

Palm SUNDAY

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Matthew 21:9 NIV



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
6361 LANCASTER AVENUE (ABSALOM JONES WAY) • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19151 • (215) 473-3065
WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792

PALM SUNDAY
THE SUNDAY OF THE PASSION
April 13, 2025

**The Historic African Episcopal Church
of St. Thomas**
6361 Lancaster Avenue (Absalom Jones Way)
Philadelphia, PA, 19151
(215) 473-3065
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 to support our church
and our ministries.**

Please click on the link provided for the [Order of Service](#)
for this Sunday.

“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
Palm Sunday: The Sunday of the Passion.

We welcome **Mr. David Kasievich, President/Head of School;** our Homilist, **the Rev. Fr. Walter Thorne, students, parents, and staff from St. James School** will also 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 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. 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. Whoever you may be and however you may find yourself experiencing life's journey, do know that St. Thomas Church welcomes you.

Again, welcome!

Faithfully,

Martini Shaw +

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

FROM THE DESK OF THE RECTOR:

This is a reminder that the Mass (Service) ends following the Closing Hymn and Dismissal. Please make an extra effort to refrain from unnecessary chatter and departure from the Service before the conclusion. This request is being made in order to respect all gathered wishing to embrace the fullness of worship.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS!

Enormous thanks to individuals who made sacrificial donations toward both the rental of our Palm Sunday Donkey (Pretzel) and the purchase of new outdoor church banners.

IMPORTANT FINANCIAL UPDATE

March 31st ended the First Quarter of 2025.

Enormous thanks to those who are current with their yearly pledge. It is very important to assure that we remain current in order for the church to fulfill its monthly expenses. You will soon receive your First Quarter statement. Please use the month of April to catch up if you are not already current.

AECST LIVE STREAM

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

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

HOLY WEEK 2025

SUNDAY OF THE PASSION

(Palm Sunday) - April 13th - Arrive by 9:30 AM

Blessing and Distribution of Palms / Outdoor Procession / Holy Eucharist;
Worshipping with us: St. James School Community.

HOLY THURSDAY

(Maundy Thursday) April 17th

6:00 PM - Candlelight Dinner Hosted by the Vestry & Auxiliary Vestry.

Get your dinner tickets today (\$20.00/ person) *Limited Seating

7:00 PM - Service of Foot Washing; The Holy Eucharist;

Stripping of the Altar; and All Night "Re-Imagined" Virtual Vigil

Sponsored by the Daughters of the King (Please sign up for an hour of prayer.)

GOOD FRIDAY

April 18th, 12:00 Noon

Special Good Friday liturgy includes Stations of the Cross.

Worshipping with us: Members from Overbrook Presbyterian Church.

HOLY SATURDAY

April 19th, 6:00 PM

We join our sisters and brothers from the Schuylkill Deanery
at the Cathedral for the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

EASTER SUNDAY

(Resurrection Sunday) April 20th

6:00 AM - Early Sunrise Service

10:00 AM - Special Music and Dance; Choral Eucharist;
Easter Egg Hunt; Visitation of the Easter Bunny.



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OUR FAMILY CONTINUES TO GROW!

We welcome **Cynthia Ray**, and **Nicole Bennett-Denson**, who recently joined our church family. Cynthia's shepherd is Elaine Gillison, and Nicole's shepherd is Brenda Johnson Best. We look forward to getting to know them.



ANNOUNCING OUR NEW MEMBERS AND CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Plans are underway to begin our New Members/Confirmation Classes soon. Most of these classes will be held via Zoom. Please watch the bulletin and Spearhead for further information. Please speak with Fr. Daren or Seminarian Kathryn Brossa if you have questions.

The New Members Manual has arrived.
Please use the [link](#) to access it.



OUR CONDOLENCES

to Katrina Harris Marshall and family on the death of
her husband **Ralph Marshall**.

May the soul of Ralph rest in peace and rise in glory.
Arrangements are pending. Please pray for the family.



THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE

You are invited to a celebration and blessing of
Holy Matrimony between our own:

Stacey Gail Cummings and **R. Seth Williams**

Saturday, April 26, 2025, 12:30 PM

at The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas.



