



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



**The Second Sunday after the Epiphany
A Celebration of the Life and Ministry of
The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

January 18, 2026

**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

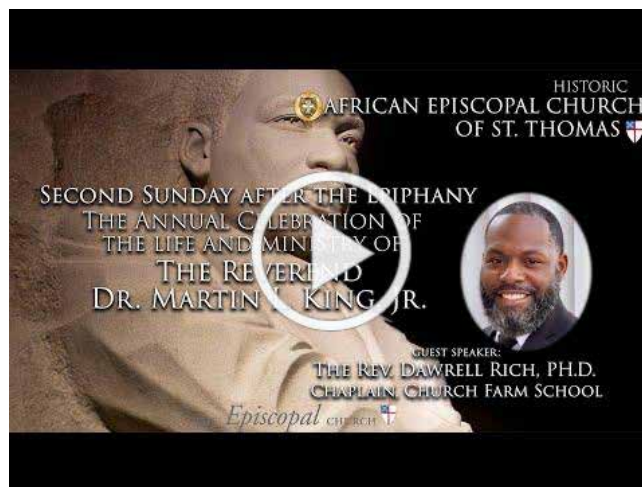
The Reverend Fr. Daren E. Evans

Associate to the Rector

The Reverend Fr. Gerald Collins

Associate Priest

JOIN US THIS SUNDAY & SHARE VIDEO INVITATION BELOW!



Video: Quentin Heyward
(St.Thomas Videography Ministry)

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 Second Sunday after the Epiphany and Celebration of the Life and Ministry of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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.

Today, we welcome the Rev. Dr. Dawrell Rich, Church Farm School Chaplain; Dr. Troy Baker, Church Farm School Head of School; Mr. Andrew Stern, Choir Director; Church Farm School Choir and members of Rho Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

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 Happy and Blessed New Year.

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

**The Church and Administrative Offices are closed
Monday, January 19th in Observance of
The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.**

**Join us this Sunday as we celebrate the Life and Ministry
of The Reverend Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.**

We will welcome the new Church Farm School Head of School Dr. Troy Baker; Church Farm School Chaplain - the Rev. Dr. Dawrell Rich; Church Farm School Choir/students; and members of the Rho Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



BIO: THE REVEREND DR. DAWRELL RICH, Ph.D

The Rev. Dr. Dawrell Rich, Ph.D is a pastor, educator, and public speaker whose work explores the intersection of faith, justice, and sustainability. He serves as Pastor of The River of Life Christian Church in Elizabeth, NJ, and Chaplain at Church Farm School in Exton, PA.

Dr. Rich holds a Ph.D in Religion, Society and Ecology, with a research focus on urban Black religious environmentalism. He has presented nationally and internationally, including at Oxford University's Symposium on Religious Studies and the Urban Futures Symposium in Switzerland. He is a member of the American Academy of Religion and the Association for the Sociology of Religion. In 2019, he received the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Social Justice Award from Drew University and is widely regarded as a thought leader and catalyst for change.

In addition to his ministerial and academic work, Dr. Rich serves as Director of Educational Activities for the Zeta Iota Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. In his free time, he enjoys traveling, art exhibitions and house music.



Scan the QR code or text "AECST" to 73256 to support our church and our ministries.



OUR FAMILY CONTINUES TO GROW!

We joyfully welcome **Marie Wallace** and **Paula Milbourne**, who joined our church family last Sunday.

Marie's shepherds are Conchetta Brewer and Cathy Stafford.

Paula's shepherd is Dr. Monica Johnson-Taylor.

We look forward to getting to know them.



NEW MEMBERS

Attention all members who joined St. Thomas in 2025.
We will be recognizing and celebrating you during service
on **Sunday, January 25, 2026.**

Please be present.

ST. THOMAS DAY OF SERVICE – Celebrating The Life Of The Reverend Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.

The Chosen 300 Ministry has designated Monday,
January 19, 2026, as a Day of Service.

We will provide and serve food to our siblings in Christ,
that may not have a meal that day.

Please join us at:

Chosen 300 Outreach & Worship Center West

3959 Lancaster Ave., Philadelphia, PA, 5:30 PM

Contact Judy Tillman, 215-242-8117, for additional details
and to register for this activity.

