

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 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 28, 2025**

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

6361 Lancaster Avenue (Absalom Jones Way)
Philadelphia, PA, 19151
(215) 473-3065
www.aecst.org

The Very Reverend Canon Martini Shaw
The 17th Rector

The Reverend Fr. Daren E. Evans
Associate to the Rector

The Reverend Fr. Gerald Collins
Associate Priest



Scan the QR code or text "AECST" to 73256 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
The First Sunday after Christmas,

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. 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 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. Again, welcome!

Wishing you a very blessed twelve days of Christmas.

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

THE RECTOR IS AWAY ON HOLIDAY.

Fr. Shaw, Fr. Daren, and Fr. Jay would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Blessed New Year. They would also like to thank everyone who expressed holiday greetings, calls, texts, and gifts. They are deeply grateful and thankful.

FROM THE RECTOR:

Please help us end the year without a deficit by completing your 2025 financial pledge by December 31, 2025.

If you are unsure about your balance, please contact Jeannette in the fiscal office at 215-471-3065 or fiscal@aecst.org as soon as possible. Enormous thanks for your continued support and gracious contributions.



FAITHFUL GRATITUDE

Please use this link to express and pledge your **Faithful Gratitude** to God for 2026.

<https://forms.gle/yj3eujEaSZ58VMgK9>

**STEWARDSHIP THEME:
FAITHFUL GRATITUDE DURING 2026**
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	\$1,200.00	\$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

2026 FAITHFUL GIVING CARDS

We have kicked off our Annual Stewardship Season at St. Thomas. Enormous thanks to 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 2026 Faithful Giving Cards.**

CLERGY

The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw
The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans
The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach
The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins
The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney

VESTRY

Dr. Tim Barksdale
Deadra Cannon
Albert Dandridge, III
Clare Mae Daniels
Deborah Camp Frye
Eugene Golson & Marie Golson
Kelvin & Pam Johnson
Monica Lewis Jones
Richard Jones
Patricia Lynch
Deborah Matthews
Judith Simkins-Booth

AUXILIARY VESTRY

Conchetta Brewer
Sharon Bullock
Ronnie Collins
Elaine Gillison
Dr. Monica Johnson Taylor
Cynthia Muse
Bobby & Judith Tillman

MEMBERS

Patricia Akins
Carmen Alexander
Constance Anderson
Dorothy Archey
Jeanne Arnold
Natasha Bagwell
Brenda Battle
Jennifer Bell
Susan Ben
Deborah Billups
Waltier Blocker
Dr. Naomi Booker
Guy Booth
Ricardo Bostic
Alice Bowman-Copper
I. Page Bowser
Michelanne Bradwell
Theresa Bramwell
Lorita Brockington
J.R. & Alfreda Brockman
Marilyn Brown
Julia Bryant
Kenneth Bundy
Cornelia Camp
Charlotte Card
Phyllis Cater
Eleanor Chestnut
Suzanne Clossen
Lynada Coleburn-Bryant
Terry Corson
Gwendolyn Cottman
Zenobia Dancy
Karen Davis
Johanna Daye
Carl Dean
Andrew & Lisa Renee Dumas
William & Quincina Edmonds
Erika Etlen
Rashid &Christie Faisal
Larry & Diedre Farmbry
Loretta Ferguson
Marceline Fitzwilliam
Jay Fluellen
Marcia Forde
Stephen & Donna Foster
Wendella Fox & Herb Wetzel
Norman & Nikki Franke
Barry Frye
Irenda Gates
Edward & Kathryn Geiger
Barbara Glenn
Swanie Goldsmith
Josephine Graham
Clarice Grant
Arlene Gray
Linda Greaves
Michele Green
Presko (PJ) Grier
Dr. Derek Griffith
Richard & Gwenda Hart
Thomasina Hack
Joan Hall
Lisa Harper
Sharon Harper
Katrina Harris
Walter & Nicole Harris
Roosevelt, Sr. & Gail Harris
Thomas & Lynn Harris
Deborah Harison
Gregory Hayes
Maurice Hayes

