



Welcome to

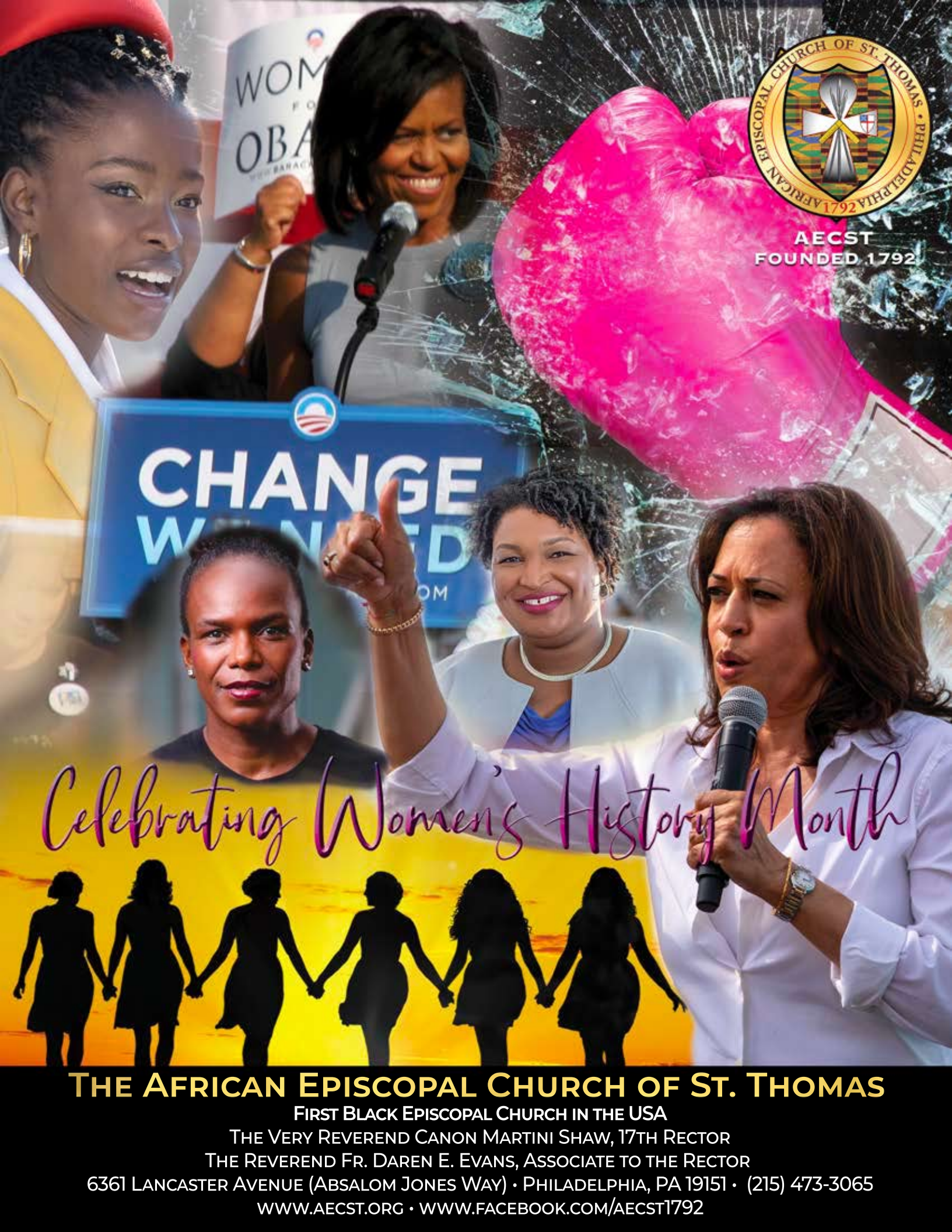
Rose Sunday

**... a time of Joy,
amid a period of
Penance & Prayer**

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



AECST
FOUNDED 1792



Celebrating Women's History Month



THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS
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**THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
(ROSE/LAETARE SUNDAY)**

March 30, 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



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

www.aecst.org

**Scan the QR code to support our church
and our ministries.**

“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 Fourth Sunday in Lent,
(Rose/Laetare Sunday) and Health Ministry 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. 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

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

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.

HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

The AECST Health Ministry is sponsoring a program Sunday in Anderson Hall entitled – “Blood Pressure and Stroke: Strategies for Prevention and Awareness.”

This Program is presented in conjunction with the Lankenau Hospital Community Health and Outreach Center.

The Sisterhood Guild is collecting 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 the church nave near the baptismal font.

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

with love and gratitude,



*we invite you to join us
for a celebration of the
life of our father,*

Ronald Pinckney Sr.

Saturday, April 5th at 2:00

**The African Episcopal
Church of St. Thomas
6361 Lancaster Avenue,
Philadelphia, PA 19151**

With heavy hearts, but with love and gratitude,
Waltier Blocker and family invite you to join them
for a celebration of Ronald Pinkney, Sr., Waltier's brother.

Saturday, April 5, 2025 at 2:00 PM at the
African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, in Anderson Hall.

So that the family can keep an accurate count of those
attending, please state that you are a St. Thomas member
and attending in support for Waltier.

Please click on the [link](#) to complete and
confirm your attendance.

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](#).

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](#).



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





Have you gotten your ticket?

Tickets are selling quickly!

The Vestry and Auxiliary Vestry
Invite you to Maundy Thursday Dinner

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

Tickets are \$20.00

If you would like to purchase a ticket, a member of the Vestry/Auxiliary Vestry will be in Anderson Hall after service.

For more information, please contact [Cynthia Muse](#).

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.



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

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

Easter Sunday, April 20th

Sunday of the Resurrection

~6:00 AM (Early Sunrise)~

Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Evans

~10:00 AM (Festive Celebration with music and dance)~

Celebrant and Homilist: The Rector

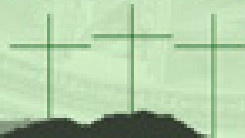
The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas +
The St. Thomas Gospel Choir



palmsunday

Annual Concert

Songs, Spirituals & Hymns 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

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.

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.

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.

LENTEN SERIES CONTINUES
Wednesday, March 26, 2025

"The Role of the Church: Post 2024 General Election"
Role of the church during the 1960's
(Facilitator: Arthur Sudler)

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







The AECST EXPRESS is fueled and powered by many dedicated staff and gifted volunteers.



**Being good stewards of our blessings from God.
Roofing work continues as we maintain God's
beautiful house of worship.**



**Hundreds filled the pews to continue their
Lenten Journey:
The Third Sunday in Lent
March 23, 2025**

**THE CHURCH OF TODAY & TOMORROW
At St. Thomas, we love and celebrate our
Youth and Young Adults.**





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

**On Saturday, March 22nd,
St. Thomas hosted a special music worship.**

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



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

Please join us Wednesday, April 2nd and 9th, for one hour.

