

Lent

**A Season of Reflection,
Renewal, and Preparation**



**THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS
FIRST BLACK EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA**



THE VERY REVEREND CANON MARTINI SHAW, 17TH RECTOR

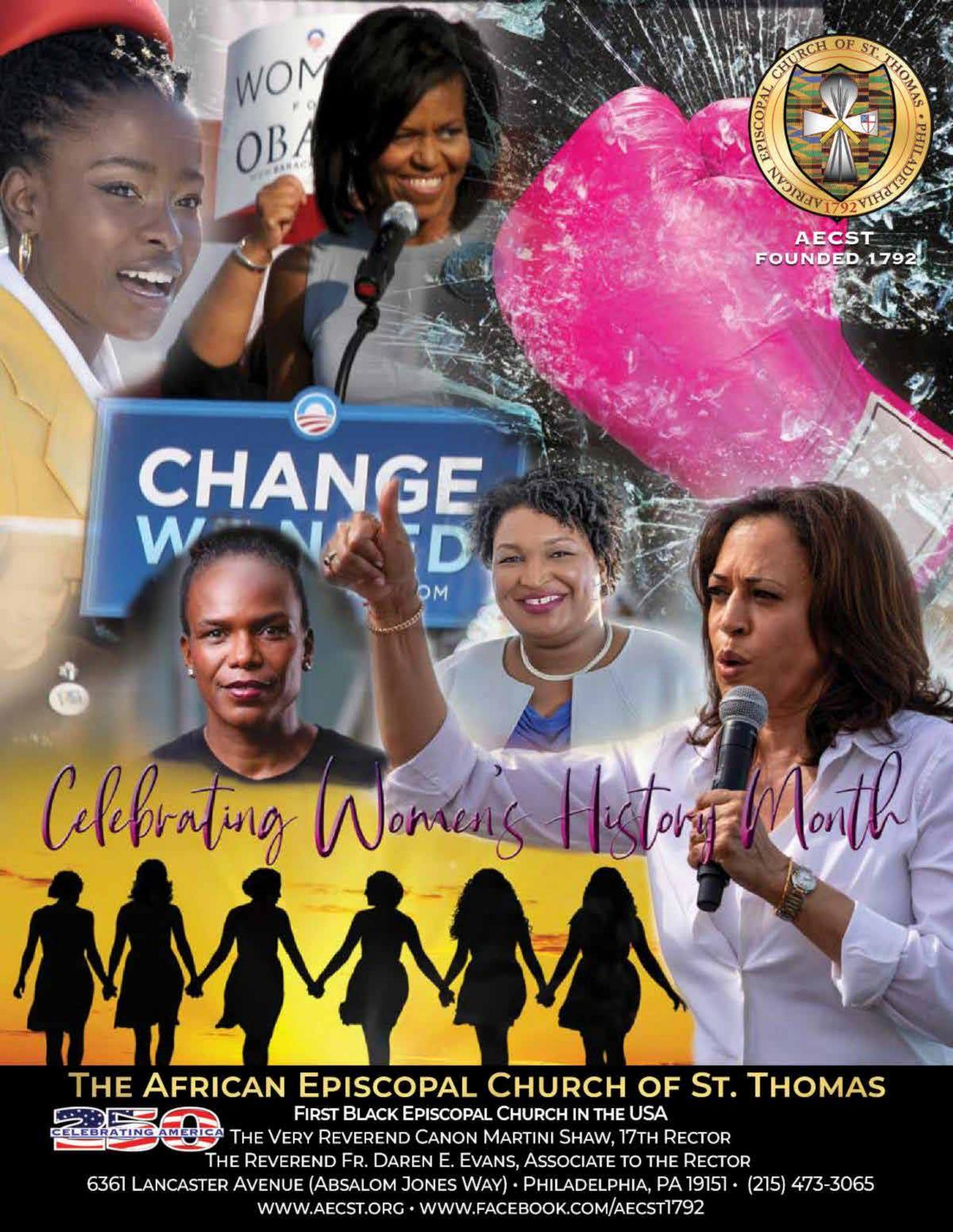
THE REVEREND FR. DAREN E. EVANS, ASSOCIATE TO THE RECTOR

6361 LANCASTER AVENUE (ABSALOM JONES WAY) • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19151 • (215) 473-3065

WWW.AECST.ORG • WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AECST1792



AECST
FOUNDED 1792



CHANGE
WOMEN
COM

Celebrating Women's History Month



THE AFRICAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS

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**THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 8, 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



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
Third Sunday in Lent.