Rene' Hayes
Denise Henderson
Julie Hergenrathar
Quentin Heyward
Erica Hill-Yates
Synethia Hill
Merle Hopson
Fleta Howell
Diana Hutchins
Robert Hugh
Donald & Patricia Hunt
Kim Hyde
Yvonne Hyde-Carter
Diann Jacox
Simone Jeffers
Evelyn Johns
Bobby Johnson
Dr. Frank Johnson
Vernetta Johnston
Bettie Jones
Clarence Jones
Donna Jones
Eric Jones
Dr. Sheila Jones-Smith
Tyrone Keller
Jurdina Koilor
Paula Lamb
Nancy Lee
Steven & Jamella Lewis
Karen Leys
Michele Lofton
Adrienne Logan
Alonda Lord
C. Adjoa Love-Dorsey
James Lowe
Winston Lowe
Kimberly Lloyd
Gregory Lyles
Thomas Lynch, IV
Constance Lyons
Stephen & Michelle Mack
Stacey McCoy-Ndiaye
Sheila Sawyer McCullough
Denise McKinney-Gibson
Michael McIntosh
Laura McNeil
Elsie Moto
Velma Morris-Nembhard
Mueni Beatrice Mwanzia
Vincent & Lisa Napoleon
Mercy Natt
Ingrid Nembhard
Chinwe Onyekere
Debbie Otey
Carolyn Paige
Samuel & Deidre Patterson
Zennetta Peters
Eugene & Karina Phillips
Kim Phillips
Mary Ann Phillips
Stephen Pugh
Wendy Puryear
Karem Ragin
Karen Ragland
Cynthia Ray
Dolores Redmond
Clarence Rice
Caryn Rivers
Victoria Rivers
Cassandra Ruffin
Yvonne Ruiz
Sandra Rushin

Barbara Savage	Louise Trotman
Georgia Sawyer	Howard Tucker
Richard & Rebecca Scales	Joe Tucker & Alycia Horn
Leah Sheppard	Robin Vann-Lynch
Kayma Sherman-Knuckles	Karen Vaughn
Arlene Singletary	Barbara Wiley
Anita Smith	Michele Wilkinson
Catherine Stafford	R. Seth Williams
H. Lynn Starr	Scott & Ashley Williams
Daryn Stewart	Gillian Wilson
Shelly & Ann Stewart	Jenelle Wilson Johnson
Arthur & Michele Sudler	Laura Wilson
Carolyn Summers	Lorna Wilson
Lynda Tapper Smith	Carole Williams Green
Kellen & Sarah Shaw-Thomas	Charlene Wiltshire
Calvin Thompson	Diane Winkfield
Jillian Theorgood	Edgar Wise
Gloria Thomas	Daphnie Wright-Gilstrap
Teri Tillman	Khalita Wright
Harold Townsend	Paula Wright
Carole Townsend Harrell	Wanda Wood
Arnott Trotman	Alice Young
Justin & Lee Anne Trotman	M. Elaine Young

PREPARING FOR THE CHRIST-MASS

December 24, 2025

Altar Guild preparing the altar for the Holy Eucharist; Angels in Motion Dance Ministry, preparing to minister; Clergy and acolytes preparing to serve; Pentecost Committee preparing for apple cider distribution following Mass.



NOTE TO ALL GUILDS/ORGANIZATIONS/MINISTRIES:

The 2026 Parish Meeting is on
Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

Your one-page year end report, sent in Word format,
is due to Gladycce in the church office by
Friday, February 6, 2026.



We offer our condolences to the family of Elaine Curry, who passed away on December 15th. Her memorial service will be held at **St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 6344 N. Broad Street, on December 30th at 10:00 AM.** May the soul of Elaine rest in peace and rise in glory. Please pray for the family.

Are you receiving the weekly electronic Spearhead? If not, please email Gladycce DuBrey at 1792@aecst.org with your mobile number and email address.