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 call the
church office @ 215-473-3065 or email 1792@aecst.org.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY COMMITTEE

In addition to our member and family photographs, the new pictorial St. Thomas Church Directory will include:

- our bountiful history
- a special in memorial page (listing members who have transitioned since 2017)
- greetings from the rector
- group photographs of AECST ministries

A new category has been created entitled: “With Love and Blessings.” You can add your name to this section with patron, business or ministry ads. It would be wonderful to have your support and expressions of gratitude included in the directory.

Patron ads: \$5.00 per name

Business or Ministry ads:

Full page \$150.00 - 8x10” portrait

1/2” page \$75.00 - 8x5” landscape

1/4” page \$50.00 - 4x5” portrait

1/8” page \$35.00 - 4x 2 1/2” landscape

Email: Camera ready ads to: churchdirectory@aecst.org

Checks may be mailed and payable to:

The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas

6361 Lancaster Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19151

TO THE GUILDS/FELLOWSHIP AND ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS

Please submit the names of the people in your guild or organization in alphabetical order in a horizontal format in a Word document to Patricia Hunt - dhunt37261@aol.com by **February 1, 2026.**

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
The Baptism Of Our Lord (Renewal Of Baptismal Vows)
January 11, 2026

“STANDING AT THE JORDAN”

A special blessing with holy water from the Jordan River, where Jesus was baptized.







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

Photos: Bill Edmonds, Brenda Johnson Best & Stephen Pugh
(St.Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry)

AN INSPIRING AFTERNOON OF VOCAL ARTISTRY AT ST. THOMAS!

Our own Renard Golden in partnership with The Locke Alliance
and the Boys' Latin of Philadelphia.



Photos: Bill Edmonds & Stephen Pugh
(St.Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry)

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



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)

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The Jesse F. Anderson (JFA) Scholarship Committee invites you to **Mardi Gras Lunch, Sunday, February 15, 2026**, from 1:00-3:30 PM in Anderson Hall. Join us for an afternoon of celebration, good food, music, silent auction, prizes and fun! Adults \$25.00, Youth \$10.00, Children under 6 are free. Contact Thomasina Hack (215) 901-2773, Paula Lamb (215) 620-7250 or any JFA Member for tickets. Come enjoy a delicious meal and fellowship before attending the BIG CELEBRATION AT 4:00 PM.



**SAVE THE DATE / MARK YOUR CALENDARS -
A BIG CELEBRATION!!!!!!**

"Celebrating the Feast of Absalom Jones"

Guest Preacher:

The Rt. Reverend Michael Bruce Curry, former Presiding
Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church

Sunday, February 15, 2026; 4:00 PM

(This is the ONLY service this day)

Guest participants: Christ Church, Philadelphia,
St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, Mother Bethel African
Methodist Episcopal Church, Philadelphia and
the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge,
Philadelphia, PA

SPREAD THE WORD NOW!

NOTE TO ALL GUILDS/ORGANIZATIONS/MINISTRIES:

The 2026 Parish Meeting is on

Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

Please submit a one-page, year-end report (formatted in
Word) to the church office, on or before

Friday, February 6, 2026.

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.



FAITHFUL GRATITUDE

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

<https://forms.gle/yj3eujEaSZ58VMgK9>

2026 FAITHFUL GIVING CARDS

Enormous thanks to ALL who have submitted
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	Zenobia Dancy
Carmen Alexander	Elaine Davis
Constance Anderson	Jasmine Davis
Dorothy Archey	Karen Davis
Jeanne Arnold	Stacey Davis
Natasha Bagwell	Johanna Daye
Brenda Battle	Carl Dean
Jennifer Bell	Dr. Rollo Dilworth
Susan Ben	Muso Karmi Doe
Deborah Billups	Ginger DuBrey
Waltier Blocker	Andrew & Lisa Renee
Dr. Naomi Booker	Dumas
Guy Booth	William & Quincina
Ricardo Bostic	Edmonds
Alice Bowman-Cropper	Jonathan Edwards
I. Page Bowser	Lynette Edwards
Michelanne Bradwell	Carol Etlen
Theresa Bramwell	Erika Etlen
Lorita Brockington	Rashid &Christie Faisal
J.R. & Alfreda Brockman	Larry & Diedre Farmbry
Carmen Brown	Yaseen & Alaina Farooq
Marilyn Brown	Loretta Ferguson
Julia Bryant	Marceline Fitzwilliam
Kenneth Bundy	Dr. Jay Fluellen
Cornelia Camp	Marcia Forde
Charlotte Card	Stephen & Donna Foster
Phyllis Cater	Wendella Fox & Herb
Eleanor Chestnut	Wetzel
Suzanne Closson	Norman & Nikki Franke
Lynada Coleburn-Bryant	Barry Frye
Terry Corson	Irenda Gates
Gwendolyn Cottman	Edita Gauthney