THE CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

will be selling Jamaican patties on Sunday after service.

They will have chicken and beef patties for sale: one for \$3 and two for \$5. Get those pre-orders in by emailing us: caribfestaecst@gmail.com or call/text at [215-821-8588](tel:215-821-8588). Thank you for your support!



PALM SUNDAY

(Sunday of the Passion)

April 13th -

Arrive by 9:30 AM

Blessing and Distribution of Palms /
Outdoor Procession / Holy Eucharist;
worshipping with us:
St. James School community

The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas +
The St. Thomas Gospel Choir

palmsunday Annual Concert

Songs, Spirituals & Hymn's in Remembrance of
Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

SUNDAY
APRIL 13th
3:00PM

Free Will Offering
Concert Will Be Followed by a Reception



The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas



6361 Lancaster Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19151

The Reverend Canon Fr. Marini Shaw, Rector
The Reverend Fr. Daren Evans, Assistant to the Rector

For More Information - 215-473-3065

Hundreds gathered to celebrate the 5th Sunday in Lent April 6, 2025



More pictures may be found on [Facebook](#).







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The formation of our youth happens at St. Thomas.



**Our LAST Lenten Series (Wednesday, April 9, 2025)
“The Role of the Church: Post 2024 General Election”
(Facilitator: Wendella Fox and Elaine Gillison)**



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**It is that special time of the year when
ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE AECST!!!**



6:00 PM Candlelight Dinner
hosted by the Vestry and
Auxiliary Vestry
Foot Washing/Eucharist/Stripping
of the Altar/The Vigil Watch
sponsored by the DOK



MAUNDY THURSDAY SILENT NIGHT VIGIL

Then HE returned to HIS disciples and found them sleeping.

Simon, HE said to Peter, are you asleep?

Couldn't you keep watch for one hour?

Mark 14:37

The St. Thomas Chapter of the Order of the Daughters of the King invites you to pray with us on this year's **Maundy Thursday Silent Night Watch Vigil** on April 17, 2025 from 8:00 PM to 12:00 Noon on **Good Friday, April 18, 2025.**

This year we invite you to join us in a silent vigil where you can pray in your own space, in your own way, and share a deeper connection with God. In keeping with scripture and to ensure that we have continuous prayer throughout the night, we ask that you sign up prior to Maundy Thursday indicating which hour you and your family will be in prayer with us.

As a note, this year there will be no in-person vigil.

Once you sign up, we will forward several suggested prayers and meditations as well as a list of readings on

Monday, April 14, 2025.

You may sign up by sending an email to [Brenda Johnson Best](#) or by using the signup sheet which will be on the table at the rear of the church.

OUR DEDICATED OUT-OF-TOWN MEMBERS/FAMILIES

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

Constance Anderson

Dr. Paul Bach & Dr. Julie

Hergerather

Christopher Burks

Deadra Cannon

Nora Corbin

Dr. Ted Corbin

Lee Daniels

Rashid and Christie Faisal

The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney

Bradley Hammond

Richard & Gwenda Hart

Dr. Calvin Johnson

Bettie Jones

Rae Scott Jones

Richard Jones, Jr.

Dr. Sheila Jones

Steven and Jameela Lewis

Gregory Lyles

Dr. John Rich

Richard & Rebecca Scales

Shelly and Ann Stewart

Howard Tucker

Allison Young



Each week we will feature one of our out-of-town members/families. This week, we give thanks to **Constance Anderson**, a member of St. Thomas for 25 years. She says, "It is a joy to watch your service to each other and the community."



HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2025
Sunday, April 13th
Palm Sunday (Sunday of the Passion)
Arrive by 9:30 AM

Blessing and Distribution of Palms / Outdoor Procession / Holy Eucharist; worshipping with us: St. James School community



Maundy Thursday (Holy Thursday)
April 17th, 6:00 PM: Candlelight Dinner
 7:00 PM Service of Foot Washing;
 The Holy Eucharist; Stripping of the altar;
 and all night "Re-Imagined" Virtual Vigil

Good Friday
April 18th, 12:00 Noon

Special liturgy includes Stations of the Cross. Worshipping with us: Members from Overbrook Presbyterian Church



