



Window: The Baptism of Jesus

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
The Order of Worship for Epiphany 7
February 23, 2025 † 8:30 AM

THE ENTRANCE

Welcome

Please stand as comfortable at the ringing of the bell.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II
THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Celebrant Blessed be God: most holy, glorious, and undivided Trinity.

People **And blessed be God's reign now and for ever. Amen.**

Collect for Purity *unison*

BCP 355

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: The Third Song of Isaiah

BCP 87

Arise, shine, for your light has come, *
and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.
For behold, darkness covers the land; *
deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.
But over you the Lord will rise, *
and his glory will appear upon you.
Nations will stream to your light, *
and kings to the brightness of your dawning.
Your gates will always be open; *
by day or night they will never be shut.
They will call you, The City of the Lord, *
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
Violence will no more be heard in your land, *
ruin or destruction within your borders.
You will call your walls, Salvation, *
and all your portals, Praise.

The sun will no more be your light by day; *
by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.
The Lord will be your everlasting light, *
and your God will be your glory.

The Collect of the Day

BCP 216

O Lord, you have taught us that without love whatever we do is worth nothing: Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts your greatest gift, which is love, the true bond of peace and of all virtue. Grant this for the sake of your only Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

Please be seated for the reading of the scriptures.

A Reading from the First Book of Kings

I Kings 8:22-23, 27b-30

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, ‘O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart. Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Have regard to your servant’s prayer and his plea, O Lord my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; that your eyes may be open night and day towards this house, the place of which you said, “My name shall be there”, that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays towards this place. Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray towards this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling-place; heed and forgive.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 84 *read responsively by half-verse*

BCP 707

- 1 How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts! *
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
- 2 The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest
where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
- 3 Happy are they who dwell in your house! *
they will always be praising you.
- 4 Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

- 5 Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, *
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.
- 6 They will climb from height to height, *
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.
- 7 Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.
- 8 Behold our defender, O God; *
and look upon the face of your anointed.
- 9 For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room, *
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.
- 10 For the Lord God is both sun and shield; *
he will give grace and glory;
- 11 No good thing will the Lord withhold *
from those who walk with integrity.
- 12 O Lord of hosts, *
happy are they who put their trust in you!

A Reading from the Revelation to John

Revelation 21:2-7

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

The Nicene Creed *unison*

BCP 358

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.

Prayers of the People *kneeling or seated*

Let us worship the Savior with joy as we offer our prayers, saying hear our prayer.

At the birth of Jesus, Magi traveled from distant lands. We pray for the welfare of the world, for peace in places of conflict, and for the renewal of the Earth.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

At his baptism, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. We pray for the Church, anointed with that same Spirit, that we may practice repentance, proclaim the gospel, and walk in love.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

After his baptism, Jesus gathered a community of disciples. We pray for the health, safety, and wellbeing of this community as we navigate the challenges before us.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

In his preaching, Jesus declared that the Kingdom of God has come near. We pray for our Nation and for our leaders, that we may end division, enact justice, and respect the dignity of every human being.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

In his ministry, Jesus healed the sick and comforted the distressed. We pray for all who are sick, anxious, or troubled, especially St. Thomas parishioners Nicole, Alice, the Poole & Carpenter families, the Covington & Whitaker families, the Pauli family, the Lewis family, Charlene, Marie, Charlene & Randy, Arthur, Bernie, Elissa, Charlotte, and Cindy; our homebound members John, Ramón & Maria, Carol, and William; friends of the parish Gaston, Joe, JoAnn, the family and friends of Justin Rieger, Mr. Shivley, the family of David Johnson, and Linda, and for all who care for them.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus comforted those who grieved and raised the dead to life. We pray for all who grieve and for those who have died, especially Murray, Judy, Rick, John, and Bill.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

The disciples rejoiced to see Jesus transfigured before them. We rejoice in the many blessings of this life, especially your presence with us.

