



AECST
FOUNDED 1792

May the light
sent from God
shine in the darkness
to show us
the way of salvation.



HOPE

*Christ...
is our Hope*

THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS • FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA
THE VERY REVEREND CANON MARTINI SHAW, 17TH RECTOR
6361 LANCASTER AVENUE (ABSALOM JONES WAY) • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19151 • (215) 473-3065
WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“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 **First Sunday in Advent.**

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. The first rector of this historic parish, The Rev. Fr. Absalom Jones was also the first Black Episcopal priest in the nation.

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

Faithfully,
The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw,
17th Rector and Dean
of the Schuylkill Deanery

Please click for the [Order of Service](#)
for this Sunday's service.

From the Rector: Whoever you may be and however you may find yourself experiencing life's journey, do know that St. Thomas Church welcomes you.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE RECTOR

My dearest and faithful family members of St. Thomas, Grace and Peace to you.

We have entered the Season of Stewardship, following 2 ½ years of being in the midst of a deep Pandemic. I invite you to now join me as we Re-imagine our ministries for 2023. You are aware that many of our programs and activities have restarted. Our need for an Associate Rector for Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministries is crucial and at the top of my list of priorities.

PLEASE prayerfully consider increasing the level of your commitment this year in the offering of your [Faithful Giving Card](#). There is much being planned for 2023, and we will need your support. You may submit your card in four different ways:

- bring it to the altar Sunday morning during the offertory;
- drop it off at the parish office;
- mail it to the parish office;
- [electronically](#)

We celebrate that “We’ve come this far by faith leaning on the Lord”.

Faithfully,
Fr. Martini Shaw

A CHART TO ASSIST US WITH OUR FAITHFUL GIVING

Holy Scripture commends a minimum tithe of
(10% of our earnings)

Where are you on your spiritual journey?
Annual Faithful Giving

Yearly Income	2%	5%	10%
\$10,000.00	\$200.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
\$15,000.00	\$300.00	\$750.00	\$1,500.00
\$20,000.00	\$400.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
\$25,000.00	\$500.00	\$1,250.00	\$2,500.00
\$30,000.00	\$600.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
\$40,000.00	\$800.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
\$50,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
\$60,000.00	\$1,200.00	\$3,000.00	\$6,000.00
\$70,000.00	\$1,400.00	\$3,500.00	\$7,000.00
\$80,000.00	\$1,600.00	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00
\$90,000.00	\$1,800.00	\$4,500.00	\$9,000.00
\$100,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
\$110,000.00	\$2,200.00	\$5,500.00	\$11,000.00
\$120,000.00	\$2,400.00	\$6,000.00	\$12,000.00
\$150,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$15,000.00
\$175,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$8,750.00	\$17,500.00
\$200,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$20,000.00

2023 Faithful Giving Cards

We have kicked off our Annual Stewardship Season at St. Thomas. Enormous thanks ALL who have submitted their Faithful Giving Cards. Please add your name to the list this week by submitting your card today.

Thank you to the following persons who have submitted their 2023 Faithful Giving

The Rev. Fr. Martini Shaw
The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach
The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins

Vestry

Patricia & Walter Bantom
Ronnie H. Collins
Deadra Cannon
Albert Dandrige, III
Clare Mae Daniels
Wendella Fox & Herb Wetzel
Deborah Harrison
D. Lynn Joell
Kelvin Johnson
Pamela Johnson
Brenda Johnson-Best
Jonathan Muse
Judith Simkins-Booth
Bobby Tillman
Judy Tillman

Auxiliary Vestry
Pat Akins
Conchetta Brewer
Sharon Bullock
William Burke, Jr.
Dr. Frank Johnson
Gregory Lyles
Particia Lynch

Carmen Alexander
Constance Anderson
Michael & Dorothy Archey
Jeanne J. Arnold
John Baker
Dr. Timothy Barksdale
Jennifer Bell
Susan Ben
Deborah Billups
Waltier Blocker
Deborah Booker-Mathews
Guy Booth
Ricardo Bostic
I. Page Bowser
Theresa Bramwell
Lorita Brockington
J.R. & Alfreda Brockman

