CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL ORDER OF WORSHIP



The Feast of Absalom Jones
A Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

February 23, 2025

3:00 p.m.

900 Broadway Nashville, Tennessee 37203 christcathedral.org

Absalom Jones, Priest, 1818 Holy Eucharist: Rite II

PRELUDE Florence Price
Adoration (1887–1953)

David Hurd (b. 1950)

Every Pilgrim Has a Mountain

Every pilgrim has a mountain that is hers alone to climb, Rising from the deepest places, standing with the rush of time.

Every mountain has a summit calling out to him who seeks, Though the way is often winding and the summoning oblique.

Every summit has a threshold with a path from either side, Where the hopeful meet the Hoped-for, and the guided know their Guide.

Guide us now and guide us always, God of pilgrimage and peak, Source of all that draws and drives us, sum of everything we seek.

Michael Hudson

The Lord is My Light

Lillian Bouknight (d. 1990)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?

Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life;
Whom shall I fear?

In the time of trouble, he shall hide me; Whom shall I fear?

Wait for the Lord, and be of good courage; He shall strengthen thine heart.

Arr. Paul Gainer

CALL TO WORSHIP

Please stand as you are able for the procession.

ENTRANCE HYMN

Lauda Anima

Blessed Absalom



Celebrant From the rising of the sun to its settingPeople My Name shall be among the nations,

Celebrant in every place incense shall be offered to my name

People And a pure offering for my Name shall be great among the nations

says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 1:11

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

SONG OF PRAISE

Every Time I Feel the Spirit arr. William L. Dawson

Soloist: Sam Boyd (1899–1990)

Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart, I will pray.

Upon the mountain my Lord spoke, Out of his mouth came fire and smoke; Looked all around me, it looked so fine, Till I asked my Lord if all was mine.

Jordan river is chilly and cold, It chills the body but not the soul; There ain't but one train on this track, It runs to heaven and right back.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

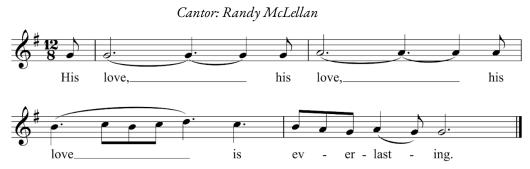
Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Isaiah 42:5-9

Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

Lector The Word of the Lord.People Thanks be to God.

PSALM 126



Antiphon: 1st x soloist, 2nd x congregation

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Antiphon

Then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

Antiphon

Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negev.
Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping,
carrying the seed,
Will come again with joy,
shouldering their sheaves.

Antiphon 2x

SEQUENCE HYMN

McKee

In Christ there is no East or West

#529 The Hymnal 1982

All stand for the reading of the Gospel

THE GOSPEL LESSON – John 15:12-15

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. †††

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

SERMON - The Reverend Ollie V. Rencher

A moment of silence and reflection follows the sermon.

THE NICENE CREED

All stand

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

† and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR ABSALOM JONES

Reader: O God of freedom and justice: we celebrate this day your servant, Absalom Jones, the first person of African ancestry ordained in The Episcopal Church. Empower the Diocese of Tennessee and the entire church to build a world where righteousness and justice are the foundations of your throne. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God of peace, let your Church continue the ministry of reconciliation. Help us grow Absalom Jones' ministry of racial justice. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God who hears and sees the tears of our forbearers, help the nations of the world hear their citizens' concerns by responding to injustice, war, and racial oppression with actions that lead to peace. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God of our Ancestors, endue our leaders with wisdom and vision *to gain wisdom from the past* with the purpose of moving forward. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God of compassion, you hear your people's cries and prayers in heaven: accept our intercessions and petitions as part of our worship of you. Help us remember that we stand on the prayers of our ancestors. We pray for current and future generations. Glory to God 's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God who creates, Blessed Absalom reminds us that sacrifices must be accompanied with action: guide our feet to run the race without growing weary. Keep us focused on the fight for equality. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God who heals, deliver those who call upon your name as we intercede for the sick, the unhoused, the hungry and those suffering for lack of justice. You inspire our hearts with hope as we offer prayers of thanksgiving for this earth. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God who delivers us from death, continue to grow from strength to strength those who know you more fully, as we pray for the departed. Glory to God's power and goodness;

Response: The nations of the earth praise you.

