims on a Journey Adult Bible Study~  
with Fr. Jay via Zoom - 7:00 PM

### **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH**

~Bible Study with Fr. Daren~  
6:00 PM in the Absalom Jones House

~Angels in Motion~  
6:30 PM in the church

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

### **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH**

~Retired Person's Ministry~  
10:00 - Noon in the Undercroft

### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH**

~Happy Valentines Da~y

~Scouts~

1:00 – 4:00 PM in Anderson Hall

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## **“Resistance & Resilience While in the Wilderness”**



### **ASH WEDNESDAY**

**February 18, 2026**

(Imposition of Ashes and  
Holy Eucharist)

7:00 AM, 12 Noon and 6:00 PM

### **Wednesdays During Lent**

6:00 - Holy Eucharist

6:30 - 7:15 - Presentation/  
Discussion

Week 1: Moses and the Exodus

Week 2: Abram and Sarai

Week 3: Birth of Jesus and flight to Egypt

Week 4: Sermon on the Mount

Week 5: The Cross

Facilitators: Fr. Shaw, Fr. Daren, Lisa Sharon Harper  
and Arthur Sudler

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### **OUR LIVESTREAM MINISTRY NEEDS YOU!**

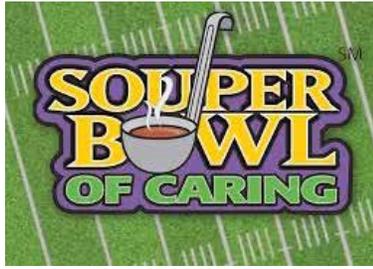
Each week, many people who are away are able to worship with us via our amazing Livestream. Please prayerfully consider serving in this ministry. If interested, please communicate with the rector.

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### **AECST LIVE STREAM**

Please join us for worship on the St. Thomas [website](#), [the Live Stream Service](#), on our [Facebook](#) page or [Youtube](#) every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM.

You can also watch [Past Services](#).



**A MESSAGE FROM DAKOTA MOSLEY - GIRLS' FRIENDLY  
ST. THOMAS MEMBER**

The Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) is proud to support the work of Tackle Hunger and their annual Souper Bowl of Caring event.

If 213 million people watch "*the big game*," think about how much money we could give if each person donated one dollar to a food bank.

The Media Food Bank is helping lots of people who can't afford food. GFS has extended collecting donations until  
**February 8th.**

The collection bin is located in the Undercroft.  
Tackle hunger to tackle game!

The Girls' Friendly will be selling homemade soup **NEXT  
Sunday, February 8th**, \$10 a quart.  
Proceeds will go to the Media Food Bank.

**Media Food Bank's  
Most Needed Items**

Newborn diapers  
Size 5 Diapers  
4T/5T Pull Ups

**Community Choice Room**

Bottles juices  
Corned beef  
Honey  
Vegetable cooking oil  
White sugar  
Canned beets  
Sardines  
Shelf-stable dairy milk

**COMING SOON!!!** Portraits of Power Presented by The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas Church School Sunday, March 1st from 12 Noon- 2:00 PM

As we celebrate the close of Black History Month, join the AECST Church School for Portraits of Power, an art showcase of the powerful and impactful black figures in our history.

The Church School Students of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas Present

# PORTRAITS of POWER

A Black History Month Art Showcase!

A Black History Month Art Showcase!

**Sunday, March 1**  
12 Noon - 2:00 PM

Immediately Following Service

As we celebrate the close of Black History Month, join the AECST Church School for Portraits of Power, an art showcase of the powerful and impactful black figures in our history.

Donations Accepted

## DO YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT?

Have you ever thought about using that talent to glorify God in worship? Please prayerfully consider joining our St. Thomas Jazz Ensemble, St. Thomas Chancel Choir, or St. Thomas Gospel Choir. If interested, please contact Gladyce in the Parish Office ASAP to get details on upcoming scheduled rehearsals.