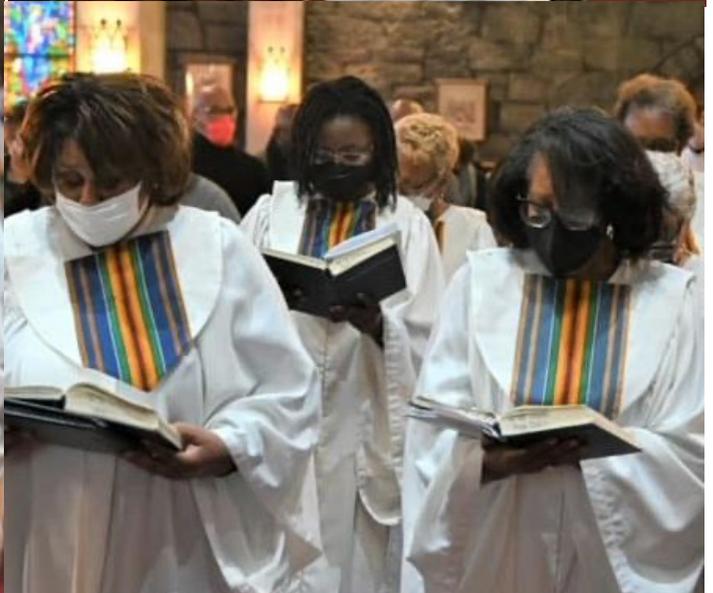
Carmen M. Brown
Marilyn Brown
Robert & Jayne Brown
William H. Brown, III
Sandra Bryant-Miller
Theodore Bythewood
Yvonne Caldwell White
Cornelia Camp
Phyllis Cater
Lynada Coleburn-Bryant
Ronald Coleman
Dr. Tracy Collins
Terry Corson
Gwendolyn Cottman
Johanna Daye
Carl & Mary Dean
Dr. Rollo Dilworth
Musu Doe
Barbara Douglass
Andrew & Lisa Renee Dumas
William & Quincina Edmonds
Lynette Edwards
Roy & Patricia Ellison
Erica Eten
Rashid & Christie Faisail
Larry & Deidre Farmby
Loretta Ferguson
Jay Fluellen
Norman & Nikki Franke
Barry & Deborah Frye
Irenda Gates
Elaine Gillison
Barbara L. Glenn
Swanie Goldsmith
Christopher Golson
Eugene & Marie Golson
Chad & Toya Gordon
Josephine Graham
Clarice Grant
Linda Greaves
Carole W. Green
Michelle Green
Thomasina Hack
Joan Hall
Stephen Hannum
William Hanscom
Sharon Harper
Eugene & Calais Harris
Katrina Harris

Roosevelt & Gail Harris
Walter & Nicole Harris
Joyce B. Harrison
Richard & Gwenda Hart
Gregory Hayes
Maurice Hayes
Rene Hayes
Quentin Heyward
Erica Hill-Yates
Angela Holloway
Merle D. Hopson
Fleta Howell
Robert Hugh
Donald & Patricia Hunt
Diana Hutchins
Kim Hyde
Diann Jacox
Simone Jeffers
Bobby Johnson
Lemont Johnson
Sheryl L. Johnson
Bettie Jones
Donna Jones
Kelly & Tracy Jones
Lelo Jones
Mary Ann Jones
Monica Jones
Richard Jones
Robert & Joyce Jones
Clarence Jones, Jr.
Tyrone R. Keller
Reginald & Sherilynn Kimble
Jordina Koiler
John Kortue
Kathleen Lacey
Paula Lamb
Gwendolyn Langford
Nancy Lee
Louise Lewis
Steven & Jameela Lewis
Karen Leys
Kimberly Lloyd
Adrienne Logan
Adjoa Love-Dorsey
James T. Lowe, Jr.
Winston Lowe
James T. Lowe, Jr.
Gregory Lyles
Thomas Lynch

Constance Lyons
Geraldine B. Martin
Katrice Mathurin
Shelia Sawyer-McCullough
Denise McDaniel - Henderson
Denise McKinney - Gibson
Robert & Dianne McNeal
Laura McNeill
Regina Meacham-Devero
Colin & Helen Mitchell
Beverly Moore
Donald & Dorothy Moore/Roberts Cynthia
Muse
Mueni Mwanzia
Vincent & Lisa Napoloen
Francina Norris
Deborah Otey
Gwendolyn Perryman
Andrea Petrocelli-Fields
Kim Phillips
Mary Ann Phillips
Stephen Pugh
Audrey Pyles
Karen Ragland
Ella Randall
Dolores Redmond
Clarence H. Rice
Caryn Rivers
Victoria Rivers
Rosalind Roberts-Small
Dr. Cassandra Ruffin
Yvonne Ruiz
Mercedes Sadler
Dr. Barbara D. Savage
Georgia Sawyer
Richard & Rebecca Scales
Deborah Seay
Leah Sheppard
Arlene Singletary

