



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✦ April 2023

Reverently Speaking

The man said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised.”

Mark 16:6

Dear People of St. Andrew’s,

Are you a doom-scroller? Doom-scrolling is the act of endlessly scrolling down news apps, Twitter, and social media, reading all the bad news. The problem with this habit is that it can lead to higher stress. We think that keeping up with the latest news will lessen our anxiety, but it increases it. Doom-scrolling is an “unsatisfying addiction,” says one clinical psychologist. Instead of making us feel safer, it raises our level of fear, anxiety and stress.

So, does this sound familiar? Are you experiencing this in your own life? Do you get into bed, turn off the lights, and glance at your phone just one more time? Wanting to stay informed, you end up being sucked into doom and gloom, maybe even spiraling into despair. Doom-scrolling. According to *NPR*, this binging on bad news is eroding our mental health. But we are not the first to experience this. The three women who visited the tomb on Easter morning were some of the very first doom-scrollers.

Mark tells us that when the Sabbath was over, “Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint [Jesus]. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb” (16:1-2). What were they feeling? Doom and gloom. Their Messiah had been killed in a humiliating death on a cross. His body had been laid in a cave-like tomb, and a large stone had been rolled against the door. They were feeling grief over the death of Jesus, stress about the future, and anxiety about how they would remove the stone.

As they were walking along, they had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” (v. 3). Anxiety is a feeling of fear or apprehension about what is to come, and that’s exactly what the women were experiencing. Minute by minute, their mental health was eroding. But when they arrived, “they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back” (v. 4). Their doom-scrolling was met by an act of stone-rolling. Finally, some good news!

But as “they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed” (v. 5). They didn’t expect to see anyone, so they were startled. The man said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised” (v. 6). Their doom-scrolling had been focusing them on bad news, but the words of the young man gave them reason to hope.

Then the man ordered them to go “tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you” (v. 7). The young man changed their focus from doom and gloom to a new possibility for the future. He promised them that Jesus was going ahead of them, and that they would see him in Galilee.

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So the women fled the tomb, filled with terror and amazement. Since negative emotions can be hard to overcome, Mark admits that “they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid” (v. 8). Yes, the fear that had been gripping them was not easy to throw off. It took time. And what was true for them is also true for us. You can turn off Twitter with the flip of a switch. But escaping doom and gloom is not that simple.

Experts say that the solution to doom-scrolling is to break out of the “vicious cycle of negativity.” That’s the message for the women and for us, when we see large stones in our path and feel alarmed. The good news of Easter is that God has acted in our lives to break the cycle of negativity. We are invited today to see that the stone has already been rolled back, to believe that Jesus has been raised, and to focus on the future where our risen Lord is ahead of us and waiting for us.

Fear is always worse than reality. “Our brains are crazy,” writes Tyler Tervooren in *HuffPost*. “Every day they lie to us about how terrible things are or how bad they’re going to be, but when we finally ignore the fear [we] realize everything’s pretty much okay, the world will keep turning, and we’re going to survive.” Yes, the world will keep turning, and God will keep working. The women were so afraid of the stone that they never dreamed that God would take action to roll it away. Their brains were lying to them about how terrible things were and how bad things were going to be. But then God replaced their doom-scrolling with stone-rolling.

God will do the same for you. So don’t let your brain convince you that the stone you fear will always stand in your way. Maybe you are anxious about something at work or at home. Perhaps you are fearful of failure or loneliness or a health issue. Don’t let your brain lie to you. Since God is always at work, fear is worse than reality.

Next, open your eyes and see that Jesus is no longer dead. The young man in the tomb sensed that the women were not going to believe what he was saying, so he invited them to see for themselves. Jesus “is not here,” said the man. “Look, there is the place they laid him” (v. 6). Jesus is not here, dead in the tomb. See for yourself. Instead, he is alive in people who are showing his grace, his love, his forgiveness, his healing and his justice. Jesus is alive and well whenever a stranger is welcomed, a child is loved, a friend is forgiven, a patient is healed and an injustice is made right.