Holy Saturday
April 19th, 6:00 PM

We join our sisters and brothers from the Schuylkill Deanery at the Cathedral for the Celebration of the Easter Vigil

Easter (Resurrection Sunday)
April 20th

6:00 AM - Early Sunrise Service
 10:00 AM - Special Music and Dance
 Choral Eucharist; Easter Egg Hunt;
 Visitation of the Easter Bunny



LENTEN GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Rose or Laetare Sunday is the fourth Sunday in the season of Lent., in the Western Christian liturgical calendar. Traditionally, this Sunday had been a day of celebration, within the austere period of Lent. This Sunday gets its name from the first few words (incipit) of the traditional Latin entrance (Introit) for the Mass of the day. “Laetare Jerusalem” (Rejoice, O Jerusalem”) is Latin from Isaiah 66:10.

Flowers may appear on the high altar. Priests are given the option to wear rose-colored vestments at Mass on this day in place of the violet vestments normally worn during Lent. The term “rose” is used to describe this lighter shade of the color violet.

Why we don’t say Alleluia during Lent: The Alleluia comes to us from Hebrew, and it means “praise Yahweh”. This praise has a joyful overtone to it and we use it especially during happy celebrations. While we do praise God all year round, during Lent we withhold a bit of our joy and happiness because of the season’s penitential and sorrowful character. After all, we are anticipating Jesus’ very passion and death.

In order to emphasize the penitential nature of that journey, the Church, during Lent, removes the Alleluia from the Mass. We no longer sing with the choirs of angels; instead, we acknowledge our sins and practice repentance so that one day we may again have the privilege of worshiping God as the angels do.

Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter. It commemorates Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and in many Christian churches, Palm Sunday is marked by the distribution of Palm leaves.

Triduum (TRID-uh-wum) is the period of three days that begins the evening of Maundy Thursday and ends the evening of Easter Sunday. It recalls the passion, burial and resurrection.

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the apostles. The significance is derived from Latin “mandatum” (a new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you), the statement Jesus made in John 13:34 by which He explained to the apostles the significance of His action of washing their feet.

Good Friday (“good” meaning pious or holy) is the Friday of Holy Week, observed primarily by Christians commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His death at Calvary.

Holy Saturday is the day before Easter and the day of Holy Week in which Christians prepare for Easter. It commemorates the day that Jesus Christ’s body was laid in the tomb.

This Week at AECST – April 13, 2025

Monday, April 14th

Church and Office Closed

Tuesday, April 15th

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

Vestry Meeting

6:00 PM via Zoom

Wednesday, April 16th

Angels in Motion rehearsal

7:30 PM in the Church

St. Thomas Gospel Choir Rehearsal

7:30 PM in Anderson Hall

Thursday, April 17th

Maundy Thursday Dinner and

Stripping of the Altar

6:00 PM

Friday, April 18th

Good Friday Service

12:00 Noon

Saturday, April 19th

Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Scout Troop 133

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM in the Undercroft

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
UPCOMING SUNDAYS IN APRIL**

April 13th

Palm Sunday

(Sunday of the Passion)

Outdoor Procession/Distribution of Palms

9:45 AM

April 20th

Easter Sunday

(Sunday of the Resurrection)

Celebrant: Fr. Shaw; Homilist: Fr. Evans,

(Early Sunrise) 6:00 AM

Festive Celebration with Music and Dance

Celebrant and Homilist: The Rector

10:00 AM

The Easter Bunny will make a special appearance
and our Annual Easter Egg Hunt will follow the
Easter Sunday Service.



JOIN OUR PARTNERS

The St. James School will be celebrating its Annual Benefit
on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 6:00 PM.**

You may recall that our church was one of the past
honorees for this beautiful celebration.

This year, one of their honorees will be Former Presiding
Bishop Michael Curry.

If you are interested in attending, please speak with
[Phyllis Cater](#) for more details.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

St. Thomas Men are Cooking - May 4th
Have you gotten your tickets yet?

Chefs! Get your recipes ready! The Men's Fellowship will be outside the church to sign up chefs for the event and recipes for the cookbook. Please email Dr. Tim Barksdale, tim.barksdale@merakey.org, your recipes by email for the cookbook. Sorry, please do not send screenshots. Tickets are \$20.00 and will be on sale after service outside church.