Anita Smith
Dorothy Smith
Ted Smith
Catherine Stafford
H. Lynn Starr
Irving Stevenson
Joseph Stevenson
Daryn Stewart
Shelly & Ann Stewart
Michele Sudler
Carolyn Summers
Lynda Tapper-Smith
Wanda Tarawaly
Monica Taylor
Gloria Thomas
Calvin Thompson
Teri Tillman
Harold Townsend III
Arnott Trotman
Justin & Lee Anne Trotman Louise Trotman
Inez Turner
Robin Vann-Lynch
Karen Vaughn
Clara Watson-Williams
Joe & Alexia Wells
Barbara Wiley
Michelle Wilkinson
Julia Williams
R. Seth Williams
Arleatha Wilson
Jenelle Wilson-Johnson
Lorna Wilson
Charlene Wiltshire
Diane Winkfield
Wanda Wood
Lisa Woodley
Paula Wright
Ingrid Bernadette Wyche
M. Elaine Young

**PICTURES FROM THE LAST SUNDAY SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING/CHOSEN 300 SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 20, 2022**









African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas

Women's Day Committee Fundraiser



**This holiday season give the
most useful gift of all.**

**A Women's Day inspired
Growing in God's Love
Tote Bag**

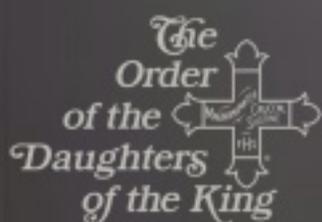
*Carry goods in
style!
Limited
Supplies
Special Price!*

*Buy 2 for the
special price of
\$25.00
\$15.00 each*



**Contact Deborah Matthews at
debmadanco@verizon.net
or any member of the Committee**

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*The St. Thomas Chapter of
The Order of the Daughters of the King
Invites All Women to join us for*

Prayer, Scripture & Reflections

*Saturday, December 3, 2022
9am -10:30am*

*Join us for this
virtual gathering as
we discern
ADVENT
in Preparation for
the COMING
of Jesus into the
world*

*'Proclaiming God's
Goodness, Grace &
Glory'*

*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who
bring news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings,
who proclaim Salvation, who say to Zion,
"Your God reigns!"
Isaiah 52:7*

*For Questions and Zoom Link – Contact:
Monica Lewis Jones | mblj03@gmail.com*

UPCOMING HAPPENINGS IN NOVEMBER / DECEMBER

- Nov. 27th** First Sunday of Advent
Youth and Young Adult Sunday
Thanksgiving Testimonies
- Dec. 4th** Annual Men's Day Celebration
- Dec. 11th** Third Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 18th** Fourth Sunday of Advent
Church School Christmas Presentation
- Dec. 24th** (7:00 PM) - Carols and Festive
Christmas Eve Service

FROM THE RECTOR - AN OFFERING OF THANKSGIVING

In thanksgiving to God for your blessings received, please prayerfully consider a sacrificial gift of thanks.

You may:

- place it in an envelope and mail to the church;
- place it in the Sunday offering plate; or
- use this [link](#) to offer it online. Please use the "Thanksgiving" option



The Sisterhood Guild is collecting men's and women's new underwear, T-shirts, socks, gloves, and hats to be given to the homeless.

The collection bin will be placed at the back of the church, by the baptismal area starting **November, 20th** through **December 24th**.

During this holiday season let's not forget those that do not have the essentials of everyday life that you and I enjoy.

Please give so that we can enrich someone else's day with this thoughtful gesture.

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE: The only doors for entry on Sunday mornings are: the Front doors of the church and the front handicap door of the church. Please refrain from using other doors at this time.

A PHILLY POPS CHRISTMAS: SPECTACULAR SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

Hamilton star **Mandy Gonzalez** returns for her fourth Christmas with the POPS, joined by Broadway sensation and small-screen heartthrob **Jordan Donica!**

Music Director and Principal Conductor **David Charles Abell** presents his usual dazzling, unique, and all-new program with over 300 performers, including The Philly POPS Festival Chorus, The Philadelphia Boys Choir, the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas Gospel Choir (For the 17th Year), and Santa!

