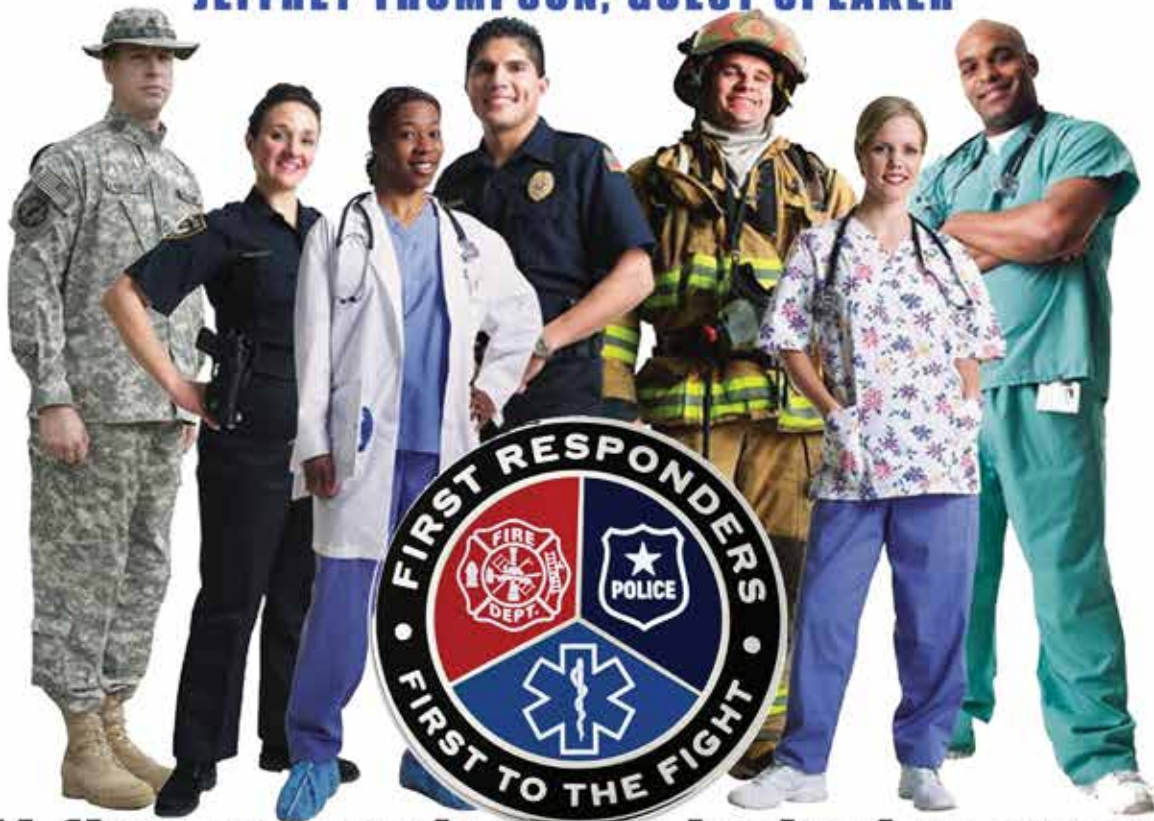




HEROES' SUNDAY

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

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

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Heroes' Sunday

May 18, 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.**

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

“WELCOME TO THE MOTHER CHURCH”

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise.
Give thanks unto Him and bless His name”

Psalm 100:4

Grace and Peace to you from God on this

Fifth Sunday of Easter and our second Annual Heroes’ Sunday honoring first responders. We welcome Philadelphia Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel; Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Jeffrey Thompson, our guest speaker, and all the first responders worshiping with us today.

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

Join us this Sunday to Recognize,
Celebrate and Bless all First-
Responders, as we welcome
Philadelphia Fire Department
Commissioner Jeffrey Thompson.
Please invite others.