*The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas
Presents*

St. Thomas Men Are Cooking

**The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw, Rector
The Reverend Fr. Daren E. Evans, Associate to the Rector**

Calling All Men to Prepare and Serve your Favorite Dish(es) and to forward your recipe for the cookbook to be available close to the event
Email Recipes to Cookbook Editor & Event Organizer: Dr. Tim Barksdale :
Tim.Barksdale@Merakey.org

\$20.00 includes:

- Delicious Food, Dessert & Drinks
- Indoor & Outdoor Seating
- Table Service for Those in Need
- Door Prizes & Give-aways
- \$10.00 for those under 12 years
- Free for toddlers



Sunday, May 4th, 2025, Immediately after service

AECST Anderson Hall, 6361 Lancaster Ave. Phila. PA 19151

For More Information Contact
ED Geiger: 716-207-0405
Andrew Dumas: 917-325-4434

Get Tickets from
The Men's Ministry & Fellowship,
Edward Geiger, President

ANNOUNCING THE 2025 “MEN ARE COOKING” CHEFS OF ST. THOMAS!!!

Fr. Martini Shaw
Fr. Daren Evans
Michael Archey
Dr. Tim Barksdale
Dr. Massimo Baudo
Guy Booth
Ricardo Bostic
Paige Bowser, Jr.
Howard Chapman
Carl Dean
Dr. Rollo Dilworth
Andrew Dumas
Bill Edmonds
Larry Farmbry
Norman Frank
Barry Frye
John Maxwell
Brian Wilson
Dr. Jonathan Wilson, Jr.
Edgar Wise
Ed Geiger
Eugene Golson
Dr. Derek Griffith
Tyrone Gunby

Dennis Hall
Dr. Walter Harris
Thomas Harris
Gregory Hayes
Maurice Hayes
Quentin Heyward
Ashley Hines
Donald Hunt
Kelvin Johnson
John Kortue
Thomas Lynch
Michael McIntosh
Stephen Pugh
Eugene Phillips
Dr. Reginald Royster
Edwin Santana
Irving Stevenson
Bobby Tillman
Harold Townsend
Arnott Trotman
Justin Trotman
Joe Wells
Seth Williams

SAVE THE DATE!



HEROES' SUNDAY

MAY 18, 2025 10:00 AM

**Philadelphia Fire Commissioner
JEFFREY THOMPSON, GUEST SPEAKER**



ALL first responders are invited to attend!

- * All First Responders are encouraged to arrive by 9:45, attend in uniform and proceed into church together.
- * There will be a reception with light refreshments in the church hall immediately following mass.
- * For More Information Please Contact: Seth Williams
Seth@SecondChanceStrategies.Net

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Guest Speaker: Philadelphia Fire Commissioner
Jeffrey Thompson. Please invite all first responders to attend.

ATTENTION AECST STUDENTS:

The Jesse F. Anderson Sr. Scholarship Fund is offering the St. Thomas Book Awards for graduating high school seniors who are members of the African Episcopal Church of St.

Thomas (AECST) and plan to attend a school of higher learning in Fall 2025. Additionally, applications are available for AECST members enrolled in a full-time graduate program. The application deadline is May 12, 2025.

For more information contact [Paula Lamb](#) (High School Seniors) or [Diana Hutchins](#) (Graduate Students) or [Thomasina Hack](#).

The St. Thomas Chancel Choir is growing!!

We are seeking to purchase new choir robes and scapulas. Are you a seamstress? Do you know of someone who makes choir robes? Is there a black owned company that makes church choir robes? We would appreciate any information that you may have. Our congregation is a vast network of amazing people. If you have any information that can help, please email Jay Fluellen at chancelchoir@aecst.org.

Blue Note

A Jazz Concert

Presented by The Marian Anderson Museum

**WHEN: SATURDAY
APRIL 26TH 2025**

TIME: 3PM

**WHERE: THE SETTLEMENT
MUSIC SCHOOL BUILDING THEATER
416 QUEEN STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19147**

ADMISSION: \$30.00

The Marian Anderson Museum invites you to join us as we kick off our 2025 performance season with a nod to our great Marian Andersons exposure to fellow artists and contemporaries in the 1920's during the Harlem Renaissance when she gave performances and logged at the YMCA and YWCA in New York and Philadelphia. Though Marian Anderson performed Classically, she was inspired by fellow artists that she witnessed and would eventually befriend. You will experience an afternoon of rare Jazz Pieces Vocally and Instrumentally that haven't often had the spotlight.