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 welcome 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. Whomever you may be and however you may find yourself experiencing life's journey, do know that St. Thomas Church welcomes you.

Again, welcome!

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

On Sunday, March 1st, Mother Bethel AME Church and St. Thomas joined to kick off a year of amazing Interfaith opportunities in celebration of America250. Thanks to the Very Rev. Judith Sullivan for organizing such a meaningful event.





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

Photos: Quentin Heyward
St.Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry

The Palm Sunday Bake Sale is Back!
AECST Women's Ministry Committee
Presents

“Delectable Desserts”

Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

Make your Holiday Dinner table complete! Enjoy mouth-watering Dinner Rolls, Delectable Cake Assortments, Cheesecake, Cookies, Homemade Pies, Delicious Cinnamon Bread, Delightful Mini Pineapple Upside Down Cake, and More!

Place your pre-orders beginning **March 8th!**

"RESISTANCE & RESILIENCE WHILE IN THE WILDERNESS"

Wednesdays During Lent

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Please note that all sessions will be via Zoom except the last one. Week 5 will be In-Person and include the Holy Eucharist

Week 1: February 25th

Moses and the Exodus: Exodus 2:7-12

Week 2: March 4th

Abram and Sarai: Genesis: 12:10-20

Week 3: March 11th

Birth of Jesus and the flight to Egypt: Luke 1:42-55

Week 4: March 18th

Sermon on the Mount

Week 5: March 25th

The Cross

The Zoom link for **Wednesday, March 11th**

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83950794067?pwd=blcnGgaJ88w7NN1WnGVbVlrOa9XPek.1>

Meeting ID: 839 5079 4067

Passcode: 788959

One tap mobile +19292056099,,83950794067#,,,,*788959#

US (New York)

+13017158592,,83950794067#,,,,*788959# US

(Washington DC)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82567436647?pwd=z7TKQnqenet4f894NvwmvLpvmf8BhnS.1#success>

The Annual Parish Meeting, was held on February 21, 2026; the following people were elected to:

Vestry: William J. Burke, Deborah Camp-Frye, Mary S. Dean, Richard Jones, and Judith Tillman, Elaine Gillison will complete the one-year term vacated by Pat Lynch.

Auxiliary Vestry: Ronnie Collins, Gwenda Hart, Kelvin Johnson, Dr. Monica Johnson Taylor, and Darryle Tillman

Delegates to the Diocesan Convention:

Albert Dandridge, III Esq., Dr. Cassandra Ruffin

Delegates to the Schuylkill Deanery: Phyllis Cater, Mary S. Dean, Tyrone Keller (Alternate)

The following were elected or appointed as:

Vestry Officers:

Rector's Warden: Richard Jones

Accounting Warden: Deborah Camp-Frye

Treasurer: Albert Dandridge, III Esq.

Clerk: Pamela Johnson

Property Chair: William J. Burke

Stewardship Chair: Judith Tillman

We extend our sincere gratitude to all Vestry, Auxiliary Vestry, and Delegates whose terms have concluded and whose service on the Vestry has been fulfilled. The church is deeply appreciative of your exceptional leadership.

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

St. Thomas supports the Marian Anderson Museum at their Annual Anniversary Gala Celebration. Thank you, **Dr. Jay Fluellen** and Jillian Pirtle.



Photos: Quentin Heyward (St.Thomas Ed Muse Memorial Photography Ministry) and random photos.