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2025





More pictures may be found on [Facebook](#).
Photo credit: William Edmonds and Stephen Pugh
(St. Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry)



THANK YOU!!! St. Thomas and the Absalom Jones House have been festively decorated by the following: Cathy Stafford and the Pentecost Committee for decorating the beautiful Christmas Tree in the Absalom Jones House and the hot apple cider after Christmas Eve Service; Suzanne Clossen and her helpers for decorating the Christmas Trees in the church; the Gardeners for the beautiful flowers outside the church and wreaths on the doors; the Altar Guild, and the Young Adults for decorating the church. We would also like to thank Vincent Tulli for donating the Christmas Trees for the church.

THANK YOU!!! The Church School Superintendent, staff and children would like to say “Thank You” to everyone who contributed to the Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 21, 2025.

For parents and guardians who rehearsed at home and brought students to rehearsals, to those who participated in the play and dance, and those who helped behind the scenes, you are APPRECIATED!!

COMING SOON!
Our new Parish Pictorial Directory.
Did you take your photo?
Enormous thanks to the hardworking committee.



A REQUEST FROM THE RECTOR

Our amazing **Livestream Ministry** continues to be an enormous blessing to many of us who are not able to physically be present for worship on any given Sunday, but able to tune in. We are very grateful to those who serve as operators in this ministry each week.

Our live stream equipment is in desperate need of upgrading. We are establishing a fund to support this need.

Please prayerfully [**donate**](#) to this initiative.
Please indicate the purpose of your contribution.
Enormous thanks in advance.

OUR LIVESTREAM MINISTRY NEEDS YOU!

Each week, many people who are away are able to worship with us via our amazing Livestream. Please prayerfully consider serving in this ministry. If interested, please communicate with the rector.

ATTENTION: ALL GROUPS/MINISTRIES/ ORGANIZATIONS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Announcements and flyers for the Sunday Bulletin and digital Spearhead **should be received on Monday, by 12:00 Noon**. If you have any questions, please contact Gladysce in the church office, 215-473-3065.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER FROM THE STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE COMMITTEES:

If you want credit for the year, your contributions should be received by **December 31, 2025**. If you are unsure about your balance, please contact Jeannette in the fiscal office at 215-471-3065 or fiscal@aecst.org as soon as possible.

Enormous thanks for your continued support and gracious contributions.

ALL GROUPS, MINISTRIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

Please submit a “Request for Meeting Space” form to the office for all meetings in the Church, Anderson Hall, Absalom Jones House, parking lot and/or the Great Lawn two weeks prior to the event. Please refrain from approaching the sextons. The church office maintains the calendar for all events. If you have any questions or need a form, please contact the church office at 215-473-3065 or email 1792@aecst.org.

A CALL TO LEADERSHIP

Share your leadership ability.

Nominations for Vestry, Auxiliary Vestry Positions, Delegates to the Schuylkill Deanery, Delegates, and an alternate delegate to the 2025 Diocesan Convention will be accepted from December 7, 2025, through January 11, 2026. Election information can be found at the links below, in the bulletin, and on the table at the rear of the church.

A Call to Lead **Candidate Profile**

AECST LIVE STREAM

Please join us for worship on the St. Thomas **website**, **the Live Stream Service**, on our **Facebook** page or **Youtube** every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM. You can also watch **Past Services**.

UPCOMING SUNDAYS

January 4th

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

First Sunday of the new year - Congregational Toast - 2026

“America 250” Kick-Off

January 11th

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY / THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Congregation blessed with Holy Water from the Jordan River

January 18th

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Observance and Celebration of Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.

Guest Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Dawrell Rich, Chaplain,
Church Farm School

Guest Choir: Church Farm School

January 25th

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

GFS Induction Sunday

Welcome / Fellowship - new members of 2025
Youth and Young Adults

THIS WEEK AT AECST

Tuesday, December 30th

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

Wednesday, December 31st

Administrative Offices closed at Noon

Thursday, January 1st

New Year's Day

Church and Administrative Offices Closed

Friday, January 2nd

Church and Administrative Offices Closed

Saturday, January 3rd

Church open 9:00 AM - Noon



THE LOCKE ALLIANCE
WHERE THE ARTS, EDUCATION, AND ENRICHMENT CONVERGE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
BOYS' LATIN OF PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

PRESENTS:

VOCAL MASTERCLASS

FEATURING CLASSICAL AND MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMANCES
FROM HIGH SCHOOL AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

JANUARY 14 & 15, 2026
1-3PM

AECST

ANDERSON HALL VISITING CLINICIAN

6361 LANCASTER AVE

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19151

Q&A SESSION TO FOLLOW

FREE ADMISSION



SCAN CODE TO RSVP



DR. KIMBERLEY DAVIS

CONFIRMATION / REAFFIRMATION / RECEPTION CLASSES

have started.