For more information call our office today or visit our website
www.marianandersonhistoricalsociety.weebly.com
215-779-4219



THE ST. THOMAS WOMEN'S MINISTRY
presents

A Weekend Celebration of Women

Saturday, May 31st

Women's Wellness Retreat

Get your Retreat Tickets Today!

Sunday, June 1st

Annual Women's Day Celebration

Includes: Mindfulness Wellness and Inspiring Speakers,
Creative Expressions Workshops, Healing Drum Circle,
Continental Breakfast, Delicious Lunch, and more!

You don't want to miss it!



The Women's Ministry Presents

The St. Thomas Women's Weekend

Saturday, May 31 - Sunday, June 1, 2025

REVIVE. RESTORE. RENEW.

FINDING STRENGTH IN FAITH

WOMEN'S WELLNESS RETREAT

Saturday, May 31, 2025 | 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

~Karen Taylor Bass~

Certified yoga instructor, mediation coach, wellness trainer, author, Radio Show Host

~The Reverend Canon Toneh Smyth~

Canon for Missions of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

~AND MORE~

FEATURED WELLNESS RETREAT EXPERIENCES INCLUDE:

**Creative Expressions workshops | Get your Affairs in Order
Mindful Meditation | Closing Drum Circle**

Tickets: \$50 per person

Checks payable to: St. Thomas Women's Ministry - Memo: Women's Retreat

Cash App payments: \$46DBM | Memo: Women's Retreat | GIVI App Memo: Women's Retreat

For more information, contact Deborah Matthews | email: debmadanco@verizon.net

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UPDATE ON REAL ID

Folks, we are less than one month away from REAL ID being implemented across this nation on May 7, 2025! If you do not have a current passport and plan to travel within the US within the next 45 days or will need to enter a federal/military facility, please apply for your new ID as soon as possible.

PennDOT is opening select Driver's License Centers on Mondays so Pennsylvanians can apply for REAL ID. Go to www.pa.gov/realid to find a location near you.

Delaware Residents use the website below for REAL ID details:
www.dmv.de.gov/DriverServices

New Jersey Residents use the website below for REAL ID details:

www.nj.gov/mvc/realid/

Get your REAL ID and don't leave home without it!

IT'S TIME TO VOTE!!

We VOTE twice every year; not just in a general election or when there is a Presidential election. Voting is your civic responsibility and one of our most precious rights. Are you ready to vote? Did you register yet?

The Pennsylvania primary is **May 20, 2025**. Here are the deadlines to mark on your calendar:

Last day to register: **May 5, 2025**

Last day to request a mail-in or absentee ballot:
May 13, 2025

Polls are open on election day from 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Voting is your Superpower!
Don't forget to register and VOTE!!

AECST HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Stress Symptoms: Effects on your body and behavior

Stress symptoms may be affecting your health, even though you might not know it. You may blame sickness for that annoying headache, your sleeping troubles, feeling unwell or your lack of focus at work. But stress may really be the cause.

Common Effects of Stress

Stress can affect your body, your thoughts, your feelings, and your behavior. Knowing common stress symptoms can help you manage them. Stress that's not dealt with can lead to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, obesity, and diabetes.

How much do you know about stress? Here's a short quiz you can take...

<https://forms.gle/tHBoBaXKG72FfSTg9>

What Can You Do To Manage Your Stress?

If you have stress symptoms, taking steps to manage your stress can have many health benefits. Check out some possible ways to relieve your stress.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13LwqiiioFGKIYdW36PG_qOVX9zZGHxtkq/view?usp=sharing

STRESS & STRAIN:

BODY & BRAIN

Worries about work, money, health care and staying safe in the post-pandemic environment — as well as broader issues such as discrimination and climate change — can pile on the stress.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, try these ways to reduce your stress yourself. Ask for help or a referral from your health care professional for other ways to lower your stress.

