

# St. Thomas Reformed Church



St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands  
Founded 1660

**February 11, 2018**

All are Welcome  
In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ

# Transfiguration Sunday

The liturgical color today is green representing the growth and mission of the church!

## “We Gather In God’s Presence...”

### Greeting and Ministry Updates

### Call to Worship

Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth!  
**Amen!**

### Introit

“Come By Here”

*Spiritual, arr. Smallwood*

### Prayer

### \*Hymn # 631

‘Lift Every Voice and Sing’

*Johnson*

## A Celebration of Music & Arts

### Worship Team

### Visual Arts

### Drama

### Children’s Choir

“We Walk His Way/Ewe Thina”

*South Africa*

### Dance Ministry

### Adult Choir

“Order My Steps”  
Penny Woods, soloist

*Burleigh*

### Children’s Message

### \*Hymn

‘I’m Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing’  
*(Students and teachers are excused to Christian Education classes.)*

*Spiritual*

**I’m gonna \*sing when the Spirit says \*sing (3x)  
And obey the Spirit of the Lord**

**\*dance/ pray/ preach/ follow/ lead**

## ...To Hear God's Word...

**Scriptures**

II Kings 2:1-14

P 410

**Message**

“Leaving Your Legacy!”

Reading

From “Legacy” by Dr. Margaret Burroughs

Gail Prince

## ...And Respond with Gratitude

**Offering**

**Offertory**

“Nobody Knows/Deep River”

*Spiritual*

Andrea Lee

**\*Doxology**

**Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer**

**\*Hymn**

‘Swing Low/When the Saints Go Marching In’

*Spiritual, arr. Schaffer*

Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home (2x)

\*Oh, when the saints go marching in (2x)

Oh, Lord, I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in

\*Oh, when the trumpet sounds the call...

\*Oh, on when they crown Him Lord of all...

\*Oh, on that hallelujah day...

**\*Benediction**

“We Walk His Way/Here I Am, Lord”

*South Africa/Schutte*

We walk His way, we walk His way

Eh-way tee-na, eh-way tee-na

Here I am, Lord; is it I, Lord?

I have heard You calling in the night

I will go, Lord, if You lead me

I will hold your people in my heart

....Depart in peace



## GIVING THANKS:

### Leading Worship Today:

Ministers:	All the people of the church
Preaching:	Pastor Jeff Neevel
Reading:	Gail Prince
Music:	Chanelle Schaffer, Penny Woods, and Andrea Lee
Greeters:	Jane Wherren and Linda Gidley
Head Ushers:	Dr. Adam Flowers and John Woods
Audio:	Steve Marsella and Henry Ong

**A warm welcome to our visitors.** You are invited to complete the visitor registration forms at the end of the pew or on the back table.

**TODAY we will welcome** members of First Reformed Church, Aplington IA with deep gratitude for assisting with hurricane relief this week! Their pastor, Rev. Brett VanderBerg (wife Jaimi) was a seminary intern here at STRC in 2010.

Later this month:

- 14 – **Ash Wednesday Service 7pm.**
- 18 – **XYG Bake No Sale** after worship
- 25 - A **2-pitch** tradition with a post-Irmaria twist!

**Thanks to the** Children's Choir, Adult Choir, Dance Ministry, Drama Ministry, Visual Arts Ministry, Michael Barr, and Noel Regalado for their contributions to this morning's service.

**A Women's Bible Study** meets twice a week. The daytime group meets on Wednesdays at 10:00 am at the Marsella home in Mahogany Run. Please speak to Robin for more info, 610-597-8312. The evening group meets at 6:15 at the Hodges' home. Contact Billie for directions, 340-514-2623. The DVD series study is titled "God of Creation" by Jen Wilken. All women are welcome.

### CLASSIFIED CORNER

*(Contact the church office 776-8255 or*

*email: [mail@stthomasreformedchurch.org](mailto:mail@stthomasreformedchurch.org) to volunteer or for more info.)*

**WANTED:** Volunteers to help teach GED Classes at BOC. For more information and to sign up please speak to Dawn.

**GIVE AWAY:** Three used solar panels, speak to Mary Howe.

**The bathroom** in the undercroft is available for use.

## CALENDAR

TODAY	10:00 a.m. 10:20 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	Sunday Worship Christian Education Worship Arts Reception (Pavilion)
Tues., Feb 13	11:30 - 1 p.m.	Salvation Army Lunch
Wed., Feb 14	10:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Women's Bible Study (Marsella Home)
Thurs., Feb 15	6:00 - 7:30 p.m. 6:15-8:00 p.m.	Adult Choir Practice (Music Room) Women's Bible Study (Hodges' Home)
Sat., Feb 17	11:30-1:00 midday	Bethlehem House Lunch
Sun., Feb 18	10:00 a.m. 10:20 a.m. 11:30 - 12 noon	Sunday Worship Christian Education Children's Choir Practice (Music Room)

### Next Week's Lectionary Scripture Readings

- Genesis 9:8-17
- Psalm 25:1-10
- 1 Peter 3:18-22
- Mark 1:9-15

## Music and Worship Arts Events

**All are welcome to a special Worship Arts Reception** immediately following the service; members of each ministry group will be present to answer any questions you may have. Be sure to take a moment to say thank you to all who've shared their gifts and enriched our worship services each Sunday!

### **Wanted: Palm Crosses for Ash Wednesday**

Do you have any extra palm crosses from past Palm Sunday services? If so, please bring them with you on Wednesday evening so they can be used ceremonially in the service.