The schedule for in-person and Zoom
classes is as follows:

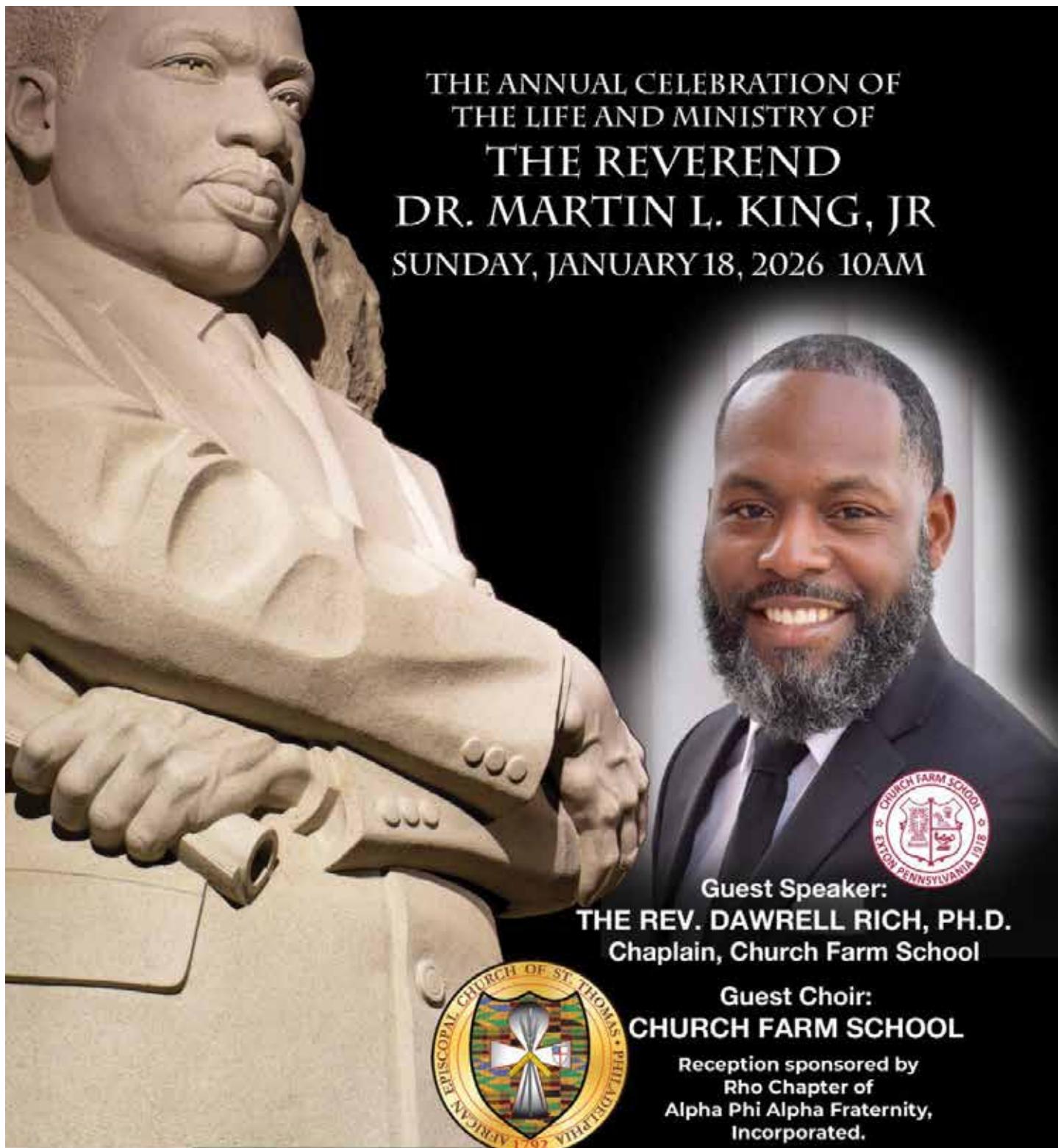
In Person	By Zoom
Sunday, 11/02/2025	Monday, 11/17/2025
Sunday, 12/07/2025	Monday, 12/02/2025
Sunday, 01/04/2026	Monday, 01/19/2026
Sunday, 02/01/2026	Monday, 02/16/2026
Sunday, 03/01/2026	Monday, 03/16/2026
Sunday, 04/05/2026	Monday, 04/20/2026
Sunday, 05/03/2026	Monday, 05/18/2026