Reader: O God, move us to be always thankful for your mercies and to act as a people who owe so much for your goodness. We ask all these blessings and mercies, only in the Name of your beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Response: Amen.

Adapted from prayers written by the Rev. Jemonde Taylor and based on "A Thanksgiving Sermon" given by the Rev. Absalom Jones on January 1, 1808.

CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Celebrant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive † you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

Amen.

THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Holy Communion

The Offering is designated to support the Historically Black Colleges and Universities of the Episcopal Church: St. Augustine's University in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Voorhees University in Denmark, South Carolina.

THE OFFERTORY



Scan this QR code with your phone or tablet, under "Fund" choose "Absalom Jones-HBCUs" in the drop-down menu to leave your offering this evening. You may also leave your offering in the offering plates as they are passed.

ANTHEM Charles Albert Tindley
Stand By Me, Lord (1851–1933)

Soloist: George Rowe

When the storms of life are raging, stand by me. When the storms of life are tossing me Like a boat out on the sea,
Lord who rules the wind and water, Lord,
Stand by me.

When I'm growing old and feeble, stand by me. When I've done all I can, And my friends don't understand, stand by me.

When the storms of life are tossing me Like a boat that's lost at sea, And my friends don't understand, Stand by me.

Arr. by Ruth Butterfield-Winter

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Eucharistic Prayer A, BCP, p. 361)

Celebrant The Lord be with you.People And also with you.Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all your saints, who have been the chosen vessels of your grace, and the light of the world in their generations. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal

kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen**.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

Celebrant Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People Therefore let us keep the feast.

The Gifts of God for the People of God. † Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Please follow the direction of the ushers in order to receive Communion. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Sacrament or a blessing during this time of distribution. If you wish to receive the Sacrament by intinction please leave the Bread in your hand. The chalice bearer will dip the Bread in the Wine and return it to your hand.

The Sacrament made with low-gluten will be distributed at the Chancel rail, let us know that you need the low-gluten wafer when we come to you.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

VOLUNTARY

Dale Wood

Let us break bread together (1934–2003)

God's Gonna Set This World On Fire

arr. Moses Hogan (1957 - 2003)

God's gonna set this world on fire one of these days, hallelujah! I'm gonna sit at the welcome table... I'm gonna eat and never get hungry... I'm gonna drink and never get thirsty...

HYMN

Kirk and Deby Dearman

Instruments of Your Peace



After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members of
your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

May Almighty God, to whose glory we celebrate this festival of Absalom Jones be now and evermore your guide and companion in the way. **Amen.**

May God, who has bound us together in the company of the elect, in this age and the age to come, attend to the prayers of his faithful servants on your behalf, as he hears your prayers for them. **Amen.**

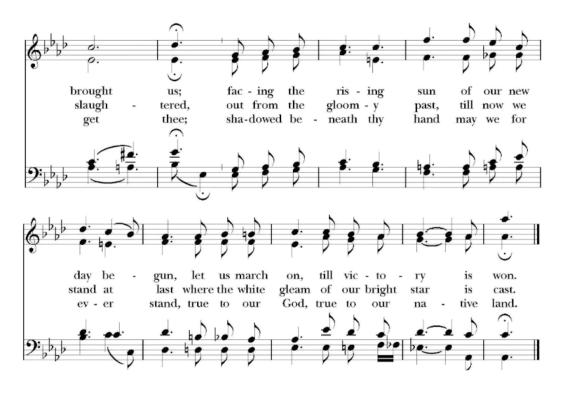
May God, who has given us, in the lives of his saints, patterns of holy living and victorious dying, strengthen your faith and devotion, and enable you to bear witness to the truth against all adversity. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen**.

HYMN Lift Every Voice

Lift every voice and sing





DISMISSAL

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Postlude in A Minor Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912)

Postlude in A Mino

All are invited to a reception following the service in the Gathering Hall.

Membership of the Beloved Community Commission of the Diocese of Tennessee

Dr. Billy Ballard, Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville
Sally Carlson-Bancroft, Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Nashville
The Reverend Richard C. Britton, Jr. Retired, Clergy Advisor. Nashville
Dr. Merriel Bullock, Trinity Episcopal Church, Clarksville
Chris Colane, St. James Episcopal Church, Sewanee
Nancy Cason, St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Nashville
Dr. William Gittens, St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, Nashville. Co-chair
Kate Keese, Franklin, Tennessee.

