

# Lent

**A Season of Reflection,  
Renewal, and Preparation**

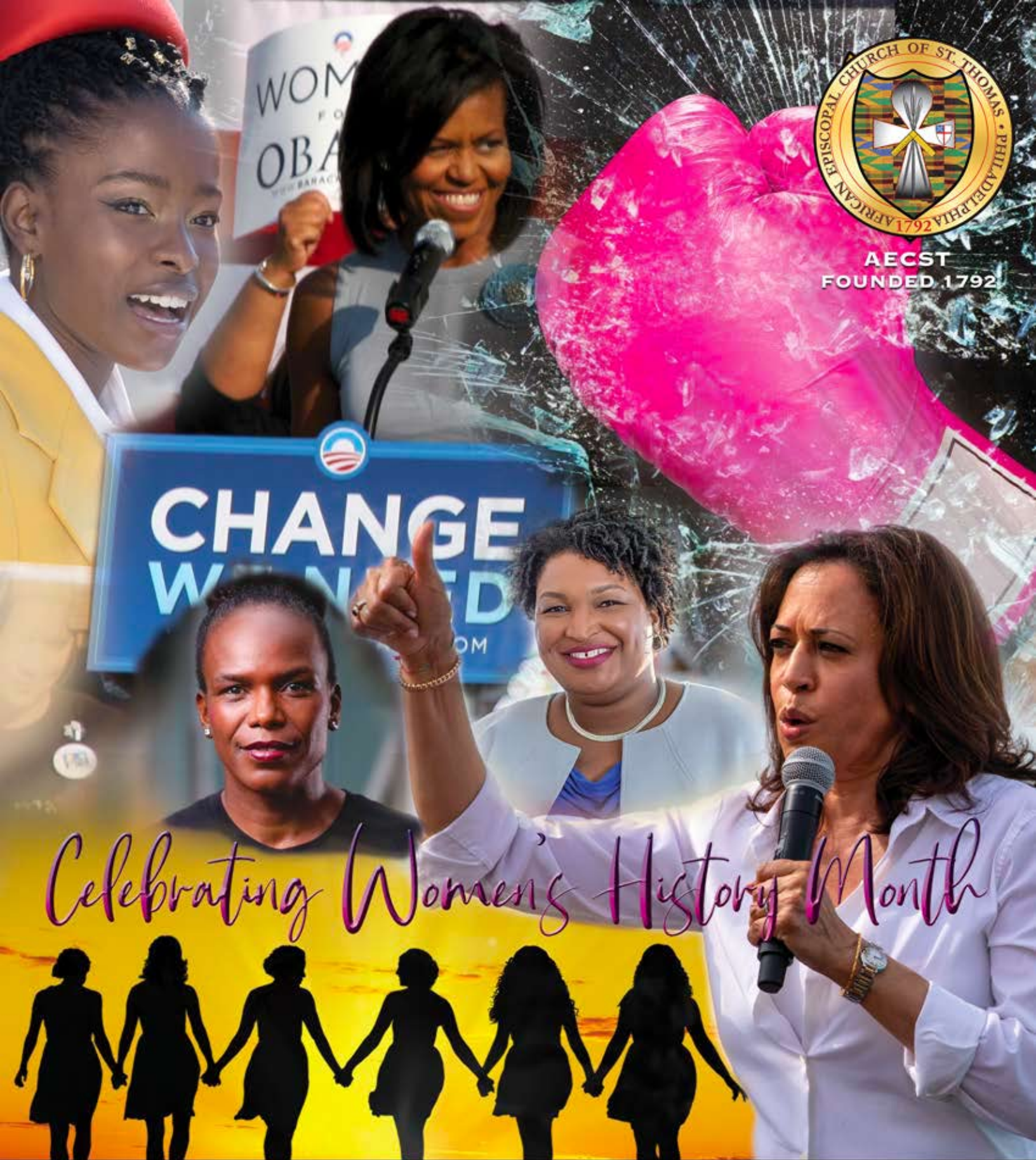


**THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS  
FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA**

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](http://WWW.AECST.ORG) • [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792)



AECST  
FOUNDED 1792



*Celebrating Women's History Month*

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# THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 16, 2025

## 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

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(A short video message from the Rector)

**ST. THOMAS CHURCH REMAINS D.E.I.**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)**

**FAITH COMMUNITY!!!**

“The Role of the Church during Wilderness Times”

Sunday, March 9, 2025 - First Sunday In Lent



Video: Quentin Heyward (St.Thomas Videography Ministry)

## “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 **The Second Sunday In Lent**. 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

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

# Welcome

We welcome **Lorenzo Whitaker**, who joined our church family last Sunday. His shepherd is Dr. Timothy Barksdale. We look forward to getting to know him.