Sunday 6/7/2026 – Confirmation Day!

Please connect with Fr. Daren, 215-473-3065 or email,
associaterector@aecst.org if you have not received any
information or have questions, ASAP.

SAVE THE DATE

THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF
THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF
THE REVEREND
DR. MARTIN L. KING, JR
SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2026 10AM



Guest Speaker:
THE REV. DAWRELL RICH, PH.D.
Chaplain, Church Farm School

Guest Choir:
CHURCH FARM SCHOOL

Reception sponsored by
Rho Chapter of
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity,
Incorporated.



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

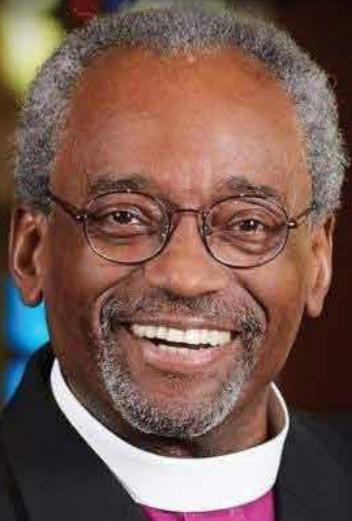




Celebrating

THE FEAST OF ABSALOM JONES

Sunday, February 15, 2026, 4:00 PM



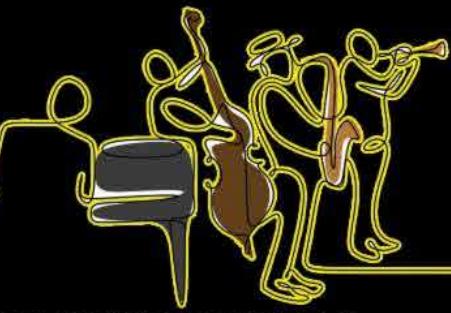
PARTICIPATING IN THE CELEBRATION:

Christ Church, Philadelphia
St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia
Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, Philadelphia
Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge

Guest Preacher
THE RIGHT REVEREND
MICHAEL BRUCE CURRY
Former Presiding Bishop and Primate
(The Episcopal Church)



Mardi Gras
JAZZ MASS



THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS
FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA | FOUNDED 1792



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

REALM CONVERSION COMPLETE

As a reminder St Thomas went through a system conversion this year. REALM is an updated solution for the management of our ministries, stewardship, media, communications, and church events calendar. Our staff will use REALM to perform administrative and accounting tasks.

REALM will help us reach you to keep you informed. Ministry and group leaders will be able to communicate with their members outside of their meeting times and stay in touch.

Online Giving

The previous system GIVI is no longer available for online giving. REALM Connect has taken it's place. REALM is not just a tool for electronic giving; it affords one the opportunity to access their giving records and offer congregants the ability to interact and communicate directly with each other. If you give directly via the church website, or by using the QR code, you will see a new webpage link on the website and a corresponding QR code that will take you to that new webpage.

Please note that we offer online electronic giving which provides an easy, secure method to contribute weekly, monthly, yearly or simply whenever you desire. Donations can be made at <https://onrealm.org/AfricanEpiscopal/give/now> or through the Realm App. (If you don't already use the Realm app and don't have an account, it's safe and easy to obtain. Download the Realm app (which is named REALM CONNECT) in the app store.