God of glory, **hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, and help us shine with the light of Christ through the power of the Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

BCP 360

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.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offering

St. Thomas is grateful for your gifts.

You may mail a check to 2100 Hilton Avenue, Columbus, GA 31906, donate online at our website (<https://www.stthomascolumnbus.org/give/>), or use your mobile device by texting **STTCOLUMBUS** to **73256**.

The Great Thanksgiving *Eucharistic Prayer B, standing as comfortable*

BCP 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 our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

Remain standing as comfortable, or kneel.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. For in these last days you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In Christ, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Savior 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 Jesus 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, according to his command, O Father,

We remember Christ's death, We proclaim Christ's resurrection, We await Christ's coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through whom we are acceptable to you, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. **AMEN.**

**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 Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ,

People **We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.**

All Christians are joyfully invited to share in communion. You do not have to be a member of St. Thomas or an Episcopalian in order to receive. Come forward down the center aisle when invited by the ushers. Go to the farthest end of the altar rail and stand or kneel. Hold out one hand to receive the bread and then dip the bread in the cup or drink from the cup. If you prefer not to share a common cup, hold out two hands to receive the bread and wine together. If you prefer not to receive either the bread or the cup, cross your arms across your chest. If you need a gluten-free wafer, let the server know. If you prefer to receive communion at your pew, let the usher know.

Postcommunion Prayer *unison*

Sit or kneel as comfortable, keeping aware that some may be kneeling behind you.

Eternal God, you have graciously accepted us as living members of 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 Savior. Amen.

The Blessing

Holy eternal Majesty, Holy incarnate Word, Holy abiding Spirit, Bless you for evermore. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

In our prayers

St. Thomas parishioners: Nicole Ceccato; Alice Barlow, the Poole & Carpenter families; the Covington & Whitaker families; the Pauli family, the Lewis family, Carlene Pawlowicz, Marie Massey, Charlene & Randy Moore, Arthur Frost, Bernie Sutter, Elissa Wagner, Charlotte Mills, Cindy Godwin

Homebound members: Ramón & Maria Capó, Carol Kennon, William South, John Studstill

Friends of the parish: Gaston Sellers (*Jennifer Fletcher*), Joe Moore (*Ena Hunt*), JoAnn Vasquez (*Maryann Rahm*), family & friends of Justin Rieger (*Karen Cortbell*), Mr. Shivley (*Kelly McFalls*) family of David Johnson (*Ann Johnston*), Linda Wilson (*Florence Wakoko*)

Those with continuing concerns: Gene Wells, Frank & Pam Feagle, Ralph Wimberly, Jessica McComb, April Jacobs, Jana Speer, Debbie & Max Anderson, Korie MacDougall, Nicole Ceccato, Neal Fenter, Ellen Free, Steve Scott, Bernie Sutter, Raymond Campbell, Art France, Angela Tulloh (*Louise Tulloh*)

Soldiers & families at Ft. Moore and St. Thomas members & friends who are deployed:
Dan Wilcox, Krk Malit

Those celebrating birthdays: Dawn Farrow 2/23, Rochelle Jones 2/24, Jeremy Reed 2/24, Susan Henderson 2/27, Marlea Jeffries 2/27, Richard Edwards 2/29, Kayden Hiers 2/29

Those celebrating anniversaries: Jeff & Leslie Holloway 2/28, Robert & Malone Moore 2/28, Debbie & Diana Young 2/28

Those who have died: Murray Craig 4/4/24, Judy Gunter 4/6/24, Rick McKnight 7/30/24, John Partin 11/22/24; Bill Pauli 1/28/25

Announcements

For more information about the ministries of St. Thomas, pick up our latest *Seasons* newsletter or visit our website at www.StThomasColumbus.org.

Sundays

Coffee Time: 8:45-10:15. Homemade and packaged snacks are available in the parish hall.
Formation for all ages: 9:30-10:15 am

Children PreK - 4th grade meet in the Children's Center

Tween and Teens meet in the Youth Room.