The African Episcopal  
Church of St. Thomas |  
About The AECST

[www.aecst.org](http://www.aecst.org)

**Scan here to support our church and our ministries.**

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**Retired Persons Ministry-St. Thomas /  
Overbrook Presbyterian Church**

Some pictures from Senior Partners / Retired Person's  
Ministry fellowship around World Day of Prayer.



# Hundreds filled the pews to begin their Lenten journey: The First Sunday in Lent, March 9, 2025



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



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



**On Sunday, March 9th, we celebrated the 100th Birthday Celebration of our own, Inez Turner**



Photo credit: Stephen Pugh, William Edmonds, Justin Trotman  
St. Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry





## **THE LENTEN SERIES - 2025**

### **“The Role of the Church: Post 2024 National Election”**

#### **March 12th**

Introduction - Political Structure of Government  
(Facilitator: The Reverend Joe Watkins)

A basic description of the Structure of our American government

#### **March 19th**

2024 National Election Results

(Facilitators: Ernestine Johnson and Julio Rodriguez)

What were the election results and what do they mean?

#### **March 26th**

The Role of the Church During the 1960's  
(Facilitator: Arthur Sudler)

What has been the role of the Church following various election results and various political climates in our society?

#### **April 2nd**

Current Involvement of the Church and Faith Communities  
(Facilitator: Lisa Sharon Harper)

In what ways are faith communities presently involved around the country?

#### **April 9th**

A Role for St. Thomas Church Post 2024 Election  
(Facilitators: Elaine Gillison and Wendella Fox)

Are there ways that St. Thomas can be more involved following the recent election?

6:00 PM - Mass

6:30 PM - Presentation/Group Discussion

7:00 PM - Ending

# LENTEN FACILITATORS



**THE KICK-OFF OF OUR LENTEN SERIES**  
**Wednesday, March 12, 2025**

**“The Role of the Church: Post 2024 General Election”**  
**(Facilitator: The Reverend Joe Watkins)**

Please join us next Wednesday for our one-hour  
Lenten Mass and Presentation  
(6:00 PM - 7:00 PM)



Photos: Quentin Heyward (St. Thomas Ed Muse Memorial  
Photography Ministry)



## **SAVE THE DATE!!!!**

The Vestry and Auxiliary Vestry  
Invite you to A Maundy Thursday Dinner

**April 17, 2025, at 6:00 PM**

Tickets are \$20.00 and will be on sale  
next Sunday, March 23rd.

## **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](mailto:Brenda.Johnson@stthomas.org)  
[Best](#) or by using the signup sheet which will be on the table  
at the rear of the church.



## **HOLY WEEK 2025 SCHEDULE OF OBSERVANCES & CELEBRATIONS**

**Sunday, April 13th**

**Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday, 10:00 AM**

Worshipping with us: St. James School community  
Guest Homilist: The Rev. Walter Thorne, School Chaplain  
Visiting Choir: St. James Ambassador Choir

**Holy Thursday, April 17th**

**Maundy Thursday, 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

**Good Friday, April 18th,**

**Conclusion of the Vigil Watch, 12:00 Noon**

Special liturgy to include Stations of the Cross  
Worshipping with us: Members from Overbrook  
Presbyterian Church  
Guest Homilist: The Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson, Pastor  
Overbrook Presbyterian Church

**Easter Sunday, April 20th**

**Sunday of the Resurrection**

**Early Sunrise 6:00 AM**

Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Evans  
**Festive Celebration 10:00 AM** with music and dance  
Celebrant and Homilist: The Rector

## 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.

**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.

**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.



**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.

**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.

**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.

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## **AECST HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS**

### **Did you know that March is Colorectal Health Awareness Month?**

Getting screened regularly is one of the best ways to prevent colon cancer. Early detection is key. Who should get screened and at what age? Click on the link below to find the answer from the Centers for Disease Control.

More information about Colorectal Health Awareness may be found [here](#).