Online and text contributions are linked to your profile based on the **email address and cell phone number** you have provided. Your **envelope number** serves as an additional layer of security, especially in cases where members may have similar names (in the near future those persons without an envelope number will be issued one). We want to make sure contributions are properly credited to your account.

AECST members have begun and will continue to receive email invitations from the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas (notifications@onrealmmail.org) titled, "African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas: Join our online community!", which will enable you to register on the site and view many of the available functions. Please request a **Membership Information Form** from the Stewardship Ministry (Stewardship@aecst.org) and one will be sent to you. Please complete and return the form so that your profile can be updated accordingly. Once the form is returned corrections can be made and you will be sent a Realm invite.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS:

In order for your contributions in REALM Connect to be successful, **YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND CELL PHONE NUMBER MUST MATCH EXACTLY WITH REALM RECORDS.** Envelope numbers serve as an additional layer of security, especially in cases where members may have similar names (soon those people without an envelope number will be issued one).

We want to make sure contributions are properly credited to your account.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Thomas.



OUR DEDICATED OUT-OF-TOWN 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 - Florida

The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach & Dr. Julie Hergerather - Bloomsburg, PA

Christopher Burks - Rhode Island/New York

Deadra Cannon - Georgia

Nora Corbin - Illinois

Dr. Ted Corbin - Illinois

Paula Cropper - North Carolina

Lee Daniels - New York

Stacey Davis - New York

Andrew and Lisa Renee Dumas - Portugal

Rashid, Christie, and Gabrielle Faisal - Michigan

The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney - Texas

Bradley Hammond - Mississippi

Richard & Gwenda Hart - South Carolina

Yvonne Hyde-Carter - New York

Dr. Calvin Johnson - Florida

Bettie Jones - North Carolina

Rae Scott Jones - Florida

Richard Jones, Jr. - Virginia

Dr. Sheila Jones-Smith - South Carolina

Steven & Jameela Lewis - Colorado

Gregory Lyles - Switzerland

Nohjay Nimpson - Texas

Zennetta Peters - North Carolina

Dr. John Rich - Illinois

Richard & Rebecca Scales - Florida

Shelly and Ann Stewart - Florida

Howard Tucker - Brazil/Philadelphia

Allison Young - Maryland

DAILY RECOMMENDED BIBLE READINGS

The Readings for the First Sunday of Christmas December 28, 2025

The First Lesson - [Isaiah 61:10-62:3](#)
[Psalm 147](#)

The Second Lesson - [Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7](#)
The Holy Gospel - [John 1:1-18](#)

The Holy Gospel Readings for the week of December 29, 2025

Monday - [John 7:37-52](#)
Tuesday - [John 7:53-8:11](#)
New Year's Eve-Wednesday - [John 8:12-19](#)
New Year's Day-Thursday - [John 1:1-14](#)
Friday - [John 16:23-30](#)
Saturday - [John 6:41-47](#)

PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

BIBLE STUDY will be on Christmas Break, Tuesday, **December 23rd and 30, 2025**. We resume class on Tuesday, **January 6th** (The Feast of the Epiphany) at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

If you are interested in joining the ministry, please contact Fr. Jay at associatepriest@aecst.org.



ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers on the High Altar - \$80.00 each
Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$70.00 each
Flowers on the Columbarium - \$60.00

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



WEDNESDAY IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY

with Fr. Daren will be on break for the Christmas/New Year season. We will resume on Wednesday, **January 14**, at 6:00 PM. See you then!



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.

AECST PODCAST



Our **AECST Podcast Series** returns with an important new episode! Fr. Daren is joined by Licensed Clinical Social Worker **Mrs. Lasheena Riley Duval** for a conversation on **supporting children through medical care**. Tune in!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR HEALING GARDEN!

Get your hands dirty for a great cause! The CLEAR Project (Children, Liturgy, Ecology, and Renewal) is creating a healing garden right here on our church campus. This is a hands-on way to live out our Christian calling to care for God's creation.