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

HOLY WEEK 2026 SCHEDULE OF OBSERVANCES & CELEBRATIONS

Sunday, March 29th

Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday

Outdoor Procession begins at 9:45 AM

Joining us: St. James School community with St. James
Ambassador Choir

St. Thomas Gospel Choir Palm Sunday Concert – 4:00 PM

Holy Thursday, April 2nd

Maundy Thursday, 6:00 PM

Candlelight Dinner hosted by the Vestry and
Auxiliary Vestry

Foot washing/Eucharist/Stripping of the altar/
The Vigil Watch sponsored by the DOK

Good Friday, April 3rd

Conclusion of the Vigil Watch 12 Noon

Special liturgy to include Stations of the Cross

Joining us: Members from Overbrook Presbyterian Church
and their pastor, The Rev. Dr. Adam Hearlson

Holy Saturday, April 4th

The Great Vigil of Easter at the Philadelphia Cathedral
5:00 PM

1723 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA

Easter Sunday, April 5th

Sunday of the Resurrection - Sunrise Service – no music

6:00 AM Early Sunrise -

Celebrant: The Rector, Homilist: Fr. Evans

10:00 AM Festive Celebration with music and dance

Celebrant and Homilist: The Rector



Our condolences to the family of **Naila Mattison-Jones** on her death. Her service will be held at St. Thomas on **Monday, March 9th**. Viewing from **10:00 AM -11:00 AM**; Requiem Mass at **11:00 AM**. May the soul of Naila rest in peace and rise in glory.

Our condolences to Donna Matthews on the death of her mother, **Doris Matthews**. Her service will be held at St. Thomas on **Thursday, March 12th**. Viewing from **10:00 AM -11:00 AM**; Requiem Mass at **11:00 AM**. May the soul of Doris rest in peace and rise in glory.

THE ST. THOMAS GOSPEL CHOIR
will present a Palm Sunday concert
Sunday, March 29th at 4:00 PM
More information coming soon!

St. Thomas Church School presents:

“PORTRAITS OF POWER”

