

The Season After PENTECOST

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

FEAST OF MOSES THE BLACK

9:30 am Wednesday, 2 July 2025

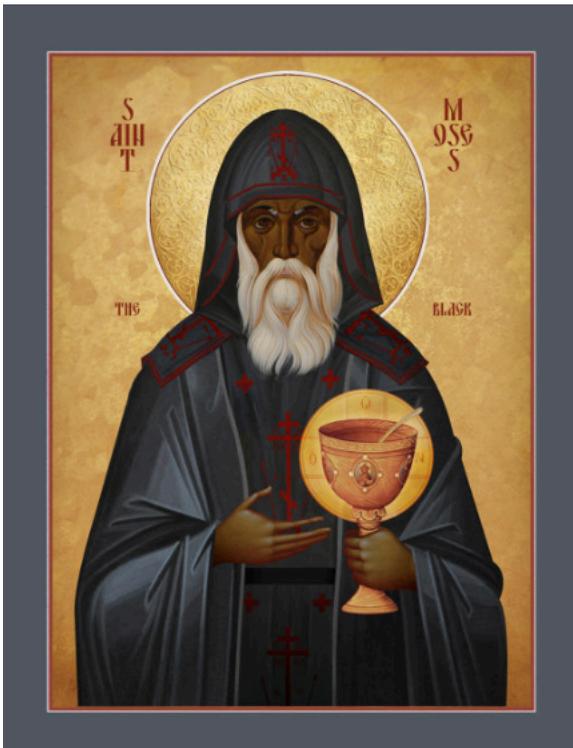
[From Lessor Feasts & Fasts](#)

Moses of Ethiopia, commonly called Moses the Black in early Christian literature, was a fourth-century monk who lived in one of several isolated desert monasteries near Scete in Lower Egypt. He was described as being tall, strong, "black of body," and in his early life, the hotblooded leader of a marauding robber band. While fleeing from the authorities, he took shelter with a group of monks. He was so impressed with their faithfulness and kindness that he chose to be baptized and to remain with them.

He led an ascetic life, lived in a simple cell, and ate only ten ounces of dry bread each day. Once, when the monks gathered to judge a member who had sinned, Moses arrived carrying a leaky basket filled with sand on his back. He explained that what he was holding behind him represented his own many sins, now hidden from his own view.

"And now I have come to judge my brother for a small fault," he remarked. The other monks

[Continued Pg 11](#)



Opening Acclamation:

Presider: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People: Glory to God for ever and ever.

Presider: Let us pray:

All: God of grace, you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love you, and voices to sing your praise. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may celebrate your glory and worship you in spirit and truth, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

GLORIA — #S-278

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,

we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:

receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Salutation

Presider: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray

Collect of the Day:

All: Almighty God, whose blessed Son guides our footsteps in the way of peace: Deliver us from the paths of hatred and violence, that we, following the example of your servant Moses, may serve you with singleness of heart and attain to the tranquility of the world to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: *(Please be seated for the lessons)*

First Lesson: A Reading from the 2nd book of Chronicles (28:8–15):

The people of Israel took captive two hundred thousand of their kin, women, sons, and daughters; they also took much booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria. But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded; he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria, and said to them, “Because the Lord, the God of your ancestors, was angry with Judah, he gave them into your hand, but you have killed them in a rage that has reached up to heaven. Now you intend to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, as your slaves. But what have you except sins against the Lord your God? Now hear me, and send back the captives whom you have taken from your kindred, for the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you.” Moreover, certain chiefs of the Ephraimites, Azariah son of Johanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, stood up against those who were coming from the war, and said to them, “You shall not bring the captives in here, for you propose to bring on us guilt against the Lord in addition to our present sins and guilt. For our guilt is already great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel.” So the warriors left the captives and the booty before the officials and all the assembly. Then those who were mentioned by name got up and took the captives, and with the booty they clothed all that were naked among them; they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink, and anointed them; and carrying all the feeble among them on donkeys, they brought them to their kindred at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria

Reader The Word of the Lord **People**

Thanks be to God

The PSALM:

Psalm 62 (read in unison)

**1 For God alone my soul in silence
waits; *
from him comes my salvation.**

**2 He alone is my rock and my
salvation, *
my stronghold, so that I shall not be
greatly shaken.**

**3 How long will you assail me to crush me,
all of you together, *
as if you were a leaning fence, a
toppling wall?**

**4 They seek only to bring me down
from my place of honor;
lies are their chief delight.**

**5 They bless with their lips, *
but in their hearts they curse.**

**6 For God alone my soul in silence
waits; *
truly, my hope is in him.**

**7 He alone is my rock and my
salvation, *
my stronghold, so that I shall not
be shaken.**

8 In God is my safety and my honor; *

God is my strong rock and my
refuge.
9 Put your trust in him always, O
people, *
pour out your hearts before him,
for God is our refuge.
10 Those of high degree are but a
fleeting breath, *
even those of low estate cannot be
trusted.
11 On the scales they are lighter than a
breath, *

all of them together.
12 Put no trust in extortion;
in robbery take no empty pride; *
though wealth increase, set not
your heart upon it.
13 God has spoken once, twice have I
heard it, *
that power belongs to God.
14 Steadfast love is yours, O Lord, *
for you repay everyone according
to his deeds.