We need volunteers at all skill levels from expert gardeners to those who just want to help.

If you're interested, please contact
Fr. Daren (associaterector@aecst.org) or
Tynecia Wilson (churchschool@aecst.org).

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](#).

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS WHO ARE:

IN REHAB:

Francina Norris and Lisa Woodley - St. Francis Nursing Home

IN LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENCES:

Helena Allen - Simpson House; Linda Holmes - Saunders House; Gwendolyn Langford - Arden Courts of Cherry Hill; Ola Bass - Atria Lafayette Hill; Ridart "Butch" Farmer - Centennial Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center

AT HOME:

Robert Brown, Thelma Silvers, Patricia Ellison, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell, Wendell Whitlock, Verger Stephen Hannum, Joyce Stewart, Virginia DuBrey, Alice Young, Alletta Parris-Olday, Deborah Harrison, D. Lynn Joell, Regina Meacham Devero, Elaine Young, Alice Bowman - Cropper, Katrina Harris, Erica Hill Yates

KEEP IN PRAYER:

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Daryn Stewart, Arlene Gray, Adinah Edwards, Waltier Blocker, Santee Ruffin, Angela Holloway, Mary Ann Phillips, Yvonne Syndor, Adrian Gray, Sharon Harper, Quincina Edmonds, D. Lynn Joell, Edita Gauthney, Carmen Brown

WE PRAY FOR:

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

CALLING ALL YOUTH



What's an Acolyte? Am I old enough? Why do I want to be one? These and other questions can be answered by Father Daren! No prior experience is necessary to serve in the **Acolyte Ministry**. Rehearsals are on Sundays, immediately after service. This is an excellent opportunity for children and youth to become involved in the life of the church. Contact [Fr.Daren](#) for details.

YOUTH ACHIEVEMENTS

We want to highlight the achievements of our youth and young adults! If your child has excelled in academics, sports, the arts, or community service—or you are a young adult working on a significant personal or professional project—we would love to hear about it. Please contact [Fr. Daren](#) so we can share your story with the congregation!

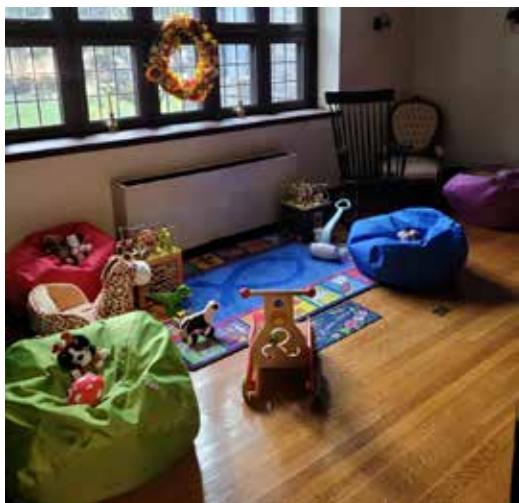


IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE RECTOR

St. Thomas celebrates children and youth not only as the church of TOMORROW, but also the church of TODAY! We welcome and encourage their full presence and participation in our Sunday worship.

Church School begins at **10:00 AM in the Undercroft**. You **must** register your child for church school for the 2025-2026 school year. Please use this [**link**](#) to register your child/children.

Call for Church School Teachers - If you feel the calling by God to volunteer your time in church school, please fill out the registration [**link**](#). If you were a teacher last year, please fill out this year's registration.



Tiny Tykes Temple is now located in the beautiful library of the Absalom Jones House for infants, children (under 3 years old) and parents. Parents who may find it necessary to step away from mass for a moment are encouraged to take advantage of this wonderful space.

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. NIV

The **Stewardship Committee** of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas recognizes that stewardship may take form in several ways: your time, talent, or 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 treasure.

Prayerfully consider donating by using the QR Code below:



OTHER 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 Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas
c/o Fiscal Administrator
6361 Lancaster Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151

3) Bring your check directly to the Fiscal Office during regular business hours, Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. After business hours, drop your envelope in the door mail slot located on the front patio of the Absalom Jones House.