We welcome our guest speaker, **Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Jeffrey Thompson**. A native Philadelphian raised in Germantown. He attended The Murrell Dobbins Career and Technical Education High School and Penn State University. Commissioner Thompson earned a BS in Emergency Management from Thomas Jefferson University.

Commissioner Thompson joined the Philadelphia Fire Department in 1989 as a member of Cadet Class 162. He has worked at stations all over the city during his 35 years; serving more than two decades as a Firefighter in North Philadelphia. He rose through the ranks to become a Lieutenant, Captain and Battalion Chief with Engine 50, Ladder 12, and Battalion 8. He has also held the positions of Executive Chief; adjunct instructor at the Fire Academy; Special Investigations Officer; Deputy Fire Commissioner of Planning and 1st Deputy Fire Commissioner of Operations.

The Philadelphia Fire Department has been a part of Commissioner Jeffrey's life since he was a child. His father served as a firefighter, retiring in 1988 after 25 years of service. Commissioner Thompson is married and has two adult daughters.

We also welcome Philadelphia Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel, who is worshipping with us this morning.



AN EASTER WISH FROM THE RECTOR:

Wishing each one of you a very holy and blessed fifty days of Easter filled with Joy and Peace.



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.

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](#).

AN EXECUTIVE ORDER

On Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025, during the sermon, Father Shaw signed a “Rector’s Executive Order” announcing that St. Thomas Church and individual Vestry members would become financial supporters and members of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The “Order” further encouraged the entire parish membership’s family and friends to become supporters. Become a member or donate NOW! Go to www.nmaahc.si.edu, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on “Become a Member” or “Make a Donation.” Have You Joined Yet? Please sign up NOW using the [link](#). **Have you joined yet?**



We honored and give thanks for our oldest mother on Mother's Day 2025, **Inez Turner** (100 years old)



Listen to Mother's Day greetings from one of St. Thomas' own, Gabrielle Faisal, Detroit, Michigan.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1G3w4JGwNA/>

**The Fourth Sunday of Easter
A Celebration of Mother's Day
May 11, 2025**







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



The ST. THOMAS SISTERHOOD GUILD collected baby items (wipes, diapers, lotions), feminine products, and other hygiene items during the season of Lent. Our generous congregation stepped up to the plate donating hundreds of items for the drive.

The Guild recently dropped the items off to Northern Children's Services and they appreciated our efforts to help the young women and babies that are located there on sight. Thanks again St. Thomas for a successful outreach project!

OUR CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS



to Patricia Griffith, Chinwe Onykere and family
on the death of their mother and aunt,
Leotta Griffith. Her service will be at St. Thomas on
Thursday, May 22, 2025. Visitation will be held at
10:00 AM, Requiem Mass at 11:00 AM.
May the soul of Leotta rest in peace and rise in glory.
Please pray for the family.

to Kathy and Ed Geiger and family on the death of her
mother and his mother-in-law, **Thelma McKenzie**.
Her funeral will be held on **Thursday, May 29, 2025**, at
Prince of Peace Temple COGIC, 669 Kensington Avenue,
Buffalo, NY 14215. The Wake will be at 10:00 AM and the
service at 11:00 AM. May the soul of Thelma rest in peace
and rise in glory. Please pray for the family.

to Tracy Covington and family on the death of his brother
Ronald Coleman. His service will be at St. Thomas on
Thursday, May 29, 2025. Visitation 9:00 AM, Requiem Mass
at 10 AM. May the soul of Ronald rest in peace and rise in
glory. Please pray for the family.

to Barry and Deborah Camp Frye and family on the death
of his mother, **Dolores T. Bliss**. May the soul of
Dolores rest in peace and rise in glory.
Please pray for the family.

JOIN OUR PARTNERS

The St. James School will celebrate its Annual Benefit
on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025,**

Simeone Foundation Automotive Museum,
6825 Norwitch Drive, Philadelphia.

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

This year's honorees are the former Presiding Bishop
Michael Curry and the former owners of
Royal Electric Supply. [Go to www.stjamesphila.org/thrive](http://www.stjamesphila.org/thrive)
for event details and registration.