Discount tickets are available using the code word: **chorus**
Box Office: Kimmel Center Box Office 300 South Broad
Street Philadelphia, PA 19102

Tickets: 215.893.1999
Subscriptions: 215.893.1955
Group Sales: 215.253.6980

2022 Concert Dates and Times

Friday, Dec. 2nd - 8:00 PM
Saturday, Dec. 3rd - 3:00 PM
Sunday, December 4th - 3:00 PM
Wednesday, Dec. 7th -8:00 PM
Friday, Dec. 9th -8:00 PM
Saturday, Dec. 10th -3:00 PM
Sunday, Dec. 11th - 3:00 PM
Wednesday, Dec. 14th - 8:00 PM
Friday, Dec. 16th - 3:00 PM
Saturday, Dec. 17th -3:00 PM



The African Episcopal Church of Saint Thomas

6361 Lancaster Avenue

(Absalom Jones Way)

Philadelphia, PA 19151

Ph: (215) 473-3065

Email: 1792@aecst.org ~ Website: www.aecst.org

November 10th, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, December 4th the **Men's Ministry & Fellowship** will hold our **annual Men's Day Celebration**. Men's Day is set aside as a special day for our church to reflect, acknowledge and celebrate the roles men play in our community of Faith. Men are actively engaged in virtually all ministries and areas of the church with responsibilities both large and small.

As we continue our spiritual journey through our "*New Normal*" and continue to strengthen our faith in a divided community, the task we have before us and our theme is to *Reimagine Men's Ministry*. Our continued goal is to be activate leaders in the church and the community in a quest for Social Justice and Moral Leadership and build a path for our youth. We are pleased and excited to be actively engaged in helping to make St. Thomas an exceptional place to worship, fellowship and share in the joy, comfort and salvation of our Faith.

We ask our St Thomas' Community to strongly consider taking a more active role in our church and share your **time, talents and treasure** to do the good work to which we are called. It does not necessarily call for a great deal of time and effort, but it does require a commitment to do your part. We are confident that our collective renewed commitment will realize immediate benefits and blessings, as we move forward, building on our unique and distinct legacy.

I invite you to view Men's Day Sunday Service on December 4th, and invite family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to help us celebrate our special day.

Given the current environment we are asking all church members to make a special Men's Day donation based on your comfort level of \$25.00, \$50.00, \$75.00 or \$100.00+ and identify the donation as a Men's Day Program.

All funds collected will be used to advance AECST's ministries.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful and generous consideration

Yours in faith,

Gregory Lyles, President
Men's Ministry & Fellowship
gregorylyles@hotmail.com
205-541-9776



THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS

MEN'S MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP

MEN'S DAY



CELEBRATION



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2022, 10 AM

"REIMAGINING MEN'S MINISTRY"

**R. SETH WILLIAMS AND JUSTIN TROTMAN
SPEAKERS**

*PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL MEN'S DAY DONATION
BASED ON YOUR COMFORT LEVEL OF \$25, \$50, \$75, OR \$100

THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS • FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA
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Next Sunday, December 4th, is Men's Day.
Our speakers will be R. Seth Williams and Justin Trotman.
Click on this [link](#) to donate to Men's Day.



CALLING ALL MEN OF ST. THOMAS!!!!
Annual Men's Day Celebration is
Sunday, **December 4, 2022 at 10:00 AM.**
Rehearsal for the Men's Day Chorus
will be on Thursday,
December 1st at 7:00 PM.



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The wearing of masks will remain **MANDATORY** while at St. Thomas until further notice. St. Thomas will follow the recommended guidelines of the CDC, the City of Philadelphia, and the Diocese of PA. Let us love our neighbor and worship safely!

Masks are available for all in attendance if needed. Hand sanitizer is also available. The ventilation system has been changed to let in outside air. We request that all in attendance be **VACCINATED**. Unvaccinated individuals are requested to watch the Service via [Live Stream](#).

A FEW QUOTES AND PARAPHRASES ON “VIRTUAL WORSHIP”

“Virtual and live stream worship have been, and will continue to be, a blessing to the church. However, by no means can it substitute coming and physically receiving the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist (Communion).”

(From Fr. Martini Shaw’s Homily on Jan. 16, 2022).