4) Church Website - <http://www.aecst.org/donations.htm> 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.

5) REALM CONNECT - Our members and visitors who use GIVI to donate online will be switching away from GIVI to REALM Connect. If you give via the church website, either directly or by using the QR code, you will soon see a new

webpage link on our website and a corresponding QR code that will take you to that new page

6) Cellphone: Text “AECST” to 73256 to donate,

IMPORTANT: Please make sure your name, number, and amount is placed on your offering envelope. This is very important to keep bookkeeping accurate. If you're unsure of your number, please don't hesitate to contact Pat Lynch at stewardship@aecst.org. We appreciate your assistance.

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**](#) and select the Building Fund button on our Capital Improvement Donation button on our [website](#).

MINISTRY STAFF

Bishop	The Rt. Rev. Daniel G P Gutierrez	rector@aecst.org
Rector	The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw	associatelector@aecst.org
Associate to the Rector	The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans	associatepriest@aecst.org
Associate Priest	The Rev. Fr. Gerald Collins	wilgafney@gmail.com
Associate Priest	The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney	pauljaybach@gmail.com
Associate Minister	The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach	1792@aecst.org
Executive Asst to the Rector	Gladyce DuBrey	fiscal@aecst.org
Fiscal Administrator	Jeannette Jeffrey	1792@aecst.org
Sexton	LaDon Elliott	1792@aecst.org
Asst Sexton	David McGilberry	chancelchoir@aecst.org
Chancel Choirmaster	Jay Fluellen, D.M.A.	gospelchoir@aecst.org
Gospel Choirmaster	Waltier Blocker	jtucker@tlgattorneys.com
Rector's General Counsel	Joe Tucker, Esq.	fredabee@verizon.net
Altar Guild	Alfreda Brockman	baptism@aecst.org
Baptism Co-Chairs	Gail Hinton Harris	p.walker.ellison@gmail.com
O. V. Catto Voter Education Ministry	Patricia Walker-Ellison	cattoministry@aecst.org
Church School Superintendent	Wendella Fox Elaine Gillison	churchschool@aecst.org
Ed Muse Photography Ministry	Tynechia Wilson	edmon57@comcast.net
Fiscal Advisor to the Rector	William Edmonds	assistantfiscal@aecst.org
Girls Friendly Society	Deadra Cannon	njsimms@verizon.net
Jazz Ensemble Director	Nikkol Simms	chancelchoir@aecst1792.org
Live Stream Ministry	Jay Fluellen, D.M.A.	livevideo@aecst.org
Memorial Flowers	Yaseen Farooq Teri Tillman	fredabee@verizon.net
Roy Ellison Monarch Greeters	Alfreda Brockman	happycmd05@aol.com
Parish Vergers	Clare Mae Daniels	1792@aecst.org
Parish Webmaster	Ashley Hines	Kdrags415@gmail.com
Property Chair	Karen Ragland	webmanager@aecst.org
Scout Pack 133	Gail Hinton Harris	property@aecst.org
Stewardship Chair	William Burke	howchapman@gmail.com
Videography Ministry	Howard Chapman	bsapack0133@gmail.com
Visitor's Ministry	Arlene Gray	stewardship@aecst.org
Voices of Comfort	Patricia Lynch	recordedvideo@aecst.org
William Burke Ushers Ministry	Quentin Heyward	visitorsministry@aecst.org
	Edita Gauthney Michele Green	1792@aecst.org
	Robert Davenport	leaniepo302@gmail.com
	Arlene Singletary	

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
Judith Simkins Booth
Deadra Cannon

Clare Mae Daniels
Eugene Golson
Marie B. Golson

Kelvin Johnson
Monica Lewis Jones
Deborah Matthews

THE AUXILIARY VESTRY

Brenda Best
Conchetta Brewer
Sharon Bullock
Ronnie Collins

Mary Sandra Dean
Elaine Gillison
D. Lynn Joell
Cynthia Muse

Dr. Monica Johnson Taylor
Darryle (Bobby) Tillman
Judy Tillman

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