Truly, Jesus is not dead in the tomb. Instead, he is found in his followers who act with justice, love and praise. Open your eyes, and see that Jesus is alive and well in you, and in the people around you.

And look to the future, not to the past. Our risen Lord Jesus is not simply *with* us — he is *ahead* of us, always ahead of us, calling us into the future that he is preparing for us. Our job is to figure out where Jesus is leading us, and to follow him there. Let’s move toward new possibilities for deeper connections with family members and friends, new possibilities for vital ministry and mission in the church, and new possibilities for justice and righteousness in our community and nation.

We don’t have to focus on doom and gloom. Not with the stone rolled away and our Lord calling us forward.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John +", written in dark ink.

The Rev. John Reese

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

How (Not) to Read the Bible: Making Sense of the Anti-Women, Anti-Science, Pro-Violence, Pro-Slavery, and Other Crazy-Sounding Parts of Scripture

For centuries, the Bible was called “the Good Book,” a moral and religious text that guides us into a relationship with God and shows us the right way to live. Today, however, some people argue the Bible is outdated and harmful, with many Christians unaware of some of the odd and disturbing things the Bible says or how to understand them.

Difficult questions arise when we read the Bible. Is God pro-violence? Does God endorse slavery? Should we all be vegetarians? Are tattoos sinful? Why does the Bible feel so anti-women and anti-science? In this six-session DVD series, Pastor Dan Kimball explores these objections and more. The good news is that there are reasonable responses to these valid and understandable questions. If church has burned you, bored you, or simply never been of interest, come take a deeper look at Jesus – and discover why the Bible might just be more beautiful than you can imagine.

Dan Kimball is on staff at Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, California, and is also on the faculty at Western Seminary. He enjoys comic art, Ford Mustangs, and punk and rockabilly music.

Here is the line-up:

4/16 – Never Read a Bible Verse

4/23 – Stranger Things

4/30 – Boys’ Club Christianity

5/7 – Jesus Riding a Dinosaur

5/14 – My God Can Beat Up Your God

5/21 – Rated NC-17

This class, facilitated by the Rector, meets in Room 302 (the Library) on the third floor of the Parish Building.

Youth News

Sunday, May 21st is graduation Sunday! There will be a blessing for our graduates and Sunday school teachers. Sunday school teachers and graduates: please be in church for the 10:30am service and coffee hour Sunday, May 21, if you are a family with a senior in high school or college, or a Sunday School teacher—we want to honor all of you on this special day! For our graduates, I need the following info by Monday, May 2nd: A picture of the graduate, the graduate’s favorite Bible verse, where the graduate is graduating from, where the graduate is attending school next fall if applicable, and the graduate’s favorite thing about being part of St. Andrew’s.

Sunday School at 9:30 on the 3rd floor goes on through **Sunday, May 21**, and children’s chapel at 10:30 continues through the summer. I am still searching for a few more shining star volunteers to serve during both hours on Sunday mornings. If you are still thinking about serving once a month, why not just come hang out with us on Sunday morning? The other Sunday School teachers and I would love to have your help, and make you feel welcome.

Also, please mark your calendars for VBS 2023: Stellar! **VBS 2023 will take place July 31st - August 4th**, from 9am to Noon. Please mark your calendars and get ready for the following planning meetings: Registration starts **Sunday, May 7th** during coffee hour in the parish hall. Our first youth & adults serving meeting will take place on **Sunday, June 11th** during coffee hour in the parish hall. Building Sundays TBD. Please contact Alicia Schmid for questions or to RSVP to serve this year! It's going to be an amazing VBS as we gather together as a community to shine God's light!

Parish Picnic



Please join us as for our annual St. Andrew's Parish Picnic. Earl and Jan Smith have once again graciously offered to host the parish picnic at their home on **Sunday, April 16th** starting at **1pm**. The Smith's address is 3627 Berger Rd. in Lutz. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided by the church. Don't forget lawn chairs or picnic blankets, outdoor games, sunscreen, bug spray or anything else you would like to bring for a festive gathering outdoors filled with fellowship, food and fun!