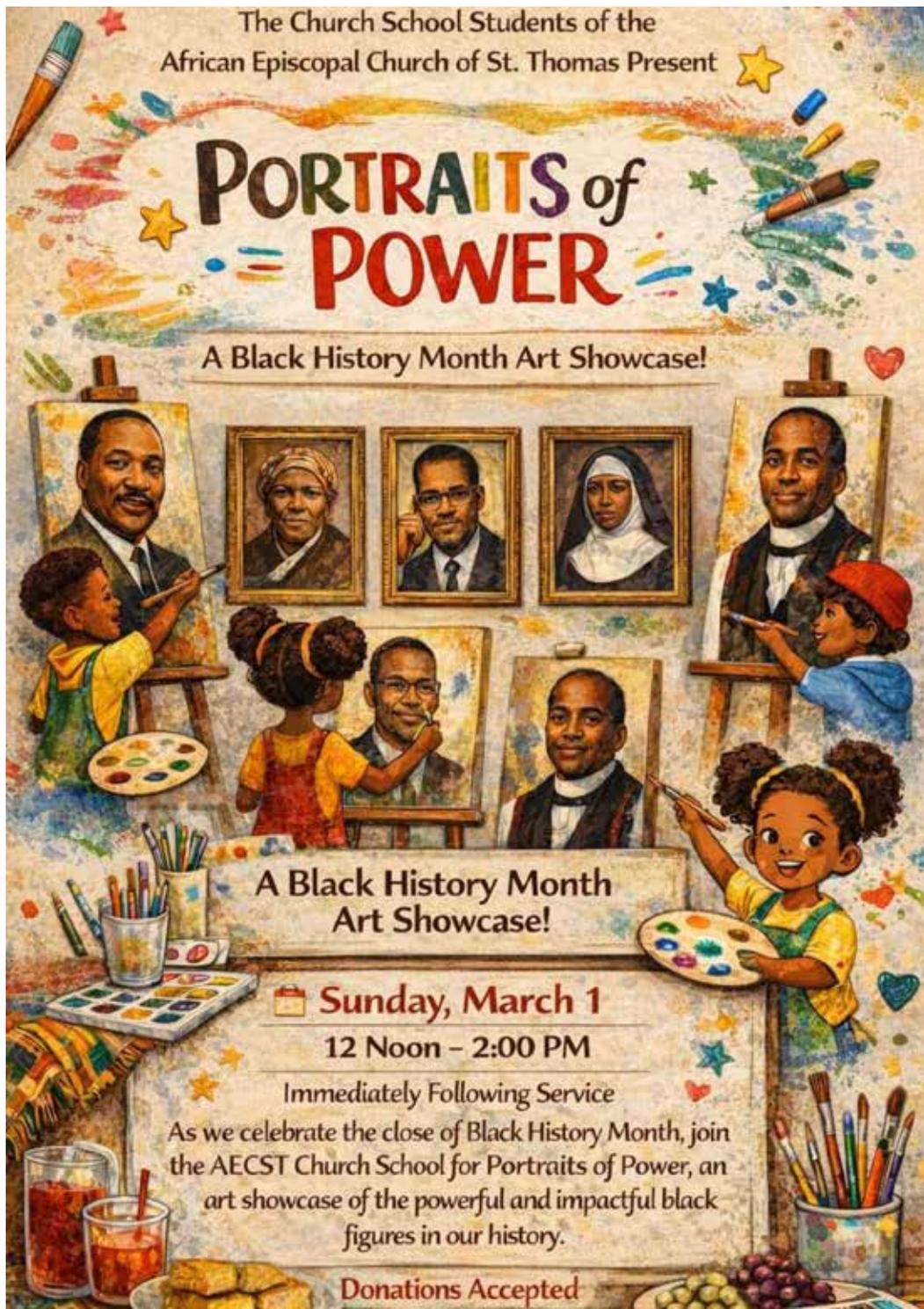
A Black History Month Art Showcase

Main Showcase - Sunday, March 8th, 12 Noon – 2:00 PM

with special guests, food, and music!

Immediately following service, please come and view portraits created by young students. Celebrate Black history through the eyes of our youth.

Contributions are appreciated.



St. Thomas supports Bishop John T. Walker
School for Boys, Washington, D.C.

The Rector pictured with Vincent and Lisa Napoleon,
members of St. Thomas; Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde,
Bishop of Washington D.C.; Andrew Clarke, Chair of the
School Board; Fr. Walter J. Thorne, Chaplain of
St. James School, Philadelphia, PA



On Sunday, March 1, 2026, members of our Vestry, Auxiliary Vestry, Delegates to the Diocesan Convention, and Schuylkill Deanery received their annual Reaffirmation and Blessing.

Thank you for your amazing, dedicated leadership.





**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.
- 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.

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](#).



THE CATTO MINISTRY CORNER

1. SAVE AMERICA ACT- There is still time to contact your Senators and make your voices heard! Call your Senators now.

The SAVE AMERICA ACT, formerly the SAVE Act, recently passed the House 218–213 and heads to the Senate this week. It is promoted as an anti-voter fraud bill, though courts have found no evidence of widespread voter fraud. Senate Republicans have 50 votes but need 60 to pass the bill. The administration is supporting passage of this bill.

What the Bill does:

- **Restricts acceptable** voter ID types.
- **Requires proof of citizenship** for all voter registrations; in-person, online and mail.
- **Forces women** with surname changes to sign an attestation.
- **Mandates** frequent voter-roll purges, including for not voting.
- **Allows lawsuits against election officials** over suspected non-citizen registrations.
- **Sends state voter lists** to Department of Homeland Security (DHS), raising data-handling concerns.

What can YOU do?

Call your Senators on 202-224-3121 TODAY! We have work to do!

2. VOTER REGISTRATION TRAINING

Indivisible Philadelphia will conduct its next virtual training session on March 12, 2026, from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Sign up online now at www.mobilize.us/indivisiblephiladelphia/event/902137 to become certified voter registration volunteers. When you complete the training, please email Wendella and Elaine at cattoministry@aecst.org.



OUR FAMILY CONTINUES TO GROW!