# VOCALISTS & MUSICIANS *Wanted*

**To Join  
A Professional Recording Gospel Choir**

The St Thomas Gospel Choir  
Directed By, Walt Blocker  
of the  
African Episcopal Church of St Thomas  
Philadelphia, PA

**WWW.STTHOMASGC.ORG**

(484) 816-STGC (7842)

**CONFIRMATION / REAFFIRMATION /  
RECEPTION CLASSES**

have started for in-person and Zoom  
classes are as follows:

In Person	By Zoom
Sunday, 11/02/2025	Monday, 11/17/2025
Sunday, 12/07/2025	Monday, 12/02/2025
Sunday, 01/04/2026	Monday, 01/19/2026
Sunday, 02/01/2026	Monday, 02/16/2026
Sunday, 03/01/2026	Monday, 03/16/2026
Sunday, 04/05/2026	Monday, 04/20/2026
Sunday, 05/03/2026	Monday, 05/18/2026

**Sunday 6/7/2026 – Confirmation Day!**

Please connect with Fr. Daren, 215-473-3065 or email,  
[associaterector@aecst.org](mailto:associaterector@aecst.org) if you have not received any  
information or have questions, ASAP.

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## REALM CONNECT CONVERSION COMPLETE

As a reminder St. Thomas went through a system conversion this year. Realm Connect is an updated solution for the management of our ministries, stewardship, media, communications and church events calendar. The staff will use Realm Connect to perform administrative and accounting tasks.

### Church Online Giving

GIVI is no longer available for online contributions. Realm Connect has taken its place. Realm Connect is not just a tool for electronic giving; it affords one the opportunity to access their giving records and offers congregants the ability to interact and communicate directly with each other. If you give directly via the church website, or by using the QR code, you will see a new <https://files.constantcontact.com/c40e14fc801/ddd2254c-23cf-4b1a-aec3-2558fcbd0362.png?rdr=true> webpage link on the website and a corresponding QR code that will take you to that new webpage. Please note that we offer online electronic giving which provides an easy, secure method to contribute weekly, monthly, yearly or simply whenever you desire. Donations can be made at <https://onrealm.org/AfricanEpiscopa/give/now> or through the Realm Connect App. (If you don't already use the app and don't have an account, it's safe and easy to obtain. Download the app Realm Connect from the app store.

AECST members have begun and will continue to receive email invitations from the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas ([notifications@onrealmmail.org](mailto:notifications@onrealmmail.org)) titled, "African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas: Join our online community!", which will enable you to register on the site and view many of the available functions. Please request a **Membership Information Form** from the Stewardship Ministry ([Stewardship@aecst.org](mailto:Stewardship@aecst.org)) and one will be sent to you. Please complete and return the form so that your profile can be updated accordingly. Once the form is returned corrections can be made and you will be sent a Realm Connect invite.

**IMPORTANT**, for your contributions in Realm Connect to be successful, YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND CELL PHONE NUMBER MUST MATCH EXACTLY WITH REALM CONNECT RECORDS. Envelope numbers serve as an additional layer of security, especially in cases where members may have similar names (soon those people without an envelope number will be issued one). We want to make sure contributions are properly credited to your account.

Powered By



**African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas: Join our online community!**

Hi [REDACTED]

We at African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas have an online community where we can connect with each other outside our Sunday gatherings. We'd love for you to take part!

Create an account: <https://onrealm.org/AfricanEpiscopa/account/CreateAccount?token=NTA0MzUyN2QtODZhZS00NDJhLTg5MWQtYjMzZTAxMDViMzVI>

Sincerely,  
African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas



**Happy birthday to all our Parishioners who are  
celebrating birthdays in February**

2/1	Lisa Rene Dumas
2/3	Karen Vaughn
2/4	Signe Griffin, Leah Sheppard
2/5	Winston Lowe
2/6	Robert Myers, Bernadette Wyche
2/7	Ronald Jones, Arlene Gray
2/8	Asia Archey Riddick, Dieynaba Diagne
2/9	Angela Kelly
2/11	Courtney Williamson
2/12	Robin Lynch, Carole Williams Green
2/13	Arthur Sudler, Rosalind Roberts Smalls, Edward Geiger
2/14	Robert McNeal
2/15	Anita Robinson, Lisa Smoots
2/16	Muso Doe
2/18	Justin & Jason Brockman, Dr. Jay Fluellen, Erica Hill-Yates
2/19	Katrice Mathurin
2/20	Gordon Sedziafa, Iuyn Williams
2/21	Sharon Harper
2/22	Alaina Farooq
2/23	Nancy Lee, Jumba Mugwanya
2/24	Denise Wing
2/26	Shawn Evans
2/27	Page Bowser, Derede McAlpin
2/28	Clara Watson Williams