Vive la Difference ~ Wine Tasting Feb 11th



From the Parish Register



Baptisms

Margaret Eileen Besselieu



Deaths

Anita Ramirez
Jane Cantler



Transfers In

Francisco & Kristin Mora

Allen & Caroline Rose

Kirk McCann
& Dorothy Peters

February 2023 Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT – Fr. Reese

A warm welcome to our new vestry members: Allison Besselieu, Holly Clemmons, Martha Cobb, Eric Hargens, and Wallace Dixon!

As of 2/21/23, there was \$228,011 in ops account and \$86,283 in the parish reserve account.

As of 2/8/23, there was \$33,952 in the Foundation's checking account – monies available to the vestry.

Total available funds from principal for years 2019 thru 2022: \$287,352.

There was \$2,757,202 in the Foundation principal as of 12/31/22, as opposed to \$3,218,925 on 12/31/21 (a decrease of \$461,723 for the year).

There is also approximately \$99,000 in the Dan Curtis fund fbo St. Andrew's within the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay. This fund is designated for church maintenance purposes. We spent the 2021 allocation of \$4,250 to pay TNT Roofing for repairs to the NW corner of church roof. We did not spend any of the 2022 allocation.

Pictorial Directory – Pam and Lauri in office are working on this, it will be an online directory that can be continuously updated and shared electronically with parishioners. Pam is currently learning to operate Realm(which is the update for ACS, our current software system). Her goal is to then have the directory up and running sometime this year.

Planned Giving – The Foundation Board would like for the parish to begin a serious effort at promoting planned giving. We could create a legacy society that would ask folks to include St. Andrew's in their estate planning.

Annual Meeting – was on Sunday, 2/5 after 10:30 service. Five new vestry members were elected and the 2023 budget was approved.

Birthday Concert – for Ryan Hebert was on Sunday, 2/5 at 4PM. Great music! We raised about 3K for new recording microphones. Parish Life hosted a lovely reception after the concert.

Wine Tasting Event – with Chris Sherman and Chris Cobb was on Saturday, 2/11. Good turnout of about 30 winebibbers.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – was on Tuesday 2/21 at 6PM (hosted by the Youth)

Ash Wednesday Services – were 2/22 at 8AM, 12:10PM, and 7PM (with choir).

Lenten Series – Tuesdays starting on 2/21 (Shrove Tuesday) and continuing through 3/28. Each evening begins with Holy Eucharist in the Children's Chapel at 5:30, followed by potluck supper in the Parish Hall at 6PM and the program at 6:30PM. Ray Vince is this year's presenter. Here is the line-up:

2/21 – Youth (Alicia Schmid)

2/28 – Parish Life (Pam)

(continued)

February 2023 Operating Summary

| | <u>MTD Actual</u> | <u>MTD Budgeted</u> | <u>YTD Actual</u> | <u>YTD Budgeted</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Revenues | \$53,985 | \$52,525 | \$109,707 | \$105,051 |
| Expenses | \$44,532 | \$52,525 | \$112,123 | \$105,051 |
| Net | \$9,452 | (\$0) | (\$2,415) | (\$0) |

3/7 – Daughters of the King (Adrienne Love)

3/14 – Choir (Barbara)

3/21 – Altar Guild (Adrienne Love)

3/28 – Outreach (Chris)

Stations of the Cross – Fridays in Lent (2/24 through 4/7) at 12:10PM in the church. Come and join us each week for this simple, yet moving, service. It only lasts about 25 minutes.

Annual Stewardship Campaign – is now concluded. As of 2/23/23, we have 156 pledges for 442K, which is 18K more than last year at this time. There are still 21 pledgers who pledged 20K in 2022 whom we have not heard from for 2023. Many thanks to all the phone calls and contacts you have made with folks during the past two months. Your valiant efforts are very much appreciated!