“Online Masses and Spiritual Communion do not represent the church. The faithful not gathered to receive the Sacraments is not the church. Jesus’ disciples always lived their relationship with the Lord in Community. They gathered, around the sacrament, at the same table, as a sign of community”. (Pope Francis’ message)

“If you are unable to receive the Sacrament, by reasons of extreme sickness or physical disability; or when being present at a celebration is absolutely impossible, it is possible to open yourself to God’s grace and blessing”. (Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer).

A ST. THOMAS HEALTH MINISTRY NOTE

STAY UP TO DATE with vaccinating against COVID-19 and the Flu. The new COVID-19 (Bivalent) booster is now available for anyone 12 and over.

For guidelines on when to get your booster go to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) or consult with your doctor's office. Both the COVID-19 booster and the Flu vaccine are available at local pharmacies (RiteAid, CVS and Walgreens). Go on their website to schedule an appointment.



YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

The Rector has restarted an official Search Process for the Calling of an Associate to the Rector for Youth Ministries and Parish Life.

CHURCH SCHOOL

is held in the undercroft at **10:00 AM** for Youth ages 4 through High School. The theme for this church school year is “ The Lord’s Prayer”.

Join us as we RE-Imagine our Church School Adventures with Prayer, Fellowship, Programs, and Fun! Register in person or contact [Dottie Archey](#) for more information or 215 837-6941.

SCOUT TROOP #133 -

Our Cub Scout Program is open to boys grades 1-5. The Cub program meets at 2:00 PM on Saturdays.

The Scout Program is open to children aged 11-17 years old. The Scout Program will meet at 3:00 PM on Saturdays according to the schedule.

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



SHEPHERDS MINISTRY

Re-imagined

ATTENTION: AECST MEN, WOMEN, COUPLES

This is an opportunity to share your caring and kindness with our AECST flock!



THE MINISTRY

- **Immediate Goal:** Shepherd our sick and shut-in parishioners
- **Primary/Ultimate Goal:** Shepherd ALL AECST parishioners
- **Number of Households:** No more than 4 sheep households per shepherd

SHEPHERDS' ROLE

- Set your own schedule to regularly contact sheep via phone or other media
- *Attend Zoom meetings with fellow shepherds (no in-person meetings)*

Please consider joining the 10 Shepherds who have volunteered.

For more information, please contact Charlene M. Wiltshire:
cwiltshi@comcast.net



Note: Vestry members will continue to shepherd all new members until their one-year anniversary.

Join the Girls Friendly Society! Meetings are from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM. All girls aged 3 - 30 are welcome. Girls participate in: Service Projects, Girl Talks, Arts & Crafts, World Day of Prayer, Founder's Day, Mission Day and GFS Day along with trips the Theater, Museums, Ice Skating, Mini Golf, Trips to the Pumpkin Patch and Holiday House in Cape, May, NJ. If you would like to volunteer as a leader or sponsor, please contact our Branch Advisor, [Nikkol Simms](mailto:njsimms@verizon.net)



Nikkol Simms
Branch Advisor
njsimms@verizon.net

For more info:
<http://gfsus.org/>

Find us on Facebook!
GFS PA African
Episcopal Church of St.
Thomas

GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY

**Meetings
begin
Oct. 1, 2022
11am-1pm**

GFS is ready to begin a new year of worship, study, play and service! We are excited to recharge our continuous mission of uplifting our young ladies and preparing them for today's society. We are also preparing for this year's theme to Love, Serve, and Grow and remembering our 75 years of legacy at St. Thomas.

Membership Ages:
Teddy Bears: 3-5 yo.
Junior Members: 5-13 yo.
Senior Members: 14-21 yo.
Ambassadors: 18-30 yo.

Girls participate in:
Service Projects
Girl Talks
Arts & Crafts
World Day of Prayer
Founder's Day
Mission Day
GFS Day

Past Recreational Opportunities:
White water rafting
Theaters
Museums
Ice Skating
Segway/Ziplining
Mini Golf
Holiday House in Cape May, NJ

GFS World Council South Africa 2023

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 who may be parked in a nearby remote parking lot. Please contact Gladyce in the office if you are interested.

as **Acolytes** to serve on the altar. Please contact Gladyce in the office 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](#).



Below you will find the next **Letter to Stop Gun Violence**. It is to State Senators and is about reporting lost and stolen guns. This issue is timely because the court struck down a city lost and stolen gun ordinance this year due to the state Uniform Firearms Act that keeps local cities from enacting firearm legislation. If you need to look up your senator please use the [link](#).