Adults: February 23 - Bishop Wright leads a forum and discussion at 9:30 in the parish hall.

Wednesdays

Winter Schedule

5:30 to 6 - Eucharist in the Chapel

5:30 to 6:15 - Dinner served on the buffet.

6:00 - Playground open for children who have finished dinner weather permitting

6:30 to 7:30 - Formation time for everyone. Children in the Children's Center. Youth in the Youth Room or outside. Adults in the library, parlor, and parish hall.

6:30 to 8:15 - Choir rehearsal in the Nave

Wednesday Night Menus - BBQ pork & chicken sandwiches on Feb 26.

Wednesday Dinner is served buffet style. Donations are welcome but not required. To help offset costs, you may donate cash or with a credit card on site or pay ahead of time on the website. Reservations are helpful to help us plan, but feel free to show up whenever you are available. All menus will have gluten free and vegan options. Let us know you're coming at StThomasColumbus.org/wednesday-dinner/

News for this Week

FABArts is sponsoring the creation of a mural in the youth/children's area by the Outreach Center. Your last chance to help paint the mural is today - Sunday Feb 23 Services with Bishop Wright - 9am - 2pm

Sietske will have smocks and aprons to protect clothing but unless you're a really messy adult, you won't need anything. This will be a welcoming, bright addition to the children and youth's area and a project to remind us all to "Laugh and Sing" in this holy place.

Journey Groups

Strength for the Journey: A Guide to Spiritual Practice by Renee Miller **AND** Manna & Mercy

Strength for the Journey explores twenty spiritual disciplines that can be part of our daily lives.

Groups explore how spiritual practices shape us, examine different types of practices, and consider how to incorporate spiritual practices into our lives. A few used copies of the book are in the church office for \$7, or you may purchase a copy online. You may also participate in a group without reading the book. **Groups will explore *Strength for the Journey* on Sunday afternoons at 4 pm, Tuesday afternoons at 1:30 pm, and Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm.** The Sunday afternoon group has a Zoom option as well.

In addition, the *Manna & Mercy* Journey Group continues to meet on Wednesday nights to discuss the second half of the book, focused on the ministry of Jesus and the early church.

Men's Group Fellowship Gathering

Tuesday, February 25th at 5:30pm, Trevioli Italian Kitchen At The Rapids (1329 Front Ave Suite A)

Contact Paul Hostetter for more information.

Women's Group

Thursday, February 27, 6 pm at Trevioli (7466 Blackmon Rd)

Gather with women from St. Thomas for fellowship and a meal. All who identify as women are welcome to gather. Next gathering is February 27 at the Blackmon Road Trevioli. Sign up online to let us know you're coming!

St. Thomas Yard Sale

Saturday, March 1

Bring your gently used goods and donate them to the St. Thomas Yard Sale!! We are looking for these types of items: Furniture, Household items: dishes, utensils, mugs, linens, Books, Artwork, Working appliances and tools, Gently used toys, Sports equipment, Games, Holiday items, Clothing: Less than 3 years old and on hangers. We will be collecting on: Sunday 2/23 4-6pm, Monday 2/24 & Tuesday 2/25 9 - 4pm, Wednesday 2/26 9 - 6pm. 2025 profits from the yard sale will support Boxwood Soccer Club. Contact Linda Prince or Susan Wirt for more information or scan the QR code for volunteer signups.

Yard Sale Preview Party

Friday, February 28, 6-8pm

Come one, come all! St. Thomas Preview Party for all the goodies in the annual Yard Sale. This is your opportunity to have a first look and pick up your treasure before it's gone! Friday night, February 28, 6 - 8pm. Bring your friends and family and enjoy an evening of shopping! All proceeds support the Boxwood Soccer Club. All prices firm.