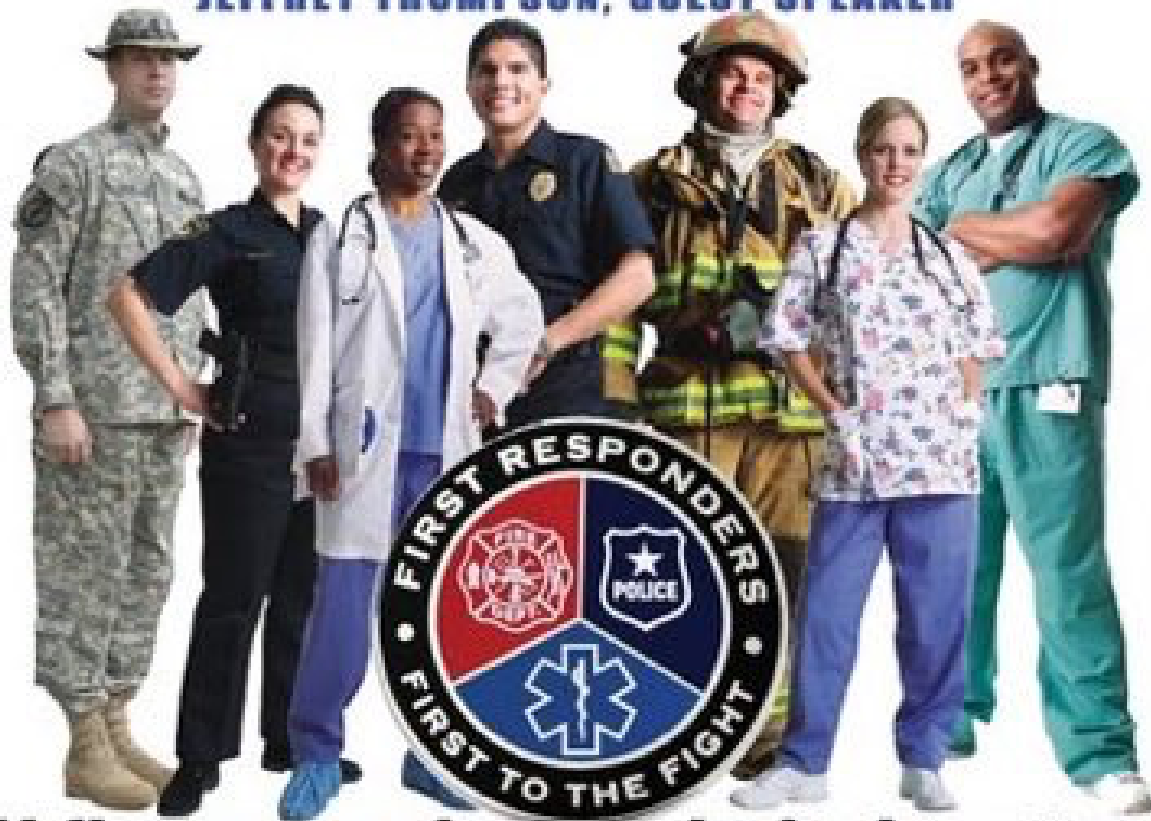




HEROES' SUNDAY

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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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.

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 me directly- Jay Fluellen

A RECTOR'S REQUEST FOR DONORS

The three beautiful 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.



Sponsors are still 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.

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

THIS WEEK OF MARCH 31, 2025

Tuesday, April 1st

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, April 2nd

Lenten Series

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

Angels in Motion Rehearsal
7:30 PM in the Church

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

Saturday, April 5th

Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

MARK YOUR CALENDARS UPCOMING SUNDAYS IN MARCH/APRIL

March 30th

Fourth Sunday in Lent (Rose Sunday)
Health Ministry Sunday

April 6th

Fifth Sunday in Lent
Inurnment of Shirley Winkfield

April 13th

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion Outdoor Procession/
Distribution of Palms - 9:45 AM

April 20th

Easter Sunday (Sunday of the Resurrection)

6:00 AM (Early Sunrise) - Celebrant: Fr. Shaw / Homilist: Fr. Evans
10:00 AM (Festive Celebration with music and dance)
Celebrant and Homilist: The Rector



Happy Birthday to all those celebrating a Birthday in April

- 4/1 Justin Lyon
- 4/2 Linda Watson
- 4/3 Brandon Stiff, Nicola Knight, Swanie Goldsmith
- 4/4 Edwin Santana
- 4/9 Deborah Sartin, Landon Leys
- 4/10 Jeffrey Chapman, Barry Frye
- 4/11 Irenda Gates
- 4/12 Barbara Wiley, India Lyon
- 4/13 Nicole Stanley
- 4/14 Debbie Harrison
- 4/15 Gloria Moses, Alexia Wells, Karen Ragland, Judy Tillman
- 4/16 Lynette Edwards, Rhonda Wilson, Carmen Randolph, Shelly Stewart
- 4/18 Darryle Tillman, Elaine Young
- 4/19 Rashanda Stiff
- 4/20 Theresa Bramwell, Katsi Henderson
- 4/21 Tim Barksdale, Julia Williams
- 4/22 Lemont Johnson
- 4/23 Muriel Clifford, Richard Jones, Jr.
- 4/24 Judy Simkins Booth
- 4/25 Wanda Wood, Joseph Gubern
- 4/26 Simone Jeffers
- 4/28 Albert Dandridge, Tracy Jones
- 4/29 Tynecia Wilson
- 4/30 Shakerra Blair, Tammara Lewis, Allison Young