Date _____

State Senator _____

Dear _____,

I am a resident of your district and am writing to you to request that you do everything in your power to pass lost and stolen gun reporting legislation. In Pennsylvania, people can own guns and fail to report them lost or stolen.

As a Christian and a member of the Schuylkill Deanery of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, a group of Episcopal churches in West Philadelphia, this issue is a matter of faith for me, of loving my neighbor as myself. West Philly is facing an epidemic of gun violence and hope you can tell the PA Senate this is a matter of life and death in our neighborhoods.

According to the Philadelphia Inquirer in Oct. 2021, "Reports of stolen guns reached a new peak this year, with 1,388 to date, police records show. That is 11% higher than last year, 38% higher than in 2019, and the highest tally since 2011, the first year figures were available." In 2021, car thefts including theft of a firearm were up 37%. Most guns are stolen from individuals and not gun shops or other businesses and thus legally can go unreported, which leads the Philadelphia Police Department to believe the number of stolen guns actually is much higher. Unreported stolen guns often enter the underground gun market without a trace and no chance of recovery by police.

Mandatory reporting of stolen firearms, as in the Philadelphia's lost and stolen gun ordinance struck down in Feb. 2022, help law enforcement police this underground market. They are especially effective in exposing straw purchases, where someone legally entitled to buy guns purchases them for someone unable to pass standard checks (and then frequently fraudulently claims the gun was stolen from them if it turns up at a crime scene).

Daniel Semenza, a Rutgers-Camden University criminal justice professor, coauthored a study this year that examined how the availability of guns impacted the homicide rates in 226 cities for years 2017 to 2019. The study found that greater availability of stolen firearms in U.S. cities is linked to higher firearm homicide rates.

The thing that really correlates with gun homicide rates is the access to stolen guns," he said. "It trumps any kind of effect that the number of firearm dealers and general legal access has in a city, and it's particularly important in cities that have poorer socioeconomic status."

In West Philly and surrounding neighborhoods, we lose loved ones and neighbors to illegal guns flooding our city every month. I believe passage of a bill to enforce the reporting of lost and stolen guns is part of what will help solve this terrible, unacceptable situation.

When earlier this year Judge Leadbetter (who ran as a Republican) struck down the Philadelphia lost and stolen gun ordinance, she urged the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to reconsider that 1996 legal standard known as the state Uniform Firearms Act and to allow local restrictions "narrowly tailored to local necessities." She added that it violates the fundamental right to life and liberty when children can't walk on a street near their homes without the risk of being shot. "It is neither just to impose unnecessarily harsh limits in communities where they are not required nor consistent with simple humanity to deny basic safety regulations to citizens who desperately need them,"

Help us protect our children and maintain our strong and vital neighborhoods by strongly urging passage of a lost and stolen firearms bill in Pennsylvania.

**Readings from the First Sunday of Advent
November 27, 2022**

The First Lesson: [Isaiah 2:1-5](#)
[Psalm 122](#)

The Second Lesson: [Romans 13:11-14](#)

The Holy Gospel: [Matthew 24:36-44](#)

**The Holy Gospel Readings for the
Week of November 28, 2022**

Monday - [Matthew 21:1-11](#)

Tuesday - [Matthew 21:12-22](#)

Wednesday - [Matthew 21:23-32](#)

Thursday - [Matthew 21:33-46](#)

Friday - [Matthew 22:1-14](#)

Saturday - [Matthew 22:15-22](#)

**Readings for the Second Sunday of Advent
December 4, 2022**

The First Lesson: [Isaiah 11:1-10](#)
[Psalm 72:1-7,18-19](#)

The Second Lesson: [Romans 15:4-13](#)

The Holy Gospel: [Matthew 3:1-12](#)

**The Holy Gospel Readings for the
Week of December 5, 2022**

Monday - [Matthew 22:23-33](#)

Tuesday - [Matthew 22:34-46](#)

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

Thursday - [Matthew 23:13-26](#)

Friday - [Matthew 23:27-39](#)

Saturday - [Matthew 24:1-14](#)

Readings for the Third Sunday of Advent December 11, 2022

The First Lesson: [Isaiah 35:1-10](#)

[Psalm 146:4-9](#)

The Second Lesson: [James 5:7-10](#)

The Holy Gospel: [Matthew 11:2-11](#)

The Holy Gospel Readings for the Week of December 12, 2022

Monday - [Matthew 24:15-31](#)

Tuesday - [Matthew 24:32-44](#)

Wednesday - [Matthew 24:45-51](#)

Thursday - [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

Friday - [Matthew 25:14-30](#)

Saturday - [Matthew 25:31-46](#)

AECST LIVE STREAM

Please join us for Worship on the St. Thomas [website](#), the [Live Service](#), or on our [Facebook](#) page or [youtube](#) every Sunday morning at 10 am. You can also watch [Past Services](#) and [Highlights](#) from past services.