God is STILL With Us - St. Thomas Devotions

Parishioners are invited to write reflections on our theme for this Lenten season. How do you know that God is still with you, and what difference does that knowledge make? Reflections are 300 words or less and will be shared in our email newsletters in this season. Contact meg@stthomascolumnbus.org to offer to write.

Upcoming and Ongoing

Women's Lectionary Bible Study

Thursdays, 10 to 11 am

All women are invited to join Rev. Cindy Cox Garrard in the library or by Zoom from 10 to 11 am on Thursdays to study the lectionary readings for the coming week. A handout for the week's study is emailed to each participant. Contact the church office to be added to the mailing list.

Shroventide: A Shrove Tuesday Pancake Feast

March 4 beginning at 5:30.

St. Thomas youth host our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner as a fundraiser for the youth ministry program. This year's event will be a medieval feast highlighting the history of Shrove Tuesday. Dinner is served until 6:15, followed by a program about St. Thomas youth ministry and concluding with our annual pancake flipping contest. Children will bury Alleluias during the program and return in time for the contest. Donations support this summer's Youth Mission Trip to Charlotte, NC.

Ash Wednesday Services

March 5 at 7 am (chapel) and noon and 6:30 pm (nave).

Ash Wednesday liturgies begin the season in solemn prayer and quiet. There is no music at 7am. A cantor chants at noon. The choir and congregation sing and chant at the 6:30 pm service. Child care and children's chapel are offered at the 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday service only. Invite a friend to join you. Ash Wednesday is a meaningful day for Episcopalians and for all Christians alike.

Read Across Americca

Wednesday, March 5 1:00-1:30pm and Thursday, March 6 8:00-8:30am

Community Cares is looking for community members to come in for about 30 minutes and read to our students for Read Across America. There are two available dates and times. Contact Reb Kreyling for more information.

St. Thomas Book Group

March 7, 11 am

An informal group, everyone is welcome. Come and bring your friends. Contact Linnea Grosse for further information. March book - *The Confidante* by Christopher Gorham.

Episcokids Adventure to the CocaCola Space Science Center

March 22, noon - 2 pm

Cost: \$6 per child (cash is preferred). Please turn the money in to Ms. Shayla by March 19. The trip is open to the first 30 children who sign up. Scan the QR code to register.

Lost and Found

St. Thomas lost and found's current inventory: 6 jackets, vests, sweaters; 1 child's novelty hat; 1 travel drink mug; 1 pair of sunglasses; 2 pair of reading glasses; 4 assorted toys; 1 sticker book; 2 tote bags; assorted jewelry; 1 owners manual (Inflator). Please call or swing by the office if any of these items might belong to you. Unclaimed items will be happily donated to the yard sale February 27.

QR Code for signups! Use the QR code to find a list of current signups at St. Thomas. New to QR codes? Open the camera on your smartphone (or a QR reader), point at the black and white code box, when prompted push the link that shows up on your screen.



Vestry Members

David Brandenburgh (Sr. Warden), Garrett Vance, Brian Walker, Norm Easterbrook (Jr. Warden), Jessica Ezzell, Sue O'Dell, Andrew Meeks, Mollie Smith, Katie Underwood

St. Thomas Staff

Administrative Assistant: Karen Corthell; *Director of Children and Family Ministries:* Shayla Holloway; *Director of Music:* Debbie Anderson; *Director of Parish Administration:* Patty Slembariski; *Director of Parish & Community Engagement:* Meg Olive-Allison; *Director of Youth & Young Adults:* Taylor Mack; *Organist:* Robin Ericksen; *Kitchen Manager & Sexton:* Seth Burgamy; *Livestream Technician:* Nick Williams; *Maintenance & Cleaning:* Frances Woolfolk; *Nursery:* Riley Mullen, Evie Smith, Dorothy Uwanawich, Jenneken Varnum; *Sexton Assistant:* Morgan Camp

St. Thomas Clergy

Rector: Rev. Grace Burton-Edwards; *Associate Rector for Mission:* Rev. Darius Sudayi