Edward & Kathryn Geiger	Diana Hutchins
Barbara Glenn	Kim Hyde
Renard Golden	Yvonne Hyde-Carter
Swanie Goldsmith	Diann Jacox
Josephine Graham	Thomas & Mayla Jackson
Clarice Grant	Simone Jeffers
Arlene Gray	Evelyn Johns
Linda Greaves	Bobby Johnson
Michele Green	Dr. Calvin Johnson
Presko (PJ) Grier	Dr. Frank Johnson
Dr. Derek Griffith	Vernetta Johnston
Thomasina Hack	Bettie Jones
Joan Hall	Clarence Jones
Lisa Harper	Donna Jones
Sharon Harper	Eric Jones
Katrina Harris	Eric & Tracy Jones
Roosevelt, Sr. & Gail Harris	Kelly & Tracy Jones
Thomas & Lynn Harris	Robert & Joyce Jones
Walter & Nicole Harris	Dr. Sheila Jones-Smith
Deborah Harrison	Tyrone Keller
Richard & Gwenda Hart	Reggie & Sherilynn Kimble
Gregory Hayes	Jurdina Koilor
Maurice Hayes	John Kortue, Sr.
Rene' Hayes	Paula Lamb
Denise Henderson	Nancy Lee
Julie Hergenrather	Doris Levin
Quentin Heyward	Joyce Levin
Synethia Hill	Steven & Jamella Lewis
Erica Hill-Yates	Karen Leys
Ashley & Lena Hines	Landon Leys
Merle Hopson	Kimberly Lloyd
Fleta Howell	Michele Lofton
Robert Hugh	Adrienne Logan
Donald & Patricia Hunt	Alonda Lord

C. Adjoa Love-Dorsey	Karem Ragin
James Lowe	Karen Ragland
Winston Lowe	Ella Randall
Gregory Lyles	Cynthia Ray
Thomas Lynch, IV	Dolores Redmond
Constance Lyons	Clarence Rice
Stephen & Michelle Mack	Caryn Rivers
Stacey McCoy-Ndiaye	Victoria Rivers
Michael McIntosh	Julio & Alexandra
Denise McKinney	McFadden Rodriguez
Denise McKinney-Gibson	Cassandra Ruffin
Laura McNeil	Yvonne Ruiz
Regina Meacham Devero	Sandra Rushin
Deidre Milanes	Edwin & Sharahn Santana
Colin & Helen Mitchell	Barbara Savage
Donald Moore & Dorothy E.	Samira Savoury
Roberts	Georgia Sawyer
Elsie Moto	Sheila Sawyer McCullough
Velma Morris-Nembhard	Richard & Rebecca Scales
Mueni Beatrice Mwanzia	Leah Sheppard
Vincent & Lisa Napoleon	Kayma Sherman Knuckles
Mercy Natt	Nikkol Simms
Ingrid Nembhard	Shaine Simms
Chinwe Onyekere	Arlene Singletary
Debbie Otey	Anita Smith
Carolyn Paige	Dorothy Smith
Samuel & Deidre Patterson	Rackell Smith
Charles & Zennetta Peters	Catherine Stafford
Eugene & Karina Phillips	H. Lynn Starr
Kim Phillips	Daryn Stewart
Mary Ann Phillips	Joyce Ann Stewart
Simone Pollard	Shelly & Ann Stewart
Stephen Pugh	Brandon & Rashanda
Wendy Puryear	Perryman Stiff
Audrey Pyles	Sheila Stubbs

Arthur & Michele Sudler	Michele Wilkinson
Carolyn Summers	R. Seth Williams
Lynda Tapper Smith	Scott & Ashley Williams
Wanda Tarawaly	Stephanie Williamson
Rosita Taylor	Gillian Wilson
Jillian Theorgood	Jenelle Wilson Johnson
Kellen & Sarah Shaw-Thomas	Laura Wilson
Calvin Thompson	Lorna Wilson
Gloria Thomas	Tynecia Wilson
Teri Tillman	Carole Williams Green
Harold Townsend	Charlene Wiltshire
Carole Townsend Harrell	Denise Wing
Arnott Trotman	Diane Winkfield
Justin & Lee Anne Trotman	Edgar Wise
Louise Trotman	Wanda Wood
Howard Tucker	Khalita Wright
Joe Tucker & Alycia Horn	Paula Wright
Robin Vann-Lynch	Daphnie Wright-Gilstrap
Karen Vaughn	Alice Young
Barbara Wiley	M. Elaine Young