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.

If interested, please contact Gladyce in the Parish Office ASAP to get details on upcoming scheduled rehearsals.

POSITION OPENING - ST. THOMAS ASSISTANT SEXTON

Part-time position is open for an Assistant Sexton. Hours are typically some weekday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays. Presently, reduced hours due to pandemic restrictions. Hours will increase as in-person activities increase. For more information, interested persons should contact:

[**Deborah Harrison.**](#)

ATTENTION:

We are so blessed to be stewards of a beautiful property that God has entrusted to our care. Persons are needed to serve on our Property Committee. If interested, please speak with [**Deborah Harrison**](#) or call the Parish Office to express your interest.

SPEARHEAD NEWSLETTER EMAILS

If you are not receiving the Spearhead emails, please use the [Newsletter](#) sign up link. Your information will NEVER be shared or sold and you can **UNsubscribe** at anytime by following the instructions provided at the bottom of every email message.

If you are a member of St. Thomas and wish to participate in a **monthly Vestry meeting** via Zoom, you must notify the Vestry Clerk. Send an email to vestryclerk@aecst.org at least two days prior to the meeting. You will then receive the link needed to join the meeting. Vestry meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

ACOLYTES NEEDED

We are in need of Acolytes (Youth and Adults). Please consider serving God in this rewarding ministry. If interested, please contact the Rector ASAP.

ASSOCIATE RECTOR SEARCH

The Rector has restarted an official Search Process for the Calling of an Associate to the Rector for Youth Ministries and Parish Life.



AECST BIBLE STUDY WITH FR. JAY via Zoom Tuesdays at 7:00 PM.

If you are interested in joining a lively, interactive Bible Study Group, contact Fr. Jay via email at:

associatepriest@aecst.org to be included on our membership list serve. You will receive the Zoom link and our weekly lesson plan to prepare, in advance, for the week's meeting.

ALTAR FLOWERS

As we enter the Season of Advent, flowers are only placed on the Altar for Rose **Sunday, December 11, 2022**. Please see the form below for Poinsettia information.

To order flowers for **Rose Sunday**, please return the form with payment to:

Clare Mae Daniels, Alfreda Brockman (Please do not place in the collection plate or give to the church office. Thank you)

I would like to place flowers on the High Altar - \$60.00.

I would like to place flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$50.00

I would like to place flowers on the Columbarium- \$40.00

(Please PRINT)

a) In Memory of _____

b) In Thanksgiving for _____

Given by _____ Envelope # _____ Amount _____.

Your gift of Christmas poinsettias and altar arrangements will help beautify the church for the holidays, and will be a beautiful tribute to your loved ones, or a token of Thanksgiving for a blessing received. Please fill out (**Print**) the form below and return to Alfreda Brockman or Clara Mae Daniels at 6361 Lancaster Avenue, Phila., PA 19151

Please do not place in the collection plate. DEADLINE : TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2022

Christmas Flower Donations (Please Print All Names)

- I would like to place flowers on the High Altar - @125.00
- I would like to place flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - @ 85.00
- I would like to place flowers on the Columbarium - @ 45.00

A) In memory of

B) In Thanksgiving for

Given by _____

Envelope # _____ Amount \$ _____

Poinsettia and Christmas Tree Adoption

- I would like to purchase a **Poinsettia @ \$25.00 (5 names per plant)**
- I would like to adopt a **Christmas Tree @\$35.00 per tree.**

Please PRINT names below:

Please circle one: In memory of / In Thanksgiving for

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Given by _____

Envelope # _____ Amount \$ _____

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS WHO ARE:

IN REHAB: Linda Holmes; Shirley Winkfield Bryn Mawr Village.

IN THE HOSPITAL:

Alletta Parris-Olday - Nazareth Hospital.

RECOVERING AT HOME:

Rosalind Rodriquez, Joan Hall, Charles Fleming,
Harold Yates, Leatrice Snowden, William Smalls, Dorothy Smith.