The Rev. Rob Lamborn,The Parish of St. Mark and St. Paul. Sewanee The Rev. Monna Mayhall, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Franklin. Co-chair Pamela Bradley Smith, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Franklin Johniene Thomas, St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, Nashville. Greg Voiles, St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Nashville

For more information about the ministry of the Beloved Community Commission and how to get involved, contact the Reverend Monna Mayhall monna@stpaulsfranklin.com, the Reverend Richard C. Britton, Jr. rick_britton@comcast.net or Dr. William Gittens bgittens@comcast.net

The Reverend Ollie V. Rencher



Father Ollie Rencher has served as the rector of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church and School in Memphis, TN, since July 2018. Prior ministry since his priesthood ordination on January 13, 2004 include rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Charlotte, NC), associate rector of Church of the Holy Communion (Memphis, TN), and assistant rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church/campus minister at the University of Mississippi (Oxford, MS). An alumnus of Millsaps College, the General Theological

Seminary of The Episcopal Church, and a member of the Fellowship of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), Father Rencher is married to Ellie Rolfes Rencher. In addition to past leadership in the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee, he now serves on the boards of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal School, St. George's Independent School, BRIDGES, and the Memphis Boy and Girl Choir. His livelihood involves time with family and friends, retreats, racial reconciliation initiatives, fitness training, travel, cooking, exploring cemeteries, movies, and an array of music, especially jazz, classical, and singing primarily in Anglican/Episcopal choral ensembles.

The Reverend Absalom Jones, 1746-1818

Absalom Jones was America's first black priest. Born into slavery in Delaware at a time when slavery was being debated as immoral and undemocratic, he taught himself to read, using the New Testament as one of his resources. At the age of 16, Jones' mother, sister, and five brothers were sold, but he was brought to Philadelphia by his master, where he attended a night school for African Americans operated by Quakers. Upon his manumission in 1784, he served as lay minister for the black membership at St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church with his friend, Richard Allen, and together they established the Free African Society to aid in the emancipation of slaves and to offer sustenance and spiritual support to widows, orphans, and the poor.

The active evangelism of Jones and Allen greatly increased black membership at St. George's. Alarmed by the rise in black attendance, in 1791 the vestry decided to segregate African Americans into an upstairs gallery without notice. When ushers attempted to remove the black congregants, the resentful group exited the church.

In 1792 Jones and Allen, with the assistance of local Quakers and Episcopalians, established the "First African Church" in Philadelphia. Shortly after the establishment that same year, the African Church applied to join the Protestant Episcopal Church, laying before the diocese three requirements: the Church must be received as an already organized body; it must have control over its own affairs; and Jones must be licensed as lay-reader and if qualified, ordained as its minister.

Upon acceptance into the Diocese of Pennsylvania, the church was renamed the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. The following year Jones became a deacon but was not ordained a priest until 1802, seven years later. At 56 years old, he became the first black American priest. He continued to be a leader in his community, founding a day school (as African Americans were excluded from attending public school), the Female Benevolent Society, and an African Friendly Society. In 1800 he called upon Congress to abolish the slave trade and to provide for gradual emancipation of existing slaves. Jones died in 1818.

The famous image on the cover of Absalom Jones was rendered by Philadelphia artist Raphaelle Peale in 1810.

CELEBRANT

The Right Reverend John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop The Episcopal Dioceses of Tennessee

PREACHER

The Reverend Ollie V. Rencher Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Memphis

DEACON

The Reverend Deacon Mary McCarthy Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville

ASSISTING CLERGY

The Very Reverend Serena Sides, *Dean and Rector Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville*The Reverend Canon Anna Russell Friedman *Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville*The Reverend Richard C. Britton, Jr. *Member, The Beloved Community Commission*

LITANIST

The Reverend Tabitha Lewis, Vicar St Anselm's Episcopal Church, Nashville

MUSICIANS

St. Bartholomew's Chamber Singers Dr. David Madeira, Director of Music St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Nashville

ORGANIST

Dr. Peter Rogahn, Associate Organist and Choirmaster Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville

LECTOR

Pamela Bradley Smith St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Franklin

ACOLYTE

Cheryl Williams
Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville

SACRISTAN

Amy Woodson Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville

USHERS

Sally Carlson-Bancroft

Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, Nashville

John Bridges

Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville

Dr. William Gittens

St Anselm's Episcopal Church, Nashville

Johniene Thomas

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, Nashville

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