***The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas
Presents***

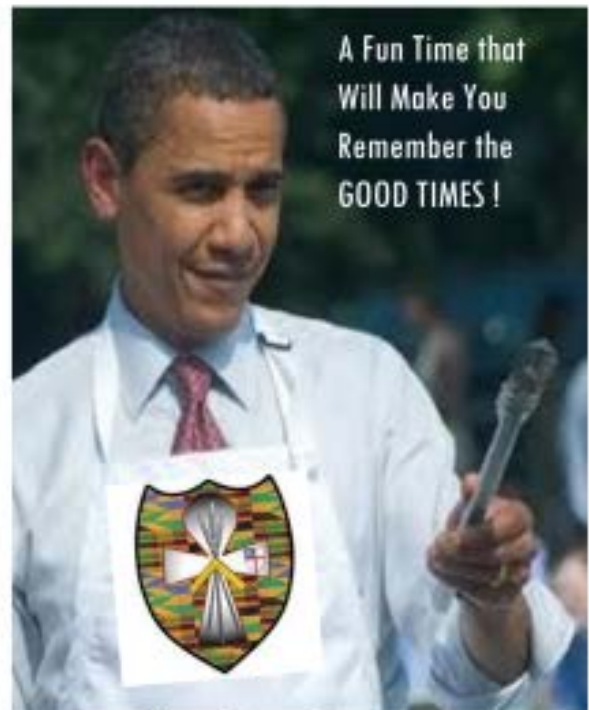
St. Thomas Men Are Cooking

**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

SAVE THE CHANGED DATE!!

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.

SAVE THE DATE

This year Caribbean Sunday will be on June 8th, which also happens to be Pentecost Sunday.

The Caribbean and Pentecost Committees will meet after church on Sunday, March 30th in the Undercroft.

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

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NEWS FLASH FROM THE CATTO MINISTRY CORNER

UPDATE on REAL ID

Did you know that you can Pre-Verify Online! If you received your FIRST Pennsylvania driver's license, learner's permit or photo ID card AFTER September 1, 2003, PennDOT may already have your REAL ID documentation on file. Go to www.PennDOT.gov/REALID to find out if your required documents are on file with PennDOT.

REAL ID is rapidly approaching; **May 7th** is the effective date. REAL ID will be mandatory to enter a federal or military facility (that require ID) or, board a U.S. domestic flight. A valid Passport may be sufficient now but what about in the future? We encourage you to review the REAL ID DOCUMENT CHECKLIST to make sure you have all that is required when the time comes to get a new driver's license or state ID.

WWJD: What Can I Do?

On **April 3, 2025, at 7:00 PM** Jesus would tune into the virtual conversation on **Hope** with Bishop Budde and two (2) other Bishops. Go to www.turquoiseandlavender.com to register for this dynamic and transformational discussion.

What More Can I Do... Protest?

If your legs and feet can withstand the action, the "Hands Off" Rally takes place on **April 5, 2025, at Noon**, at Philadelphia City Hall. Join the many Philadelphians that will voice their concerns regarding the National demise of civil rights, climate change, social security, Medicare and Medicaid imposed by this current President's Administration.

If public crowds make you nervous or unsettled, it's totally understandable to want to avoid rallies or protests. You can protest on-your-own by making a conscious effort to no longer support US companies that have curbed or eliminated their DEI policies. Check out **Sunday, March 9th** edition of The **Philadelphia Tribune** for a list of some of these companies.



ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers on the High Altar are in loving memory of
W. Gerard Best and Elizabeth Ross, given by
Brenda Johnson Best.

Flowers on the High Altar are in loving memory of our sister,
aunt, and cousin, **Joyer Smith Tiller**, in celebration of
her heavenly birthday, given by Susan Patricia Ben and family.

Flowers on the High Altar are given in Thanksgiving for
Layla Leys birthday, given by Karen Leys.

Flowers on the High Altar -\$60.00

Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$50.00 each

Flowers on the Columbarium - \$40.00 each

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



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 the Fourth Sunday In Lent March 30, 2025

The First Lesson - [Joshua 5:9-12](#)

[Psalm 32](#)

The Second Lesson - [2 Corinthians 5:16-21](#)

The Holy Gospel - [Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32](#)

The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of March 31, 2025

Monday - [John 4:43-54](#)

Tuesday - [John 5:1-8](#)

Wednesday - [John 5:19-29](#)

Thursday - [John 5:30-47](#)

Friday - [John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30](#)

Saturday - [John 7:37-52](#)

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.

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: [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](#).



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](#).

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

AT HOME:

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

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 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 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