WHY IT MATTERS

Simply put, stress can kill. People with high levels of chronic stress or psychological distress are more likely to die of various causes, research shows, including heart disease and stroke.

Chronic stress is also linked to anxiety disorders and major depression. And stress can underlie other problems, such as irritability, sleep disruption, headaches, changes in appetite, gut discomfort and reduced fertility.

TRY THESE STRESS-BUSTERS

Fight stress by focusing on your physical and mental health.



Get out of the house:
Take a walk in nature and enjoy the sights and sounds.



Sleep tight: Set a regular bedtime and wakeup routine and turn off or dim electronic screens as bedtime approaches.



Use your network:
Reach out and connect regularly with family and friends.



Put your mind to it: Explore mindfulness, a type of meditation that focuses your attention on your present experiences without interpretation or judgment.



Lean on a furry friend:
Pets may help reduce physiological reactions to stress.



Work it out: Regular physical activity — a recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity, 75 minutes of vigorous activity, or a mix of both weekly — can help relieve tension, anxiety and depression and give you immediate benefits from exercise.

For more tips on the mind-heart-body connection, visit heart.org/BeWell.

ALTAR FLOWERS



EASTER FLOWERS AND LILIES

Your gift of an Easter Lily will help beautify the church and will be a beautiful tribute to your loved ones, or a token of Thanksgiving for a blessing received. To order flowers, go to the church website, or use this [link](#) to order and pay for flowers.

High Altar - \$125

Absalom Jones Altar - \$90

the Columbarium - \$60

Easter Lily - \$25 each (5 names per plant)

Deadline: Monday, April 14, 2025



PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

with Fr. Jay meet on Tuesdays
7:00 PM via Zoom.

Please contact [Fr. Jay](#) with
questions/requests.

DAILY RECOMMENDED BIBLE READINGS

READINGS FOR PALM SUNDAY

(The Sunday of the Passion)

April 13, 2025

The Liturgy of the Palms

The Holy Gospel - [Luke 19:28-40](#)

[Psalm 118:1-2,19-29](#)

The Liturgy of the Word

The First Lesson - [Isaiah 50:4-9a](#)

[Psalm 31:9-16](#)

The Second Lesson - [Philippians 2:5-11](#)

The Holy Gospel - [Luke 23:1-49](#)

The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of April 14, 2025

Monday - [John 12:9-19](#)

Tuesday - [John 12:20-26](#)

Wednesday - [John 12:27-36](#)

Maundy Thursday - [John 17:1-11\(12-26\)](#)

Good Friday - [John 13:36-38](#)

Holy Saturday - [Romans 8:1-11](#)

WEDNESDAYS IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY

with Fr. Daren will resume in the AJ House on

April 30th at 6:00 PM.

Our Spring study will be a

“Journey through the Book of Revelation.”

TINY TIKES TOT AREA

Basic items for the Tiny Tykes Tot area have been identified and ordered! Basic items that were ordered are arriving. Soon our little Saints will have an area where they can take their parents. Keep your ear to the ground for a special announcement and your eyes out for a sneak preview. Please contact [Fr. Daren](#) if you have questions.

ATTENTION: ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS OF ST. THOMAS

Please know that your church family is here to support you during your years of academic studies. Please [email](#) Fr. Daren your contact information as soon as possible (including cellphone). Our prayers remain with you.



A REMINDER TO ALL GUILDS, ORGANIZATIONS, MINISTRIES, AND INDIVIDUALS:

ANY and **ALL** Activities using the church facilities (ie; Anderson Hall, the Undercroft, the church) or the Absalom Jones House **MUST** be scheduled and approved by the Parish Administrator: [Gladys DuBrey](#) (215-473-3065) and **NOT the SEXTON** beforehand. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that all activities are listed on the calendar of the Parish Office.



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.](#)



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.

CHAT AND CHEW

Have you ever considered hosting a Chat and Chew following Service in thanksgiving for a blessing received or in memory of a departed loved one? Please contact [Gladyce](#) in the church office for further details.

GFS Holiday House is in Jeopardy!