We joyfully welcome **Melissa, Ryan, and Cameron Chapman** who joined our church family last Sunday. Melissa's shepherd will be Deborah Matthews and Ryan's shepherd will be Eugene Golson. We look forward to getting to know them.



HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

March is National Nutrition Month®, an annual campaign sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that focuses on making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

The 2026 theme is, The Power of Nutrition; highlighting how food fuels health, boosts energy, and helps prevent chronic diseases.

Healthy Eating Tips for the whole family

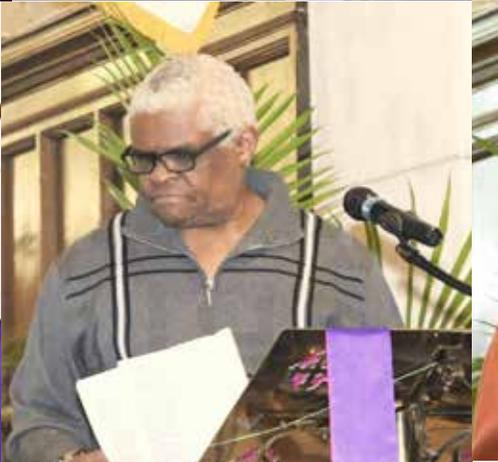
- For snack time, keep fresh fruit and pre-chopped or no-chop veggies on hand. Your family is more likely to grab fruits and vegetables if they are readily available.
- Enjoy fish high in omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, mackerel, trout and albacore tuna are good choices.
- A small handful of nuts or seeds can be a satisfying and healthy snack. Look for unsalted or lightly salted nuts. Almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios and walnuts are all good choices.
- Vegetables and fruits are loaded with nutrients and fiber, and typically low in calories and sodium.

Food Labels

The Nutrition Facts label found on packaged foods and beverages is your daily tool for making informed food choices. Use the QR Code below to learn more about the Nutrition Facts Label and discover the wealth.



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 1, 2026





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



**MAUNDY THURSDAY DINNER IN ANDERSON HALL-
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026**

Our annual candlelight dinner, hosted by the Vestry and Auxiliary Vestry, will be held at 6:00 PM on Holy Thursday, April 2, 2026.

Tickets are \$20.00 each and will be sold following church service in Anderson Hall. Space is limited, so be sure to purchase your ticket as soon as possible! Contact Judy Simkins Booth at msjay424@verizon.net with questions.

THIS WEEK AT AECST

Monday, March 9th

~Funeral for Naila Mattison Jones~
Viewing from 10:00 AM-11:00 AM. Requiem Mass 11:00 AM

Tuesday, March 10th

~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, March 11th

~Lenten Series~ via Zoom - 6:00 PM

~Angels in Motion~ 6:30 PM

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

Thursday, March 12th

~Funeral of Doris Matthews~
Viewing from 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Requiem Mass 11:00 AM

Friday, March 13th

~Retired Persons Ministry~
10:00 – 12 Noon in the Undercroft

UPCOMING SUNDAYS

March 8th

~Third Sunday in Lent~

March 15th

~Fourth Sunday in Lent~

March 22nd

~Fifth Sunday in Lent~

~Girls' Friendly Society Sunday~

~Induction and Chat and Chew~

LENTEN GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Rose or Laetare Sunday is the fourth Sunday in the season of Lent, in the Western Christian liturgical calendar. Traditionally, this Sunday had been a day of celebration, within the austere period of Lent. This Sunday gets its name from the first few words (incipit) of the traditional Latin entrance (Introit) for the Mass of the day. “Laetare Jerusalem” (Rejoice, O Jerusalem) is Latin from Isaiah 66:10.

Flowers may appear on the high altar. Priests are given the option to wear rose-colored vestments at Mass on this day in place of the violet vestments normally worn during Lent. The term “rose” is used to describe this lighter shade of the color violet.

Why we don't say Alleluia during Lent: The Alleluia comes to us from Hebrew, and it means “praise Yahweh”. This praise has a joyful overtone to it, and we use it especially during happy celebrations. While we do praise God all year round, during Lent we withhold a bit of our joy and happiness because of the season's penitential and sorrowful character. After all, we are anticipating Jesus' very passion and death.