Second Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Acts (22:6-21):

“While I was on my way and approaching Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Then he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting.’ Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. I asked, ‘What am I to do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me, ‘Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told everything that has been assigned to you to do.’ Since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, those who were with me took my hand and led me to Damascus.

“A certain Ananias, who was a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews living there, came to me; and standing beside me, he said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight!’ In that very hour I regained my sight and saw him. Then he said, ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear his own voice; for you will be his witness to all the world of what you have seen and heard. And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name.’

“After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance and saw Jesus saying to me, ‘Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’ And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. And while the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by, approving and keeping the coats of those who killed him.’ Then he said to me, ‘Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Lesson: *(Please stand as you are able)*

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Luke (23:39-43):**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding Jesus and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

Homily

Nicene Creed (CONTEMPORARY VERSION) All say together

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, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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

Leader: God of enlightenment, send out your light and your truth that they may lead your people into your joy and gladness

People: Send us out to shine your light brightly and share our joy gladly.

Leader: God of our strength, we lift to you those feeling weak, oppressed, or forgotten.

People: that through your might, we may support, defend, and serve the cause of the innocent and downtrodden.

Leader: God of loving-kindness, we bless you for your love shown to us in our creation, preservation, and salvation.

People: Let all creation praise you forever.

Leader: God of grace and mercy, fill us with knowledge of your will and peace.

People: May your love heal our factions, divisions, and hatred and may your peace overcome our strife.

Leader: God of healing and hope, you turn our wailing into dancing and comfort us in our sorrows.

People: We pray that you would restore to health and wholeness all who cry out to you in their times of suffering.

Leader: God of unity and harmony, you desire that we love one another, loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. We lift up to you our neighbors:
In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer: *The Diocese of Natal – The Anglican Church of Southern Africa.*

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer: *St. George's, in Holbrook.*

And we pray for the first peoples of this land, especially the Apache and Tohono O'odom peoples who called this area home.

May we continue to support one another in love and empathy.

People: And Lord, we ask your blessing and favor upon them, in your Holy Name. Amen.

Confession of Sin

Deacon: Let us confess our sins to God.

All: God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that influences us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

Absolution

Presider: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Christ our Lord, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Exchange of the Peace

Presider May the peace of Christ be always with you

All And also with you.

The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Offertory

Presider: I appeal to you, friends, by the mercies of God, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Doxology (Hymn #380 v. 3)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

EOW 2

Presider The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Presider: It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and surrounded us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we say/sing:

Sanctus -

#S-128

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
in the highest.**

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

Presider continues:

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love.

Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation.

Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and 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 friends, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

As supper was ending, 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit (+) may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit (+) and live as Christ’s Body in the world.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

Presider: And now as Jesus taught us, we pray: (*Contemporary Lord’s Prayer*)

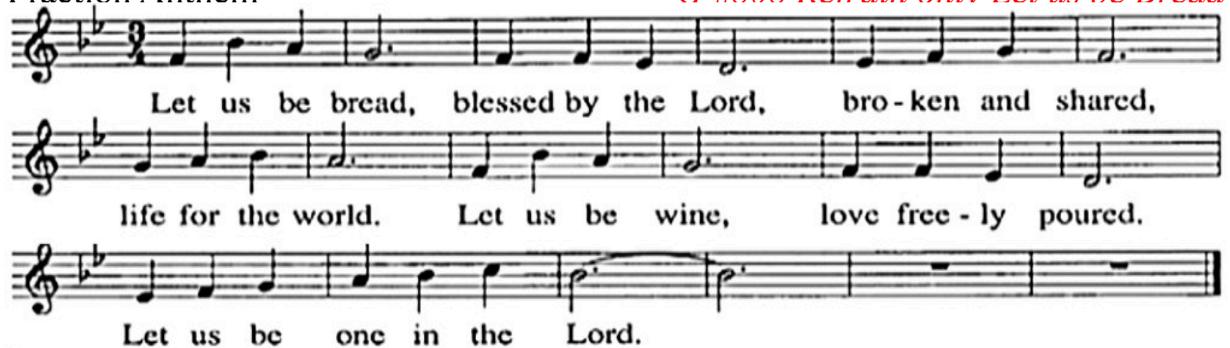
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name. Your kingdom come, your will be done On earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, Now and forever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

(*Presider breaks the consecrated bread*)

Fraction Anthem

G #808 Refrain only Let us be Bread



Let us be bread, blessed by the Lord, bro-ken and shared,
life for the world. Let us be wine, love free - ly poured.
Let us be one in the Lord.