### **Special Musical Event @The Hebrew Congregation of St. Thomas**

On Sunday, February 18, at 11:30 a.m., the [St. Thomas Synagogue](#) will host one of the most interesting music events of the year. A visiting cruise ship chartered by the [World Union for Progressive Judaism](#) (the international arm of the [Reform movement of Judaism](#)) is bringing six synagogue choirs, at least twelve cantors, and chords of healing, hope and sacred sound to the sand-floor Sanctuary. The stop on St. Thomas is part of the WUPJ's [Igniting the Musical Jewish Soul](#), exploring roots, history and Jewish ties in the Caribbean. The concert, offered as a gift to the community, is meant to bring energy, inspiration and a spiritual "lift" to residents and visitors on St. Thomas and St. John. It is free and open to all.

# **Our team of artists**

## **Worship Team**

Kim Bourne-Vanneck  
Amos Frett  
Amber Knight  
Rebecca McDonnell  
C.J. Oleari  
Gloria Salas-Lindquist  
Penny Woods

## **Dance Ministry**

Camille McKayle-Stoltz  
Bailee Dukes  
Savannah Dukes  
Grace King  
Ariel Stoltz  
Rebecca McDonnell

## **Adult Choir - *singing this morning***

Lori Abbotts  
Geoffrey Barnard  
Julie Dukes  
Martin Dukes III  
William Howe  
Andrea Lee  
Stephen Mange  
Georgeann McNicholas  
Yolanda Thorpe  
Bonnie Treadwell  
Michael Weinzettle  
Penny Woods

**- additional members**

Elisabeth Anderson  
Shirley Coffelt  
Donna DeJongh  
Colleen Imbriale  
Lori Korkosz  
Steven Lamphear  
April Newland  
Dr. Ronald Nimmo  
John Turpin

**Children's Choir**

Arya Dickson  
Gabriella Dickson  
Grace King  
Dakota Merrill  
Kya Merrill  
Kai Merritt  
Kamui Nieves  
Kenji Nieves  
Amaya Turbé-Wheatley

**Instrumentalists**

Michael Barr  
Noel Regalado  
Courtney Reese

**Drama**

Jessica Henderson

**Visual Arts**

Felipé Ayala  
Desireé Francis  
Sarah Hancock  
C.J. Oleari

## Salvation Army Helpers this week

Mac Davis, Joe Tulis, Linda Gidley and Bonnie Troutman

### STRC Staff

Pastor: Rev. Jeffrey Neevel

Minister of Music & Arts: Chanelle Schaffer

Executive Office Administrator: Dawn Wheatley Comissiong

Retreat Center Coordinator: Maria V. Gomez Christian

Youth Ministry Coordinator: Nicole Wheatley Jackson

Christian Education Directors: Melissa Rogati & Rev. Rebecca McDonnell

Maintenance Supervisor: Charles Edwards

Security: Carl Griffin & John Paul Sperlich

Website Manager and Graphic Designer: Phyllis Carrozza

### Contact Information

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### Sermon Notes




## Part of history, African-American spirituals still heal

By Pamela Crosby\*

African-American spirituals, also known as Negro spirituals, are a familiar, precious part of American history. Today their melodies are an integral part of worship services. Often sung as part of Martin Luther King Jr. birthday and Black History Month celebrations, oppressed people worldwide continue to use them as protest and liberation songs.

While these songs have strong connections to historical and personal experiences, the entire function of the spirituals may not be obvious. Songs originating during the slavery years in the United States, 1600 through 1870, are generally categorized as plantation, sorrow and jubilee songs; however, the use of these melodies goes beyond those labels.

African-American spirituals emerged from a mix of the brutal institution of slavery, Christian influences and African culture. The songs expressed a yearning for a better life, claimed identification with the children of Israel, named the slave owner's deceit and hypocrisy, underscored the need for a closer walk with God, identified the reality of Satan and emphasized the slave's hope for freedom and the future. Love, grace, mercy, judgment, death and eternal life are among the themes enfolded in these songs.

The slave's acceptance of Christianity, while experiencing the conflicting behavior of slave owners, is a testament to the power of the gospel. Often slaves believed that the salvation and new life of which they learned when "worshipping" with their owners would happen not on earth, but, rather, when they went to heaven. While many slaves understood God's promises were meant for all people while on earth, they also knew they could not openly pray for deliverance and equality. The traditional spiritual "All God's Chillun Got Shoes" mentions having shoes — something most slaves did not have — plus a robe, a harp, a crown and wings. As they sang it, the slaves also knew none of these were actually available on earth.

In their songs, the slaves named issues and fears they could not express publicly. Meeting in the woods or arbors, out of the sight and hearing of slave owners and overseers, the slaves were free to worship and praise, to express their true feelings and to offer unbridled prayers and requests to God. They could lay their burdens down and find strength to face another day.

Many of the spirituals carried dual meanings and symbolic messages unknown to slave owners. The lyrics of "Steal Away" alerted slaves that a religious meeting would occur that night; slaves sang the song all day until they notified everyone. Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman used the spirituals "Wade in the Water" and "Deep River" to warn slaves to travel in the water to throw off their scent from the bloodhounds.

The lyrics of "Ride On, King Jesus" were an answer to the mistreatments by slave masters, who were no match for the God who was on the slaves' side.

The text of many spirituals, such as "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel" and "There Is a Balm in Gilead," came directly from the Old Testament. As he grieved over the sin of the Israelites who had turned their backs on God, the prophet Jeremiah posed the question, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" In their new religion, enslaved Africans found the answer in Jesus Christ.

Just as the texts of spirituals capture timeless messages, the strength and power of African-American spirituals speaks to the continual relevance of these songs and the reason they still heal souls today.