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 18th

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

- Observance and Celebration of The Reverend Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. holiday
- Guest Speaker: The Rev. Dr. Dawrell Rich, Chaplain, Church Farm School
- Guest: Dr. Troy Baker, Church Farm School Head of School
- Guest Choir: Church Farm School
- Guest: Rho Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

January 25th

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

- GFS Induction Sunday
- Liturgical Welcome to the New Members of 2025
- Youth and Young Adult Sunday

February 1st

Black History Month Kick-Off AMERICA250

February 8th

Love Sunday (Observance of Valentine's Day) (wear something red)

February 15th

- Jesse F. Anderson Annual Scholarship Fund Mardi Gras Lunch at 1:00 PM
- Celebration of the Feast of Absalom Jones, 4:00 PM service

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 18, 2026

- Ash Wednesday
- Mass and Imposition of Ashes: 7:00 AM, Noon, and 6:00 PM

February 22nd

Youth and Young Adult Sunday/Scout Sunday

- Lunch at Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church 12:00 PM
- Philly250/AMERICA250 special Interfaith Program at 1:00 PM, Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church

THIS WEEK AT AECST
Monday, January 19th
Church and Administrative Office are closed

Tuesday, January 20th

- OPC Advocacy Outreach Group Meeting
6:00 - 9 :00 PM in the Undercroft
- Pilgrims on a Journey Adult Bible Study with Fr. Jay
via Zoom-7:00 PM

Wednesday, January 21st

- Bible Study with Fr. Daren
6:00 PM in the Absalom Jones House
- Angels in Motion - 6:30 PM in the church
- St. Thomas Gospel Choir Rehearsal - 7:30 PM in Anderson Hall

Friday, January 23rd

- Retired Persons Ministry, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM in Anderson Hall

Saturday, January 24th

- Daughters of the King meeting via Zoom, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM
- Girls' Friendly Society, 11:00 AM - 1 PM in the Undercroft
- Absalom Jones Choir, 12:00 PM in the church
- Cub Scout Open House 1:00 - 4:00 PM in the Undercroft

**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 Gladyce in the church office, 215-473-3065.

CALLING ALL YOUTH, TEENS, AND YOUNG ADULTS!!!
Join us on **Saturday, January 31**, from Noon - 3:00 PM for
some games, fun, and refreshments!! See our flyer for
more details. Hope to see you there!



African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas Youth and
Young Adult Council presents:

YOUTH GAME DAY

GROUP GAMES | PRIZES | FOOD

January 31, 2026
From 12:00-3PM
6361 Lancaster Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19151
in Anderson Hall

All youth members of St. Thomas are welcome!

 ***Youth under 8 need
a chaperone
present!***

**That means GFS
and Scouts too!**



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SAVE THE DATE!

The Jesse F. Anderson (JFA) Scholarship Committee
invites you to Mardi Gras Lunch,
Sunday, February 15, 2026, 1:00 - 3:30 PM
in Anderson Hall.

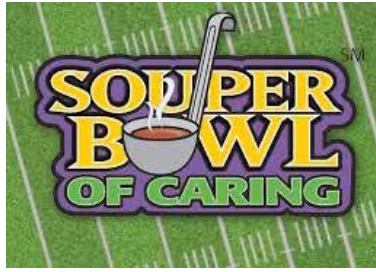
Join us for an afternoon of celebration, good food, music,
silent auction, prizes and fun!

Adults \$25.00, Youth \$10.00, Children under 6 are free.

See Thomasina Hack 215-901-2773,
Paula Lamb 215-620-7250 or any JFA committee member
for tickets.

Come enjoy a delicious meal and fellowship before
attending the BIG CELEBRATION AT 4:00 PM.





A MESSAGE FROM DAKOTA MOSLEY-GIRLS FRIENDLY ST. THOMAS MEMBER

The Girls Friendly Society (GFS) is proud to support the work of Tackle Hunger and their Annual Souper Bowl of Caring event.