Once registered, please [email](#) Phyllis Cater, if you wish to
sit at the St. Thomas table.

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.

Each week, we feature one of our out-of-town members/families. This week we give thanks for **Lee Daniels**, a member since birth, 65 years. He says: "What stands out to me most about St. Thomas is the very unique and beautiful scent of the altar ... whether it was at the Parrish street location or at our current one, it has remained the same. And there's always been a strong sense of community that St. Thomas parishioners have which is undeniable."



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

The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach & Dr. Julie Hergerather

Christopher Burks

Deadra Cannon

Nora Corbin

Dr. Ted Corbin

Paula Cropper

Lee Daniels

Stacey Davis

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

**AECST Weekend Celebration of Women
REVIVE. RESTORE. RENEW
FINDING STRENGTH IN FAITH
IMPORTANT UPDATES!**

**Saturday, May 31st
Women's Wellness Retreat
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

**LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE!
NO tickets sold at the door**

Retreat Includes: Mindfulness, Wellness, and Inspiring
Speakers, Creative Expressions Workshops,
Book Signing, Chair Massage, Closing Drum Circle,
Continental Breakfast, Delicious Lunch, and more!
You don't want to miss it!

**Sunday, June 1st
Annual Women's Day Celebration
10:00 AM**

Guest Speaker: Sheryl Lee Ralph
Tony Nominated, Emmy Award Winning
Actress and Singer

****Additional parking for both days at the Overbrook
Presbyterian Church lot – 6376 City Avenue. Enter off
Lancaster Avenue or City Avenue**

Women's Day is Sunday, June 1st. Join the Women's Day
Choir! The first rehearsal is **Tuesday, May 27th, 2025,**
at 6:30 PM in Anderson Hall.



**The St. Thomas Women's Ministry
PRESENTS**

WOMEN'S WELLNESS RETREAT

Saturday, May 31, 2025: 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

REVIVE. RESTORE. RENEW: FINDING STRENGTH IN FAITH

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

~KAREN TAYLOR BASS~

**CERTIFIED YOGA INSTRUCTOR, MEDIATION COACH,
WELLNESS TRAINER, AUTHOR**

~THE REV. CANON TONEH SMYTH~

**CANON FOR MINISTRIES OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF PA
IN CONVERSATION WITH ASHLEY WILLIAMS,
EMMY AWARD WINNING PRODUCER
FOR CBS NEWS PHILADELPHIA**

WELLNESS RETREAT EXPERIENCES INCLUDE:

**CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS WORKSHOPS | GET YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER
MINDFUL MEDITATION | CLOSING DRUM CIRCLE**

**BRING A FRIEND AND ENJOY ENGAGING WORKSHOPS,
CAPTIVATING SPEAKERS, CHAIR MASSAGE,
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, DELICIOUS LUNCH AND MUCH MORE!**

TICKETS: \$50 PER PERSON

**CHECKS PAYABLE TO: ST. THOMAS WOMEN'S MINISTRY - MEMO: WOMEN'S RETREAT
CASH APP PAYMENTS CAN BE MADE TO: \$46DBM | PLEASE INCLUDE WOMEN'S RETREAT**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

DEBORAH MATTHEWS | EMAIL: DEBMADANCO@VERIZON.NET

**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**



**The St. Thomas Women's Ministry
PRESENTS**

THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF WOMEN

Sunday, June 1, 2025: 10:00 AM

**REVIVE. RESTORE. RENEW:
FINDING
STRENGTH IN
FAITH**

GUEST SPEAKER:

SHERYL LEE RALPH

TONY NOMINATED

EMMY AWARD WINNING

ACTRESS AND SINGER

**JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION OF
WORSHIP, MUSIC, SONG, DANCE,
AND FELLOWSHIP,
FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION.**

**BRING FAMILY AND FRIENDS
TO THIS
SPIRIT-FILLED CELEBRATION
OF WOMEN!**



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

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
THE BIRTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
JUNE 8, 2025 10:00 AM



ONE LOVE!