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**The Sisterhood Guild** will collect items for the [Northern Children's Services](#) throughout the season of Lent. Any of the following items would be appreciated: toiletries, feminine hygiene products, baby wipes, disposable diapers, lotions, and diaper rash ointments. A collection tote/box will be located in the rear of the sanctuary.

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### **OUR OUT OF TOWN DEDICATED 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, Dr. Paul Bach, and 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 and 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 and Rebecca Scales, Shelly and Ann Stewart, Howard Tucker, and Allison Young.

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Are you receiving robocalls from the Rector about special upcoming events? Do you know someone who does not receive the electronic Spearhead every week? If not, please send your email and cell number to [Gladyce DuBrey](#).

## A RECTOR'S REQUEST FOR DONORS

The beautiful three banners hanging outside the church are in desperate need of replacement. Are you interested in being one of the donors? The cost for each is \$750.00.

Please contact [Gladyce DuBrey](#) in the church office to make a donation.

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Sponsors are needed to cover the donkey rental for **Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025**. Donations can be made in thanksgiving for a blessing or in memory of a loved one. Envelopes may be found at the back of the church. The cost of the donkey is \$1550.00.

Please contact [Gladyce DuBrey](#) in the church office to make a donation.

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## **THIS WEEK OF MARCH 17, 2025**

### **Tuesday, March 18th**

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

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

### **Wednesday, March 19th**

Lenten Series

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM in the Church

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

### **Friday, March 21st**

Retired Persons Ministry-  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM in the Undercroft

### **Saturday, March 22nd**

Daughters of the King Meeting  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM in Anderson Hall

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## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS UPCOMING SUNDAYS IN MARCH**

### **March 16th**

Second Sunday in Lent

### **March 23rd**

Third Sunday in Lent  
Youth and Young Adult Sunday

### **March 30th**

Fourth Sunday in Lent (Rose Sunday)  
Health Ministry Sunday

**SAVE THE DATE!!!**  
**The St. Thomas Gospel Choir**  
**Annual Palm Sunday Concert**  
Sunday, April 13, 2025 at 3:00 PM  
6361 Lancaster Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151

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**SAVE THE DATE HAS CHANGED!!**  
**St. Thomas Men are Cooking - May 4th**  
Chefs! Get your recipes ready!  
The Men's Fellowship will be outside of the church to sign up chefs for the event and recipes for the cookbook. More info to follow.  
Men, check your email for deadlines.

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**SAVE THE DATES**  
**The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas**  
**Women's Weekend - 2025**  
"Revive, Renew, Restore: Finding Strength in Faith"  
**Saturday, May 31st** | Women's Retreat  
**Sunday, June 1st** | Annual Women's Day Celebration  
You don't want to miss this exciting weekend!  
More Information coming your way soon.



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](mailto:debmadanco@verizon.net)

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## **NEWS FLASH FROM THE CATTO MINISTRY CORNER**

### **REAL ID BECOMES EFFECTIVE ON MAY 7, 2025**

Are you ready? Do you have a star in the upper right-hand corner of your driver's license or state-issued ID? If not, you will not be able to fly domestic flights, enter a federal building or military installation without a passport or REAL ID!

Go to <https://www.dhs.gov/real-id> to review the requirements to apply for REAL ID.

Tell your family, friends and neighbors. Real action that you should take today!



### **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](#).

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN  
THE VERY REV. CANON MARTINI SHAW  
URGENT LEGISLATIVE ACTION REQUEST NEEDED**

1) An Urgent Legislative letter is being sponsored by the Schuylkill Deanery of the Diocese of PA. This letter is expressing legislative opposition to a recent Congressional Resolution that has been filed in the U.S. House of Representatives to censure Episcopal Bishop Mariann Budde of Washington, DC, for a sermon delivered by her at the Interfaith Prayer Service in the Washington National Cathedral on Tuesday, January 21, 2025. You may find the letter [here](#).

2) Stop Gun-Violence Campaign Legislative Letter to the PA State General Assembly is now available for your support. Please see our Schuylkill Deanery Delegate Phyllis Cater in Anderson Hall to obtain copies of both letters that will be forwarded with your signature to your [PA State Representatives](#) and [PA State Senator](#).

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**CHAT AND CHEW**

Have you ever considered hosting a Coffee Hour (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.