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: These are the gifts of God for the People of God.

People: Christ invites us all to be known and fed here.

All are welcome and invited to come to The Lord's Supper and receive communion in this church. It is gluten free bread and real wine. To dip/intinct your bread into the wine and then consume it, please come to the left altar rail. To eat your bread and then sip wine from the cup, please come to the right altar rail. To receive a blessing instead of the bread and wine, come to either rail and cross your arms over your chest and we will give you a blessing.

Prayers for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Healing, Travel, and Gratitude

Post Communion Prayer

Presider: Let us pray:

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.

Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world, and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Benediction:

Presider: May the Spirit of Truth lead you into all truth, giving you grace to confess Jesus' ways, truth, and life and to proclaim the wonderful works of God; and may the blessing of God Almighty: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you now and always. Amen.

Dismissal:

Deacon: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God's Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)

[Continued from front:](#)

then each personally forgave their erring brother and returned to their cells.

It is to Moses that one of the most famous pieces of advice from desert monasticism is attributed: “Go, sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you everything.”

When Moses was an old man, he was warned that an armed band of raiders was approaching and that the monks needed to flee. “Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword” (Matthew 26:52), the former robber-murderer calmly replied. “I have been waiting for this day to come for a long time.” He and six other brothers waited patiently and were all slain.

[More From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)

Moses the Black ([Greek](#): Μωϋσῆς ὁ Αἰθίοψ, [romanized](#):*Mōūsês ho Aithiops*; [Arabic](#): موسىوم دوسال; [Coptic](#): ⲙⲟⲩⲥⲉⲥ; 330–405), also known as **Moses the Strong**, **Moses the Robber**, and **Moses the Egyptian**, was an [ascetic hieromonk](#) in [Egypt](#) in the fourth century AD, and a [Desert Father](#). He is highly venerated in the [Eastern Orthodox Church](#) and the [Oriental Orthodox Church](#). According to stories about him, he converted from a life of crime to one of asceticism. He is mentioned in [Sozomen's Ecclesiastical History](#), written about 70 years after Moses's death.

Early life

Moses was a slave of a government official in [Egypt](#) until he was dismissed for theft and suspected murder. He then roamed the Nile Valley with an infamous and violent gang of 75 robbers.^[3] Moses was a man of huge physical stature, strength and courage, and became leader of this gang of robbers that became a social menace and living terror to the communities where they roamed.^[4]

Conversion to Christianity

On one occasion, a barking dog prevented Moses from carrying out a robbery, so he swore vengeance on the owner. In a second attempt, with a sword in his mouth, Moses swam across the Nile towards the owner's hut. The owner, again alerted, was able to hide, and the frustrated Moses stole four of his sheep and took them to slaughter, selling their fleece in exchange for wine.^{[5][6]} Attempting to hide from local authorities, he took shelter with some [monks](#) in a colony in the desert of [Wadi El Natrun](#), then called Scetis, near [Alexandria](#). The dedication of their lives, as well as their peace and contentment, influenced Moses deeply. He soon gave up his old way of life, [became a Christian](#), was baptized and joined the [monastic community](#) at Scetis.^[4]

Monastic life

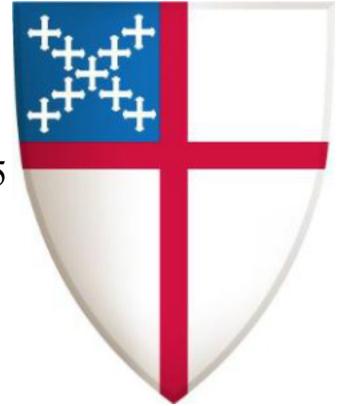
Moses had a rather difficult time adjusting to regular monastic discipline, and traces of his criminal tendencies lingered. Attacked by a group of robbers in his desert cell, Moses fought back, overpowered the intruders, and dragged them to the chapel where the other monks were at prayer. He told the brothers that he did not think it was [Christian](#) to hurt the robbers and asked what he should do with them. The robbers themselves repented and joined the community as brothers afterwards. Moses was zealous in all he did, but became discouraged when he concluded he was not perfect enough. Feeling overcome by despair and once again tempted by his former passions, early one morning, Isidore, abbot of the [monastery](#), took Moses to the roof. Together they watched the first rays of dawn come over the horizon, and Isidore said to Moses, "Only slowly do the rays of the sun drive away the night and usher in a new day, and thus, only slowly does one become a perfect contemplative."^{[3][5]}

[Continued online](#)

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Welcome Visitor!!!

Please leave your name and contact info below. If you'd like to speak with someone, please check here

Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

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Email: _____ Anv. Date _____

BrthDate _____

Adrs: _____

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