In the early morning hours, on January 26, 2025, notification arrived that the frigid cold weather caused a pipe to burst in our beloved summer retreat center, Holiday House. The water damage is beyond extensive and travels from the third floor down to the first floor. Built in 1870's, this is the last of 30 Holiday Houses in existence. It has offered shelter and housing to immigrant women, a retreat center for girls and women, and a place where summer memories were made and friendship cured.

This historic retreat center holds a special place in the hearts of St. Thomas GFS members. There is a room dedicated to Julia Porter, our first Branch Advisor. We need your help. Are you good at researching grants? Can you write a proposal? Do you have the acumen for gross fundraising? Can you provide a monetary donation? Please contact Nikkol Simms, Branch Advisor, if you can assist.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2 (GFS Motto)

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](#).



ST. THOMAS PODCAST

Stay tuned! Our podcast will soon return. In the meantime, please enjoy the three previous episodes. If you would like to be a guest on any of the podcasts, please speak with Fr. Daren or [email](#) him for more information.



ATTENTION ALL ACOLYTES

Rehearsals are EACH SUNDAY immediately following service. For more information, please speak with [Fr. Daren](#).

On **Sunday, April 27**, immediately after service at their regular meeting, the young adults will discuss the topic: **Christian Dating as a Young Adult**. This conversation will be facilitated by our own Dr. Tim Barksdale.

CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS NEEDED

Are you willing to serve, at least one Sunday per month, as a church school teacher? Please prayerfully consider this call. We are especially looking for young adults, men, and anyone who loves children. Please use this [link](#) to register to become a church school teacher.



IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE RECTOR

St. Thomas celebrates children and youth not only as the church of TOMORROW but also as the church of TODAY!!! We embrace and celebrate our youth. If you have children in your family or neighborhood, please invite or bring them to be a part of our amazing Church School program. When was the last time you invited someone to church?

YOUTH COUNCIL

Do you feel called to work with Youth? Do you have great ideas that will help the church to connect with the youth of today (and vice versa)? You are invited to be a part of our parish Youth Council. Please contact [Fr. Daren](#) for more details.

YOUNG ADULT GATHERING

All young adults (those in their 20's and 30's) are invited to a time of fellowship on the 4th Sunday of every month in Anderson Hall immediately following worship.

GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY

All young ladies are invited to join us on Saturdays in the Undercroft at 11:00 AM.

The Girls' Friendly Society does not meet every Saturday.

Please contact [Nikkol Simms](#) for more information and the schedule.

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.

CALLING FOR YOUTH ACOLYTES!



Calling all youth! You are needed to serve in the AECST Acolyte Ministry. No prior experience is needed as training will be provided. This is an excellent way for our children and youth to be involved in the life of the church. For more information please speak with [Fr. Daren.](#)

Scout Troop #133 - Our Cub Scout Program is open to children grades 1-5. The Cub program meets at **2:00 PM on Saturdays.**

Our Scout Program is open to children aged 11-17 years old. The Scout Program meets at **3:00 PM on Saturdays.**

Please contact Scout [Master Howard Chapman](#) for more information.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS WHO ARE:

IN LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENCES:

Helena Allen - Simpson House; Linda Holmes and Leotta Griffith - Saunders House; Gwendolyn Langford - Arden Courts of Cherry Hill; Inez Turner - The Residence at Bala Cynwyd; Ola Bass - The Pinnacle at Plymouth Meeting; Ridart "Butch" Farmer- Centennial Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center; Patricia Holmes; Elizabeth Trulear - Riddle Village Retirement Community

AT HOME:

Robert Brown, Thelma Silvers, Lemont Johnson, Patricia Ellison, Barbara Douglas, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell, Wendell Whitlock, Quincina Edmonds, Solomon Cropper, Sharon Harper, Donald Hunt, Sr., Verger Stephen Hannum, Marie Golson, Virginia DuBrey

KEEP IN PRAYER:

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Terri Taylor, Lisa Woodley, Adinah Edwards, Ann Stewart, Waltier Blocker, Arlene Gray, Daryn Stewart, Santee Ruffin, Angela Holloway, Mary Ann Phillips, Yvonne Sydnor

WE PRAY FOR

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

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

“To whom much is given, much is required.” -Luke 12:48

The Stewardship Committee of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas recognizes that stewardship may take form in several ways, your time, your talent or your 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 treasures. Prayerfully consider donating to one or all of the special requests below.