KEEP IN PRAYER:

Louise Lewis, Adinah Edwards, Robert Brown, Dr.
Thomas Snowden, Shirley Caldwell, Stephanie Williamson,
Francina Norris, Leotta Griffith, Ridart "Butch" Farmer, Karen
Ragland, Winston Lowe, Georgia Sawyer, Kenneth Dow,
Edita Gauthney, Justin Trotman, Gwendolyn Langford,
Alice Bowman-Cropper, Daryn Stewart, Eleanor Chestnut.

WE PRAY FOR

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

ST. THOMAS COLUMBARIUM INURNMENT

If you have a loved one who has passed away in the last
year and would like to schedule a St. Thomas columbarium
inurnment, please contact the church office
at 215-473-3065.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

If you have moved and have not sent your new address to the church office at 215-473-3065 or email, please do so ASAP. The church has received many returned mailings because of bad addresses. We would appreciate your new address, phone number, and email address. Thanks so much for your help with this.

If you have decided to use the **Givi App** or [Online Giving Donations](#), please email your name and envelope number. Thank you very much. -Judy Tillman

CAPITAL BUILDING IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN

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

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, 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 click the links below for the type of device you own to 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 Parish Office during regular business hours. 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.
- 6) **Pledge Cards:** Pledge cards can now be sent for 2023. Please send them via the US mail to the church or electronically by clicking this link [Click>](#) or send an email to our [Fiscal Administrator](#). Thank you so much and thank you to all who have sent them in.

MINISTRY STAFF

Bishop	The Rt. Rev. Daniel G P Gutierrez	
Rector	The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw	rector@aecst.org
Assistant to the Rector		
Associate Priest	The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins	associatepriest@aecst.org
Associate Minister	The Rev. Dr. Thomas G Snowden	dravidian@comcast.net
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	Ronald Jones	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
Baptism Co-Chairs	Gail H Harris	thegail@hotmail.com
	Patricia Walker-Ellison	p.walker.ellison@gmail.com
Church School Superintendent	Dottie Archey	churchschool@aecst.org
Ed Muse Photography Ministry	William Edmonds	edmon57@comcast.net
Fiscal Assistant to the Rector	Deborah Camp - Frye	1792@aecst.org
Girls Friendly Society	Nikkol Simms	njsimms@verizon.net
Jazz Ensemble Director	Joe Stevenson	jobopss@aol.com
Live Stream Ministry	Yaseen Farooq	livevideo@aecst.org
	Terri Tillman	
Memorial Flowers	Alfreda Brockman	fredabee@verizon.net
	Clare Mae Daniels	happycmd05@aol.com
Parish Vergers	Stephen Hannum	1792@aecst.org
	Karen Ragland	Kdrags415@gmail.com
	Lisa Steward-New	ljs210@msn.com
Parish Webmaster	Gail H Harris	webmanager@aecst.org
Property Chair	Deborah Harrison	dneharrison04@gmail.com
Special Advisor to the Rector	Richard Jones	r724jones1@gmail.com
Scout Pack 133	Howard Chapman	howchapman@gmail.com
	Arlene Gray	bsapack0133@gmail.com
Transportation Ministry	J. Reggie Kimble	tkglimo@aol.com
Videography Ministry	Que ntin Heyward	recordedvideo@aecst.org
William Burke Ushers Ministry	Arlene Singletary	leaniepo@verizon.net

THE VESTRY

Rector's Warden - Deadra Cannon
Accounting Warden - Kelvin Johnson
Clerk of the Vestry - Clare Mae Daniels
Treasurer - Albert S. Dandridge, III Esq.

Patricia Bantom
Brenda Johnson Best
Judith Simkins Booth
Ronnie Collins
Wendella Fox, Esq.
Deborah Harrison
D. Lynn Joell
Jonathan Muse
Darryl (Bobby) Tillman
Judith Tillman

THE AUXILIARY VESTRY

Patricia Akins
Conchetta Brewer
Sharon Bullock
Gregory Lyles
Patricia Lynch

THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINT THOMAS is a Christ-centered community that welcomes all people. This community embraces and executes the core values of our founder, the Reverend Absalom Jones: leadership, morality, spirituality, equal rights, education, liberty, charity, justice, humanitarianism, self-determination, self-respect, and freedom.

St. Thomas is an open, Christ-centered community of faith in which the Gospel is re-imaged, taught, lived and spread.