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when God's people dwell
together in unity! Psalm 133:1

Caribbean Festival



THE PENTECOST AND CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL COMMITTEES
OF THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS HOST
THE DAY OF PENTECOST AND THE 15TH ANNUAL CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL

JOIN US FOR THE SWEET SOUNDS OF STEELPAN MUSIC,
SAMPLINGS OF DELICACIES FROM THE CARIBBEAN, AND LOTS OF FELLOWSHIP AND FUN!

CATHERINE STAFFORD & GILLIAN WILSON, CO-CHAIRS

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

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
UPCOMING SUNDAYS IN MAY/JUNE**

May 18th

The Fifth Sunday of Easter/Heroes' Sunday
Guest Speaker - Philadelphia Fire Commissioner
Jeffrey Thompson

May 25th

The Sixth Sunday of Easter
~Youth & Young Adult Sunday/Memorial Day Observance~

June 1st

The Seventh Sunday of Easter
~Annual Women's Day Celebration~
Guest speaker: **Sheryl Lee Ralph**

June 8th

Pentecost Sunday
~Annual Caribbean Festival~

June 15th

The First Sunday after Pentecost/Trinity Sunday
~Celebration of Father's Day~

June 22nd

The Second Sunday after Pentecost
~Youth & Young Adult Sunday/Church School Recognition~

June 29th

The Third Sunday after Pentecost
~Graduate Sunday~

(Please complete the [Graduate Profile Form](#) to give us all
the joyful information).

THIS WEEK AT AECST – May 19, 2025

Tuesday, May 20th

Primary Election Day

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

Pilgrims on a Journey Adult Bible Study
with Fr. Jay via Zoom – 6:00 PM

Wednesday, May 21st

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

Angels in Motion
7:00 PM in the church

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

Thursday, May 22nd

Funeral of Leotta Griffith
Viewing 10:00 AM, Requiem Mass 11:00 AM

CATTO MINISTRY CORNER UPDATE
THE PENNSYLVANIA ELECTION PRIMARY
Important Dates

May 20th – Primary Election Day

- Polls open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM for in-person voting.
- Return your Mail-in Ballot by 8:00 PM.

For more information go to www.vote.pa.gov

Ballots for Philadelphia County are in the mail! Voting on state-wide judges for Commonwealth Court and Superior Court, Democratic candidates for District Attorney as well as candidates for City Controller are happening now. WE encourage you to consult The Committee of 70's Interactive Voter Guide for information about each position on the ballot and the candidates running for that position. Take your time and read about these candidates. Be informed!! Go to: www.seventy.org

Philadelphia County has 3 ballot questions that could affect the Home Rule Charter:

- Increase Minimum Spending on Housing Trust Fund Purposes Amendment
- Ombudsperson for Office of Homeless Services Amendment
- Prison Community Oversight Board and Office Amendment

The Philadelphia People's Tribunal on Genocide & War Crimes in Gaza

The people of Philadelphia are conducting a **People's Tribunal** to hold the United States Government, the U.S. Executive Branch, the U.S. Congress, & U.S. Senator John Fetterman and other designated members of Pennsylvania's U.S. Congressional Delegation Accountable for Genocide & War Crimes in Gaza. Our very own Lisa Sharon Harper will serve as one of ten distinguished jurors.

The Tribunal will be held on **Saturday, May 31, 2025, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM**. In-person seating is now full, but you can witness history via Zoom. Simply click the link below to register to attend the event virtually. You will be able to sign on at any point during the day and view the proceedings. **Register here:** <https://tinyurl.com/PeoplesTribunalbyZoom>

The Philadelphia People's Tribunal is an organizing project of Fridays @ Fetterman's, a grassroots movement to end Israel's U.S.-funded war on Gaza/Palestine. The event is co-sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA).

HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

As we continue to celebrate Older Americans Month, The Alzheimer's Association says that one good way to keep your brain healthy is to keep learning, no matter your age. If you are an older adult in Philadelphia there are several free online courses and programs that can help you learn new things, build skills, or stay curious.

Whether you want to read new books or learn about the latest technology, these programs make it easy to learn from home!

To learn more about these FREE online courses, go to <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:5baf4401-7eec-44fd-a99f-488afb21dbb9>

SAVE THE DATE



Sisterhood Guild Purse Bingo

June 21, 2025

1:00 - 4:00 PM

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

Details To Follow



RIBBON CUTTING & BLESSING of Our New “TINY TYKES TEMPLE”

On Mother's Day our new “Tiny Tykes Temple” was officially opened. This is an area designed to welcome parents, caregivers and their children ages 3 and under. The area is a soft space that will engage our little ones who may need a break from worship.”



ALTAR FLOWERS

To order flowers, please return the form with payment to **Clare Mae Daniels** or **Alfreda Brockman**.

(Please do not place in the collection plate or give to the church office). Thank you

High Altar - \$60

Absalom Jones Altar - \$50

the Columbarium - \$40

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



DAILY RECOMMENDED BIBLE READINGS
Readings For The Fifth Sunday Of Easter
May 18, 2025

The First Lesson - [Acts 11:1-18](#)
[Psalms 148](#)

The Second Lesson - [Revelation 21:1-6](#)

The Holy Gospel - [John 13:31-35](#)

**The Holy Gospel Readings for
the week of May 19, 2025**

Monday - [Luke 7:36-50](#)

Tuesday - [Luke 8:1-15](#)

Wednesday - [Luke 8:16-25](#)

Thursday - [Luke 8:26-39](#)

Friday - [Luke 8:40-56](#)

Saturday - [Luke 9:1-17](#)



**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.

WEDNESDAYS IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY
with Fr. Daren meets in the AJ House
at 6:00 PM. Our Spring study will be a
"Journey through the Book of Revelation."

ATTENTION STUDENTS:

Applications for the 2025 Rev. Canon Thomas Wilson Stearly Logan, Sr. Memorial Prize, are now being accepted. Eligible high school seniors can review the program guidelines and priorities online.

Go to www.schuylkilldeanery.org for scholarship information.

The application deadline is June 30, 2025
(late submissions will not be reviewed).

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.

GRADUATE SUNDAY is June 29, 2025

Have you or your child graduated/moved up a grade? Please use the [Graduate Form](#) to give us all the joyful information. We would love to share the accomplishments with your church family. Information should be submitted to the church office by the **Sunday, June 22, 2025, deadline.**



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.



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.

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.

ST. THOMAS GIRLS FRIENDLY SOCIETY!

The GFS presented a "Friendly Flow" on
Saturday, May 10, 2025.

Their first-ever poetry slam. The girls began with a few
collaborative activities (murals and poetry), followed by a
phenomenal Open Mic for members.

The work produced by all ages of girls was absolutely amazing.

If you have family members or neighbors who are girls,
please encourage them to become a member of the
St. Thomas GFS.



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 - 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 - 62nd Street Nursing Home

AT HOME:

Robert Brown, Thelma Silvers, Lemont Johnson,
Patricia Ellison, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell,
Wendell Whitlock, Solomon Cropper, Verger Stephen Hannum,
Virginia DuBrey, Mary Ann Phillips, Alice Bowman Cropper

KEEP IN PRAYER:

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Lisa Woodley,
Adinah Edwards, Ann Stewart, Waltier Blocker,
Arlene Gray, Daryn Stewart, Santee Ruffin, Angela Holloway,
Mary Ann Phillips, Yvonne Sydnor, Quincina Edmonds,
Sharon Harper, Marie Golson

WE PRAY FOR

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

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

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

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

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.

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.

There are several ways to submit your offering and tithes: church service offertory, using the QR code below, [website donations](#), downloading the Givi app, U.S. mail, or hand deliver it to the Fiscal office.

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

- 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