## **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 by various media platforms:

**Constance Anderson** - Florida

**The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach & Dr. Julie Hergerather** - Bloomsburg, PA

**Christopher Burks** - Rhode Island/New York

**Deadra Cannon** - Georgia

**Nora Corbin** - Illinois

**Dr. Ted Corbin** - Illinois

**Paula Cropper** - North Carolina

**Lee Daniels** - New York

**Stacey Davis** - New York

**Andrew & Lisa Renee Dumas** - Portugal

**Rashid, Christie, & Gabrielle Faisal** - Michigan

**The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney** - Texas

**Bradley Hammond** - Mississippi

**Richard & 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 & Jameela Lewis** - Colorado

**Gregory Lyles** - Switzerland

**Nohjay Nimpson** - Texas

**Zennetta Peters** - North Carolina

**Dr. John Rich** - Illinois

**Richard & Rebecca Scales** - Florida

**Shelly & Ann Stewart** - Florida

**Howard Tucker** - Brazil/Philadelphia

**Allison Young** - Maryland

**The Bible Readings For The  
FIFTHSUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY  
February 8, 2026**

The First Lesson - [Isaiah 58:1-12](#)

[Psalms 112:1-10](#)

The Second Lesson - [1 Corinthians 2:1-16](#)

The Holy Gospel - [Matthew 5:13-20](#)

**The Holy Gospel Readings for the  
week of February 2, 2026**

Monday - [John 6:27-40](#)

Tuesday - [John 6:41-51](#)

Wednesday - [John 6:52-59](#)

Thursday - [John 6:60-71](#)

Friday - [John 7:1-13](#)

Saturday - [John 7:14-36](#)



**PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY  
BIBLE STUDY** is held on Tuesdays  
7:00 PM via Zoom.

If you are interested in joining  
the ministry, please contact Fr. Jay  
at [associatepriest@aecst.org](mailto:associatepriest@aecst.org).

**WEDNESDAY IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY**  
with Fr. Daren is held on Wednesdays - 6:00 PM.  
See you then!

## ALTAR FLOWERS

To order flowers, please return the form with payment to Alfreda Brockman or Gladyce in the church office.

Flowers on the High Altar - \$80.00 each

Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$70.00 each

Flowers on the Columbarium - \$60.00

Please use the QR Code below to order flowers or contribute to our church ministries.



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## AECST PODCAST



Our **AECST Podcast Series** returns with an important new episode! Fr. Daren is joined by Licensed Clinical Social Worker **Mrs. Lasheena Riley Duval** for a conversation on **supporting children through medical care**. Tune in!



## **CALLING ALL DANCERS!!!!**

Opportunity awaits if you want to praise the Lord in dance and worship. The “Angels in Motion” dance ministry, a multi-generational ministry welcomes all ages, and skill levels in ballet, modern, jazz, and African dance to join! Interested? Please contact, Director, [Pamela Johnson](#).

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## **VERGERS NEEDED!**

Are you being called to this exciting ministry?  
Want to know more about what a Verger does?

The Verger Guide may be found [here](#)

Please speak with Karen Ragland or  
the Rector for more details.

## RE-IMAGINING OUR MINISTRIES

Persons are needed:

- to lift their voices on the **Comfort Choir** during funeral services at St. Thomas. Please contact [D. Lynn Joell](#) if interested.
- to serve with the **Sound Ministry** for Sunday morning service and weekday funeral services. If interested, please contact [Gladyce](#) in the Parish Office.
- to serve on the **Altar Guild**. This amazing group of individuals prepares our altar each week for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Interested people should contact [Alfreda Brockman](#).
- to serve as **Readers and Intercessors** to read the Holy Scripture during our weekly services. Interested persons should contact [Gladyce](#) in the Parish Office to sign up.
- to join the **Transportation Ministry**. The main mission of the ministry is to provide transportation to parishioners who attend Sunday Service. Please contact [Gladyce](#) in the office if you are interested.
- as **Acolytes** to serve on the altar. Please contact [Fr. Daren](#) if you are interested.
- **Photography Ministry** is in need of additional photographers. You do not need to be a professional photographer but do enjoy taking pictures. Anyone interested can contact [Bill Edmonds](#) or [Dale Williams](#).
- **The Shepherds Ministry** is still in need of many more volunteers to be able to shepherd all households of our congregation. Shepherds set their own schedules to be in regular touch with their households of sheep by phone, email, text or various social media platforms. Each is assigned no more than 4 households. All Ministry meetings are held via Zoom. Please note that the Vestry will continue to shepherd, for one year, all new members joining the congregation. For more information, or to volunteer, please contact [Charlene M. Wiltshire](#).