In order to emphasize the penitential nature of that journey, the Church, during Lent, removes the Alleluia from the Mass. We no longer sing with the choirs of angels; instead, we acknowledge our sins and practice repentance so that one day we may again have the privilege of worshiping God as the angels do.

Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter. It commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and in many Christian churches, Palm Sunday is marked by the distribution of Palm leaves.

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the apostles. The significance is derived from Latin "mandatum" (a new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you), the statement Jesus made in John 13:34 by which He explained to the apostles the significance of His action of washing their feet.

Good Friday ("good" meaning pious or holy) is the Friday of Holy Week, observed primarily by Christians commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His death at Calvary.

Holy Saturday is the day before Easter and the day of Holy Week in which Christians prepare for Easter. It commemorates the day that Jesus Christ's body was laid in the tomb.

Triduum (TRID-uh-wum) is the period of three days that begins the evening of Maundy Thursday and ends the evening of Easter Sunday. It recalls the passion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.



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 - 8”x10” portrait
- 1/2 page \$75.00 - 8”x5” landscape
- 1/4 page \$50.00 - 4”x5” portrait
- 1/8 page \$35.00 - 4”x 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

Attention: The Directory Committee is offering another day of FREE photos for the Church Directory. If you have not had your photo taken, please sign up for **Saturday, March 21st**. Photos will be taken from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM in the Absalom Jones House. Sign up **Sunday, March 8th, and 15th** or you may email Charlene Wiltshire, cwiltshire@comcast.net for more information.

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

**CONFIRMATION / REAFFIRMATION /
RECEPTION CLASSES**

have started for in-person and Zoom
classes are as follows:

In Person (8:45 AM)

Sunday, 03/01/2026

Sunday, 04/05/2026

Sunday, 05/03/2026

Zoom (6:00 PM)

Monday, 03/16/2026

Monday, 04/20/2026

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.



GFS Women's History Month Friendly Fact

Katrina Lake (born 1982)

- An American businesswoman
- Founder and co-chair of “Stitch Fix;” a fashion-based subscription service. This is an online styling service that delivers clothing and shoes for women, children, and men.
- She established “Stitch Fix” in 2011 and in 2017 was the youngest woman to take an internet company public.



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.

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 <https://onrealm.org/AfricanEpiscopa/-/form/give/now> 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/AfricanEpiscopa/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.

Powered By



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=NTA0MzUyN2QtODZhZS00NDJhLTg5MWQYjMzZTAxMDViMzVI>

Sincerely,
African Episcopal Church Of St. Thomas

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)

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

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
THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
March 8, 2026**

The First Lesson - [Exodus 17:1-7](#)
[Psalm 95](#)

The Second Lesson - [Romans 5:1-11](#)

The Holy Gospel - [John 4:5-42](#)

**The Holy Gospel Readings for the
week of March 9, 2026**

Monday - [Luke 4:23-30](#)

Tuesday - [Matthew 18:21-35](#)

Wednesday - [Matthew 5:17-19](#)

Thursday - [Luke 11:14-23](#)

Friday - [Mark 12:28-34](#)

Saturday - [Luke 18:15-20](#)



**PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY
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.

WEDNESDAY IN-PERSON BIBLE STUDY

with Fr. Daren will be on break beginning Wednesday,
February 11, and throughout the season of Lent. All are
encouraged to attend the Lenten series held each
Wednesday during Lent.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Flowers are not placed on the High Altar in Lent except for
Rose Sunday, March 15, 2026.

To order flowers, please return the form with payment to
Alfreda Brockman or Gladyce in the church office.

Flowers on the High Altar - \$125.00 each

Flowers on the Absalom Jones Altar - \$90.00 each

Flowers on the Columbarium - \$70.00

EASTER FLOWERS AND LILIES

Your gift of an Easter Lily will help beautify the church and
will be a beautiful tribute to your loved ones, or a token
of Thanksgiving for a blessing received. Use the QR Code
below to order and pay for flowers.