# Spirituals! Spirituals! Spirituals!

with **Dr. James Abbington**

Saturday, March 22, 2025

9:30AM-12:45PM

The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas

6361 Lancaster Ave.

Philadelphia, PA 19151



GIA invites all ages, denominations, and levels of experience to join us as we sing songs of faith and explore the profound history of American sacred music.

## Registration Fee includes:

- Participation in an inspiring musical event led by Dr. James Abbington
- Experience the excitement of singing in a large group of enthusiastic people
- You and your choir directors will be exposed a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the traditional, "second generation" spiritual, and some of the most recent arrangements
- Including the covers to "Trying to Get Ready" arr. Clayton White, "Spirits That Dwell in Deep Woods" by Wyatt Tee Walker, and eight selected spirituals

## Registration Options:

### Preregistration

- \$25.00/person, early registration
- Early registration closes on March 21
- Late registrations are \$30.00/person

### Group Preregistration

- \$20.00/person for groups of 10 or more
- Early registration closes on March 14th

### Walk-in

- \$30.00/person
- **Does NOT guarantee** an octavo packet

**REGISTER TODAY!**

<https://giamusic.com/earthandheavensing> or call 1-800-442-1358



## **ALTAR FLOWERS**

Flowers on the High Altar -\$60.00

Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$50.00 each

Flowers on the Columbarium - \$40.00 each

Flowers are not placed on the altar in Lent except for  
**Rose Sunday, March 30, 2025.**

To order flowers for the High Altar, Absalom Jones Altar,  
Columbarium, please use this [link](#).

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## **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

Absalome Jones Altar - \$90

the Columbarium - \$60

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

**Deadline: Monday, April 14, 2025**

## DAILY RECOMMENDED BIBLE READINGS

Readings for the First Sunday In Lent  
March 16, 2025

The First Lesson - [Genesis 15:1-12,17-18](#)  
[Psalm 27](#)

The Second Lesson - [Philippians 3:17-4:1](#)  
The Holy Gospel - [Luke 13:31-35](#)

### The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of March 17, 2025

Monday - [Luke 6:3-10](#)

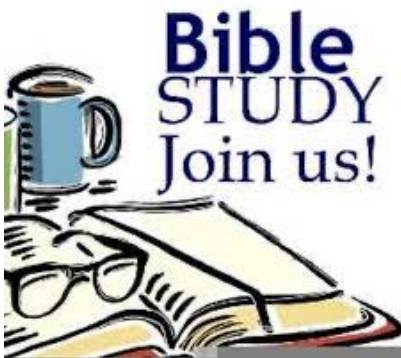
Tuesday - [Matthew 23:1-12](#)

Wednesday - [Luke 2:41-52](#)

Thursday - [Luke 16:19-31](#)

Friday - [Matthew 21:33-43](#)

Saturday - [Luke 15:11-32](#)



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### PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

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

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

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### 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."

## **PROGRESS IS IN THE AIR!!!!**

Basic items for the Tiny Tykes Tot area have been identified. We are moving forward. Keep an eye out for change! Please speak to [Fr. Daren](#) for more details.

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### **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.

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### **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: [Gladyce 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](#).

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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.

## **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.

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## ATTENTION ALL ACOLYTES

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

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## 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.

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## 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?

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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!



All youth of our church are invited 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.](#)

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**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.

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

### **IN THE HOSPITAL:**

Patricia Holmes - Presbyterian Hospital;  
Sharon Harper - UPenn

### **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

### **AT HOME:**

Virginia DuBrey, Robert Brown, Ridart "Butch" Farmer,  
Ola Bass, Thelma Silvers, Lemont Johnson, Patricia Ellison,  
Barbara Douglas, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell,  
Wendell Whitlock, Arlene Gray, Bill Edmonds, Inez Turner,  
Quincina Edmonds, Verger Stephen Hannum, Solomon Cropper

### **KEEP IN PRAYER:**

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Terri Taylor, Lisa Woodley,  
Adinah Edwards, Ann Stewart, Waltier Blocker,  
Donald Hunt, Jr., Daryn Stewart, Santee Ruffin

### **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 2024 and 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](http://www.aecst.org)

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

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

- 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 don't have 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) **Pledge Cards** - Please send them via the US mail to the church or fill out the form **[electronically](#)** through the **[www.aecst.org](http://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 McGillberry	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