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS WHO ARE:**

### **IN REHAB:**

Francine Norris and Lisa Woodley - St. Francis Nursing Home  
Alletta Parris Olday - Saunders House

### **IN LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENCES:**

Helena Allen - Simpson House; Linda Holmes - Saunders House; Gwendolyn Langford - Arden Courts of Cherry Hill; Ola Bass - Atria Lafayette Hill; Ridart "Butch" Farmer - Centennial Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center

### **AT HOME:**

Robert Brown, Thelma Silvers, Patricia Ellison, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell, Wendell Whitlock, Verger Stephen Hannum, Joyce Stewart, Virginia DuBrey, Alice Young, Deborah Harrison, D. Lynn Joell, Regina Meacham Devero, Elaine Young, Erica Hill Yates, Alice Bowman - Cropper, Katrina Harris, Gloria Moses, Carolyn Summers, Karen Ragland

### **KEEP IN PRAYER:**

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Daryn Stewart, Arlene Gray, Adinah Edwards, Waltier Blocker, Santee Ruffin, Angela Holloway, Mary Ann Phillips, Yvonne Syndor, Adrian Gray, Sharon Harper, Quincina Edmonds, D. Lynn Joell, Edita Gauthney, Carmen Brown, Stephen Pugh

### **WE PRAY FOR:**

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

## CALLING ALL YOUTH



**What's an Acolyte? Am I old enough? Why do I want to be one?** These and other questions can be answered by Father Daren! No prior experience is necessary to serve in the **Acolyte Ministry**. Rehearsals are on Sundays, immediately after service. This is an excellent opportunity for children and youth to become involved in the life of the church. Contact [Fr.Daren](#) for details.

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### YOUTH ACHIEVEMENTS

We want to highlight the achievements of our youth and young adults! If your child has excelled in academics, sports, the arts, or community service—or you are a young adult working on a significant personal or professional project—we would love to hear about it. Please contact [Fr. Daren](#) so we can share your story with the congregation!

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**THE YOUNG ADULTS** (ages 20's and 30's) meet immediately after service every 4th Sunday of the Month in the Absalom Jones House.



## **IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE RECTOR**

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

**Church School** begins at **10:00 AM** in the **Undercroft**.

You **must** register your child for church school for the 2025-2026 school year. Please use this [link](#) to register your child/children.

**Call for Church School Teachers** - If you feel the calling by God to volunteer your time in church school, please fill out the registration [link](#). If you were a teacher last year, please fill out this year's registration.



**Tiny Tykes Temple** is now located in the beautiful library of the Absalom Jones House for infants, children (under 3 years old) and parents. Parents who may find it necessary to step away from mass for a moment are encouraged to take advantage of this wonderful space.

## STEWARDSHIP NEWS

### HOW CAN I 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”. 2 Corinthians 9:7. NIV

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 by using the QR Code below:



## **OTHER WAYS TO CONTINUE TO BE FAITHFUL TO GOD AND THE CHURCH THROUGH STEWARDSHIP:**

### **1) Sunday Offering Plate**

### **2) Mail in your check or money order to the church.**

Please use the following address:

The Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas  
c/o Fiscal Administrator  
6361 Lancaster Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151

**3) Bring your check directly to the Fiscal Office** during regular business hours, Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. After business hours, drop your envelope in the door mail slot located on the front patio of the Absalom Jones House.

**4) Church Website** - <http://www.aecst.org/donations.htm> the button(s) on the page that represents where you'd like your payment to be applied, i.e., your pledge, the AJ house, Easter, etc.

**5) REALM CONNECT** - Members and visitors who use GIVI must use **Realm Connect**. If donate via the church website, either directly or by using the QR code, you will soon see a new webpage and corresponding QR code.

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

**IMPORTANT:** Please make sure your name, envelop number and amount is placed on the offering envelope. This is particularly important for bookkeeping accurate. If you are unsure of your number, please email [stewardship@aecst.org](mailto:stewardship@aecst.org). We appreciate your assistance.

**IMPORTANT:** Please make sure your name, number, and amount is placed on your offering envelope. This is very important to keep bookkeeping accurate. If you're unsure of your number, please email [stewardship@aecst.org](mailto:stewardship@aecst.org). We appreciate your assistance.