If 213 million people watch “*the big game*,” think about how much money we could give if each person donated one dollar to a food bank.

The Media Food Bank is helping tons of people who can’t afford food. That’s why GFS is helping collect food until **February 1st**.

Tackle Hunger to tackle the game!

GFS is hosting Chat and Chew on **January 25th**, after church on GFS Sunday. We will be collecting items for Media Food Bank for Souper Bowl of Caring. Items can also be put in our bin in the Undercroft **until Feb. 1st**.

Soups will be on sale \$10 a quart made by our GFS families, with proceeds going to Media Food Bank as well.

Stop on by to grab a snack, learn more about GFS Worldwide, our branch, our favorite place, Holiday House, and to welcome our newest members.

Media Food Bank’s Most Needed Items

Newborn diapers
Size 5 Diapers
4T/5T Pull Ups

Community Choice Room

Bottles juices
Corned beef
Honey
Vegetable cooking oil
White sugar
Canned beets
Sardines
Shelf-stable dairy milk

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.



VOCALISTS & MUSICIANS *Wanted*

**To Join
A Professional Recording Gospel Choir**

The St Thomas Gospel Choir
Directed By, Walt Blocker
of the
African Episcopal Church of St Thomas
Philadelphia, PA

WWW.STTHOMASGC.ORG

(484) 816-STGC (7842)

CONFIRMATION / REAFFIRMATION / RECEPTION CLASSES

have started for in-person and Zoom
classes are 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.

REALM CONNECT CONVERSION COMPLETE

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



Church Online Giving

GIVI is no longer available for online contributions. Realm Connect has taken its place. Realm Connect is not just a tool for electronic giving; it affords one the opportunity to access their giving records and offers 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 Connect App. (If you don't already use the app and don't have an account, it's safe and easy to obtain. Download the app Realm Connect from the app store.

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 Connect invite.

IMPORTANT,

for your contributions in Realm Connect to be successful, YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND CELL PHONE NUMBER MUST MATCH EXACTLY WITH REALM CONNECT 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.



African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas: Join our online community!

Hi [REDACTED]

We at African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas have an online community where we can connect with each other outside our Sunday gatherings. We'd love for you to take part!

Create an account: <https://onrealm.org/AfricanEpiscopa/account/CreateAccount?token=NTA0MzUyN2QtODZhZS00NDJhLTg5MWQtYjMzZTAxMDViMzVI>

Sincerely,
African Episcopal Church 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 & Lisa Renee Dumas - Portugal

Rashid, Christie, & 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 & Ann Stewart - Florida

Howard Tucker - Brazil/Philadelphia

Allison Young - Maryland

**THE BIBLE READINGS FOR THE
Second Sunday after the Epiphany/ Celebration of the
Life of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
January 18, 2026**

The First Lesson - [Isaiah 49:1-7](#)
[Psalms 40:1-12](#)

The Second Lesson - [1 Corinthians 1:1-9](#)

The Holy Gospel - [Matthew 3:13-17](#)

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

Monday - [John 2:23-3:15](#)

Tuesday - [John 3:16-21](#)

Wednesday - [John 3:22-36](#)

Thursday - [John 4:1-15](#)

Friday - [John 4:16-26](#)

Saturday - [John 4:27-42](#)



PILGRIMS ON A JOURNE

BIBLE STUDY is held on Tuesdays
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 are in loving memory of my mother, **Laura Green**, on what would have been her 100th birthday, given by Evelyn C. Johns.

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 resume on Wednesday, **January 14** -
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:

Francine Norris and Lisa Woodley - St. Francis Nursing Home
Alletta Parris Olday-Saunders House

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, Deborah Harrison, D. Lynn Joell, Regina Meacham Devero, Elaine Young, Erica Hill Yates, Alice Bowman - Cropper, Katrina Harris, Gloria Moses

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, Stephen Pugh, Rae Scott Jones

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!

THE YOUNG ADULTS (ages 20's and 30's) meet immediately after service every 4th Sunday of the Month in the Absalom Jones House.



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 email 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	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 McGilberry	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	baptism@aecst.org
	Patricia Walker-Ellison	p.walker.ellison@gmail.com
O. V. Catto Voter Education Ministry	Wendella Fox Elaine Gillison	cattoministry@aecst.org
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
Roy Ellison Monarch Greeters	Ashley Hines	1792@aecst.org
Parish Vergers	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
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