Deadline: Monday, **March 23, 2026**



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!



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.

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 THE HOSPITAL:

Patricia Ellison - Abington Hospital

IN REHAB:

Francine 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, Mary Ann Jones, Shirley Caldwell, Wendell Whitlock, Verger Stephen Hannum, Joyce Stewart, Virginia DuBrey, Regina Meacham Devero, Alice Bowman-Cropper, Katrina Harris, Karen Ragland, Guy Booth, Alletta Parris Olday, Linda Tapper Smith

KEEP IN PRAYER:

Justin Trotman, Cathy Stafford, Daryn Stewart, Adinah Edwards, Teena Watson-Matthews, Waltier Blocker, Santee Ruffin, Angela Holloway, Mary Ann Phillips, Yvonne Syndor, Carl Dean, Arlene Gray, Adrian Gray, Sharon Harper, Quincina Edmonds, D. Lynn Joell, Edita Gauthney, Carmen Brown, Stephen Pugh, Lisa Woodley

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 need to 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 - Members and visitors who use GIVI must use **Realm Connect**. If donate via the church website, either directly or by using the QR code, you will soon see a new webpage and corresponding QR code.

6) Cellphone: Text "AECST" to 73256 to donate.

IMPORTANT: Please make sure your name, envelop number and amount is placed on the offering envelope. This is particularly important for bookkeeping accurate. If you are unsure of your number, please email stewardship@aecst.org. We appreciate your assistance.

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](#).

Bishop
Rector
Associate to the Rector
Associate Priest
Associate Priest
Associate Minister
Executive Asst. to the Rector
Sexton
Asst. Sexton
Chancel Choirmaster
Gospel Choirmaster
Rector's General Counsel
Altar Guild
Baptism Co-Chairs

O. V. Catto Voter Education Ministry
Church School Superintendent
Ed Muse Photography Ministry
Fiscal Advisor to the Rector
Girls' Friendly Society
Jazz Ensemble Director
Live Stream Ministry
Memorial Flowers

Roy Ellison Monarch Greeters
Parish Vergers
Parish Webmaster
Property Chair
Scout Pack 133

St. Thomas Daughters of the King
Stewardship Chair
Videography Ministry
Visitor's Ministry
Voices of Comfort
William Burke Ushers Ministry

MINISTRY STAFF

The Rt. Rev. Daniel G P Gutierrez
The Very Rev. Canon Martini Shaw rector@aecst.org
The Rev. Fr. Daren E. Evans associaterector@aecst.org
The Rev. Fr. Gerald (Jay) Collins associatepriest@aecst.org
The Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney wilgafney@gmail.com
The Rev. Dr. Paul Bach pauljaybach@gmail.com
Gladyce DuBrey 1792@aecst.org
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William Edmonds edmon57@comcast.net
Deadra Cannon assistantfiscal@aecst.org
Nikkol Simms njsimms@verizon.net
Jay Fluellen, DMA chancelchoir@aecst.org
Yaseen Farooq | Teri Tillman 1792@aecst.org
Alfreda Brockman livevideo@aecst.org
Clare Mae Daniels fredabee@verizon.net
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Judy Tillman scmci@aol.com
Quentin Heyward stewardship@aecst.org
Edita Gauthney | Michele Green recordedvideo@aecst.org
Robert Davenport visitorsministry@aecst.org
Arlene Singletary 1792@aecst.org
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 - Judy Tillman | Property Chair - William J. Burke

Dr. Tim Barksdale
Judith Simkins Booth
Deadra Cannon

Clare Mae Daniels
Mary Sandra Dean
Elaine Gillison

Eugene Golson
Monica Lewis Jones
Deborah Matthews

THE AUXILIARY VESTRY

Brenda Johnson Best
Sharon Bullock
Ronnie Collins

Gwenda Hart
D. Lynn Joell
Kelvin Johnson

Cynthia Muse
Dr. Monica Johnson Taylor
Darryle (Bobby) 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 Sandra Dean | Alternate: Tyrone Keller