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## **CAPITAL BUILDING IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN**

Thank you to all who have contributed to the fund. Everyone is asked to please make a minimum sacrificial gift of \$40 per month. Please use the envelope from your packet or place Building Fund in the Memo section of your check or click the [Donation Button](#) and select the Building Fund button on our Capital Improvement Donation button on our [website](#).

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## MINISTRY STAFF

Bishop	The Rt. Rev. Daniel G P Gutierrez	
Rector	The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw	rector@aecst.org
Associate to the Rector	The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans	associaterector@aecst.org
Associate Priest	The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins	associatepriest@aecst.org
Associate Priest	The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney	wilgafney@gmail.com
Associate Minister	The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach	pauljaybach@gmail.com
Executive Asst to the Rector	Gladyce DuBrey	1792@aecst.org
Sexton	LaDon Elliott	1792@aecst.org
Asst Sexton	David McGilberry	1792@aecst.org
Chancel Choirmaster	Jay Fluellen, D.M.A.	chancelchoir@aecst.org
Gospel Choirmaster	Waltier Blocker	gospelchoir@aecst.org
Rector's General Counsel	Joe Tucker, Esq.	jtucker@tlgattorneys.com
Altar Guild	Alfreda Brockman	fredabee@verizon.net
Baptism Co-Chairs	Gail Hinton Harris	baptism@aecst.org
	Patricia Walker-Ellison	p.walker.ellison@gmail.com
O. V. Catto Voter Education Ministry	Wendela Fox   Elaine Gillison	cattoministry@aecst.org
Church School Superintendent	Tynecia Wilson	churchschool@aecst.org
Ed Muse Photography Ministry	William Edmonds	edmon57@comcast.net
Fiscal Advisor to the Rector	Deadra Cannon	assistantfiscal@aecst.org
Girls Friendly Society	Nikkol Simms	njsimms@verizon.net
Jazz Ensemble Director	Jay Fluellen, D.M.A.	chancelchoir@aecst1792.org
Live Stream Ministry	Yaseen Farooq   Teri Tillman	livevideo@aecst.org
Memorial Flowers	Alfreda Brockman	fredabee@verizon.net
	Clare Mae Daniels	happycmd05@aol.com
Roy Ellison Monarch Greeters	Ashley Hines	1792@aecst.org
Parish Vergers	Eugene Golson   Karen Ragland	Kdrags415@gmail.com
Parish Webmaster	Gail Hinton Harris	webmanager@aecst.org
Property Chair	William Burke	property@aecst.org
Scout Pack 133	Howard Chapman	howchapman@gmail.com
	Arlene Gray	bsapack0133@gmail.com
St. Thomas Daughters of the King	Sharon Bullock	scmci@aol.com
Stewardship Chair	Judy Tillman	stewardship@aecst.org
Videography Ministry	Quentin Heyward	recordedvideo@aecst.org
Visitor's Ministry	Edita Gauthney   Michele Green	visitorsministry@aecst.org
Voices of Comfort	Robert Davenport	1792@aecst.org
William Burke Ushers Ministry	Arlene Singletary	leaniepo302@gmail.com

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## THE VESTRY

Rector's Warden - Richard Jones | Accounting Warden - Deborah Camp-Frye  
Clerk of the Vestry - Pamela Johnson | Treasurer - Albert S. Dandridge, III Esq.  
Stewardship Chair - Judy Tillman | Property Chair - William Burke

Dr. Tim Barksdale	Clare Mae Daniels	Kelvin Johnson
Judith Simkins Booth	Elaine Gillison	Monica Lewis Jones
Deadra Cannon	Eugene Golson	Deborah Matthews
	Marie B. Golson	

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## THE AUXILIARY VESTRY

Brenda Best	Ronnie Collins	Dr. Monica Johnson Taylor
Conchetta Brewer	Mary Sandra Dean	Darryle (Bobby) Tillman
Sharon Bullock	D. Lynn Joell	Judy Tillman
	Cynthia Muse	

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## DELEGATES TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Albert S. Dandridge, III Esq. | Dr. Cassandra Ruffin | Alternate: Tyrone Keller

## DELEGATES TO THE SCHUYLKILL DEANERY

Phyllis Cater | Mary Dean | Alternate: Tyrone Keller