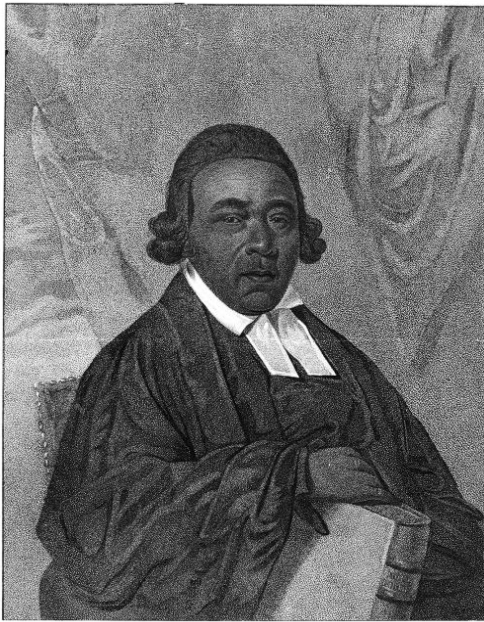


# BLESSED ABSALOM JONES



Absalom Jones was born into slavery in Delaware in the 1700s. When He was sixteen, he was sold away from his mother and six brothers and sisters and was sent to Philadelphia with his new owner.

**Young Absalom wanted to learn.** He managed to get and keep books which taught reading and writing. He practiced hard until he could do both.

Absalom thought of others first. In 1770, he married an enslaved woman named Mary King. He saved his money and took donations from friends to buy her freedom, instead of his own freedom. In this way, his children would be born free, and not as slaves.

**Absalom was courageous.** He and his family attended St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. The church leaders decided that they would **segregate** (separate) African Americans and make them sit upstairs in a balcony by themselves. Absalom thought that this was very unfair. One Sunday, he sat in the main part of the church. The church ushers picked him up and dragged him to the back of the church. Absalom and other African Americans left the church and never returned.

They started their own church called the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. That church is still in Philadelphia today. **Absalom and his African American friends also started a club to help people**, and they even started a school for African American children. When a serious sickness struck the people of Philadelphia, many people ran away from the city. Absalom and his friends stayed to help take care of the people who were sick.

Absalom Jones became a priest in the Episcopal Church, and because of all the good things he did, we Episcopalians have given him a special day. His special day is February 13<sup>th</sup>. Because he helped so many people and was a leader in our church, we remember his today.

*What good things can each of us do to be more like Blessed Absalom?*