FAITHFUL GIVING CARD (PLEDGE)

Please pray for your Faithful Giving for 2025.

You'll be able to complete your [Faithful Giving Card](#) on the [church website](#), or by using the paper Faithful Giving Card. Strong support is needed to meet the budget, our many endeavors and outreach projects at St. Thomas. Your Faithful Giving Card can also be placed in the Alms Basin or mailed to the church office.

THE BUILDING FUND ENVELOPES have been placed in Anderson Hall beside the Offering Envelopes. Please pick them up with your offering envelopes. If you've already picked your offering envelopes up, please pick up your Building Fund envelopes. You can also do your Building Fund offering [online](#). Each box of Building Fund envelopes will include twelve envelopes, one for each month.

Thank you.

CAPITAL BUILDING IMPROVEMENT FUND

If you are actively contributing, thank you! Your gifts are truly appreciated. Everyone is asked to make a minimum sacrificial gift of \$40 per month. The Building Fund Envelopes are located in Anderson Hall beside the Offering envelopes. When using electronic payments select "Building Fund." If using checks write "Building Fund" on the memo line of your check.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

The church has received many "undeliverable" mailings. If you have moved, please update your mailing address with the church office by [email](#) or phone 215-473-3065.

Can you help deliver offertory envelopes to our sick and shut-in parishioners? If you live near a parishioner who is unable to come to church, it would be much appreciated if you would bring their envelopes to them. A list of our sick and shut-in parishioners is located next to the offertory envelopes in Anderson Hall.

IMPORTANT: Make sure your name, envelope #, and amount are included on the front of your offering envelope. This is critical for bookkeeping accuracy. Help is just an email away. Contact [Patricia Lynch](#).

RECTOR'S PRAYERFUL WISH LIST

\$100,000.00. Our air conditioning units have provided over 30 years of comfort. They are now in need of being replaced. Please prayerfully consider donating toward the replacement and use the [link](#) provided. Thank you to those who have already given toward the new air-conditioning units.

There are several ways to submit your offering and tithes: church service offertory, use the QR code, website donations, download the Givi app, U.S. Mail or hand deliver it to the fiscal office.



**The African Episcopal
Church of St. Thomas |
Abou...**

www.aecst.org

WAYS TO CONTINUE TO BE FAITHFUL TO GOD AND THE CHURCH THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

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

1) **Sunday Offering Plate**

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

Please use the following address:

The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas
c/o Fiscal Administrator, 6361 Lancaster Avenue,
(Absalom Jones Way) Philadelphia, PA 19151

3) **Use the Givi app.** If you don't already use the app and nor an account, it's easy to obtain. Please download the Givi app, (**givi IOS App**) for your Apple (iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch) or (**givi Android App**) for your Android device. If you have any questions, please speak with **Deadra Cannon**, 215-844-6115.

4) **Bring your check** directly to the Fiscal Office during regular business hours (Monday - Thursday 10:00 AM-2:00 PM) **After business hours**, drop your envelope in the door mail slot located on the front patio of the Absalom Jones House.

5) **Church Website - [Online Giving](#)**

Simply select 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. **NOTE:** Please remember to enter your envelope number in the Customer ID field, if you are a member of St.Thomas when filling out your online giving information.

6) **Faithful Giving Cards (Pledge)** - Please send them via the US mail to the church or fill out the form **[electronically](#)** through the **www.aecst.org** website or send an email to our **[Fiscal Administrator](#)**. Thank you so much to all who have return them.

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
Fiscal Administrator	Jeannette Jeffrey	fiscal@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	thegail@hotmail.com
	Patricia Walker-Ellison	p.walker.ellison@gmail.com
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
Monarch Greeters Ministry	Ashley Hines	1792@aecst.org
Parish Vergers	Stephen Hannum	1792@aecst.org
	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
Stewardship Chair	Patricia Lynch	stewardship@aecst.org
Transportation Ministry		
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

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 - Patricia Lynch | Property Chair - William Burke

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

THE AUXILIARY VESTRY

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

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