

## ❖ Christ Church in Philadelphia ❖

Thirty-nine Philadelphia colonists, loyal to the Bishop of London and desiring to worship according to the rites of the Church of England, established Christ Church on November 15, 1695, on land previously under the care of the Lenni Lenape peoples. Construction began on the current church building in 1727 and concluded in 1744. The tower and steeple, financed by a lottery managed in part by Benjamin Franklin, were completed in 1754. The building is an outstanding example of colonial architecture in the Georgian spirit, arguably the finest building of its time in the colonies.

Christ Church and its clergy played a critical role during the Revolutionary era. In September 1774, the Rev. Jacob Duché, opened the first Continental Congress with prayers citing the 35th Psalm, *Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.* John Adams recounted to his wife Abigail, “I must confess I never heard a better prayer; heaven had ordained that psalm to be read on that morning.” During this time, influential Philadelphians heard sermons in Christ Church both supporting and discouraging Independence. On July 4, 1776, Christ Church struck King George’s name from the prayers in worship. Christ Church clergy served as chaplains to the Continental Congress.

In 1790, Christ Church designated a double-pew in the center aisle for the President of the United States to use for worship. President George Washington regularly attended, as did President John Adams while Philadelphia remained the capital. The pew is still so designated, but any worshipper may use it if not occupied.

Seven signers of the Declaration of Independence and five framers of the Constitution are buried in the hallowed grounds of Christ Church. In 1948, Congress designated Christ Church as a national shrine during the creation of Independence National Historical Park.

After the Revolution, Christ Church played the instrumental role in organizing the Episcopal Church out of the remnants of the colonial Church of England. Buried in the chancel of Christ Church is the Right Reverend William White, ninth Rector of the parish, Chaplain of the Continental Congress, first Bishop of Pennsylvania, and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in its formative years. Bishop White demonstrated that the Church in this nation could be independent yet still in communion with the Church in England, a fundamental tenet of Anglicanism. The first General Convention that unified the scattered Episcopal Church and approved the first American Book of Common Prayer met in this building in 1789.

Christ Church Burial Ground, at 5th and Arch Street, was purchased in 1719 as an additional burying ground for Christ Church. It is the final resting place of Benjamin Franklin and 4 other signers of the Declaration of Independence, early medical pioneers, and Military heroes.



NAVY & NATION'S 250<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY  
CELEBRATION WEEK

## Wreath Laying Ceremony

Honoring

**Tench Francis, Jr.**

First Purveyor of Public Supplies

10 October 2025  
1100 AM



20 N. American Street • Philadelphia, PA 19106 • 215.922.1695  
Worship: Sunday at 10 a.m. and Wednesday at Noon  
Services are livestreamed at [www.christchurchphila.org/liv](http://www.christchurchphila.org/liv)

Christ Church Burial Grounds  
N 5th and Arch Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

## ❖ History of the Supply Corps ❖

In 1779, the Board of Admiralty was created by the Continental Congress to keep accounts of all naval stores, clothing, and provisions.

The new American government was challenged in its abilities to compensate its sailors and soldiers.

In 1783, four years after the Bonhomme Richard defeated the British ship HMS Serapis, John Paul Jones, on behalf of his crew, complained that the men had not "received any gratification ... in respect of wages ..."

Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris, the financier of the American Revolution, appointed Joseph Pennell in 1783 as commissioner for settling accounts to improve record keeping.

In 1795, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton recognized the need for a single government procurement agency. President George Washington created the position of Purveyor of Public Supplies within the U.S. Treasury and appointed Tench Francis as the first Purveyor. Francis' first task was to expedite the cutting and shipping of timbers and the delivery of other supplies for construction of the six new ships authorized by the Naval Armament Act of 1794.

Francis contracted with shipwrights and carpenters to go to Georgia and cut and shape 2,400 tons of live oak for the ships and have it shipped to New England by December 1794. Tench Francis was instrumental in obtaining the live oak and also the multitude of other supplies and materials necessary to construct those first six ships of the U.S. Navy.

The appointment of Tench Francis as Purveyor of Public Supplies centralized the supply function. The U.S. Navy Supply Corps traces its birth to his appointment.



## ❖ Honoring Tench Francis ❖

First Purveyor of Public Supplies

### ❖ Welcome Remarks ❖

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

### ❖ Presentation of Colors ❖

U.S. NAVY - US. MARINE CORPS CEREMONIAL GUARD

### ❖ National Anthem ❖

U.S. NAVY BAND

### ❖ Invocation ❖

U.S. NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS

### ❖ Presiding Officer Remarks ❖

THE 50TH CHIEF OF SUPPLY CORPS and  
COMMANDER, NAVSUP

### ❖ Placement of Wreath ❖

U.S. NAVY - US. MARINE CORPS CEREMONIAL GUARD

### ❖ Taps ❖

U.S. NAVY BAND

### ❖ Benediction ❖

U.S. NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS

### ❖ Concluding Remarks ❖

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

## Rear Admiral Kenneth W. Epps

Supply Corps, United States Navy  
Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command  
and 50th Chief of Supply Corps



Rear Adm. Epps is a 1990 graduate of Vanderbilt University where he commissioned through the Reserve Officers Training Corps program. He holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was the recipient of the Frank Hawkins Kenan Award for Excellence and is a distinguished graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Epps previously commanded Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Weapon Systems Support and the Fleet Logistics Center in Pearl Harbor. Afloat, he served on USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55) and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70).

Other assignments include instructor and educational counselor, Navy Supply Corps School; aide and flag lieutenant to Commander, NAVSUP and Chief of Supply Corps; readiness analyst and program objective memorandum development assistant, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (N80); action officer, Defense Logistics Agency (J3); director, material budgets, Naval Inventory Control Point, Philadelphia; assistant commander for financial management and comptroller, NAVSUP; chief, strategy and readiness division, Joint Staff (J4); assistant commander for supply operations and logistics policy, NAVSUP; assistant professor, Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy; and director, fleet ordnance and supply, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

His personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, and Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.

## ❖ Official Party ❖

Presiding Officer

**Rear Adm. Ken Epps**

Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command  
and 50th Chief of Supply Corps

Master of Ceremonies

**Capt. (ret.) Joe Dunn**

Supply Corps Foundation Philadelphia Chapter

**Rear Adm. Michael York**

**and Command Master Chief Chris Fitzgerald**

NAVSUP Weapon Systems Support

**Chaplain Rear Adm. Carey Cash**

Deputy Chief of Navy Chaplains

**USMC Brig. Gen. Shannon M. Brown**

Assistant Wing Commander for 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

**Capt. Juan Carlos "JC" Uribe**

**and Cmdr. Christopher Cromie**

NAVSUP Business Systems Center



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