2023 Budget – was approved at annual meeting. Since we received additional pledges after the annual meeting, it is now a balanced budget of 630K.

Parochial Report – we need to approve it and send it on to diocese by 3/1. Pam Frost emailed you a copy of the draft for your perusal prior to the vestry meeting. If you have any questions, please call Pam in the office.

Parish Picnic – Should we try it?

The vestry was enthusiastic about holding a parish picnic this year at the Smith's. Richard Ferlita agreed to check dates with Jan & Earl Smith after they return from their travels.

Committee Assignments – Come prepared to claim a committee slot as chairman/chairwoman/chairperson.

Foundation Board – will meet soon and designate this year's allocation (range is 2% to 4% of principal based on a three year rolling average, as per Foundation by-laws).

Parish & Foundation Audits – time to form two audit committees to conduct 2022 audits. Who will come forth this year to chair each audit? Could it be you?

Fr. Reese asked for volunteers to conduct the audits for the Diocese. Barbara Brotherton and Allison Besseliu volunteered to complete the Foundation audit. Wallace Dixon and Holly Clemmons offered to conduct the Parish audit.

Senior Warden – Richard Ferlita has spent this month working with committee members and welcoming new vestry members.

Junior Warden – Richard Chapman reported that the annual fire inspections were completed with a few extraneous replacements needed. Richard will be meeting with irrigation people to get the last zone working and leaks repaired. We will be trying a new vendor (Oasis). There is a leak at the courtyard fountain that requires attention. The second floor A/C work will be complete prior to next vestry meeting. Richard is waiting for the final tile selection for second floor restroom renovations to complete the estimate.

Treasurer – Eric Hargens' review finds pledges were up a third and parking revenue increased as well. Expense side showed anomalies due to prepaids for termites and quarterly property insurance. Net is that we are up for the month taking those prepaids into consideration.

Committee Reports

Outreach - Chris Capsambelis would like to hold an Outreach meeting on March 26th. He will arrange for a bulletin announcement for that.

Parish Life – Parish Life is serving tomorrow (2/28) for the Lenten series. Pam Curry has the food organized for the session. Easter brunch after the 10:30 service will be coordinated by Pam. Fare will be as it was last Easter.

Welcoming Committee – Wallace Dixon

Wallace is working on writing up the procedures.

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Old Business

None to report

New Business

A question was posed as to whether or not there will be password protection on the on-line directory when it is launched. Fr. Reese assures us that it will be protected.

Paul Scheuer inquired as to whether or not we are looking at resurfacing or sealing the parking lot to repair potholes. It was also suggested that the spaces be resized to allow more room for larger vehicles.

Holly Clemmons asked if we can get some recycling bins, especially when we have larger events such as Octoberfest. Richard Ferlita said we will have them in time for Cinco de Mayo.

The meeting was concluded at 6:13pm.

Help us help others!



Your outreach committee is partnering with the members of our homeless lunch ministry in asking for items for our homeless population. For the remainder of April, and the entire month of May, we are asking for dark-colored crew socks, and thin, dark-colored washcloths. Monetary donations are always appreciated as well. Please write "homeless ministry supplies" in your check memo if you would prefer to make a donation in that way. God bless you for helping us to help those who are most in need here in our church community!

Concert

On **Sunday, April 23rd at 4pm** Amanda Cohen, St. Andrew's soprano section leader, will present a concert featuring some of her original music. The evening will be full of inspiring themes and heartfelt messages. The concert is free, however donations are welcome and will go to support the Friends of Music at St. Andrew's. Amanda is excited to share this facet of her life with the people of St. Andrew's and everyone is welcome to come and listen!



Outreach

The Outreach Committee is bringing back our **Cinco de Mayo luncheon on Sunday, May 7** following the 10:30 service. Tacos with all the trimmings, yellow rice, and black beans are among the items on the menu. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children. Advanced purchase is greatly appreciated. Proceeds will support our Operation Smart Start initiative. Hope to see you there for food and fellowship



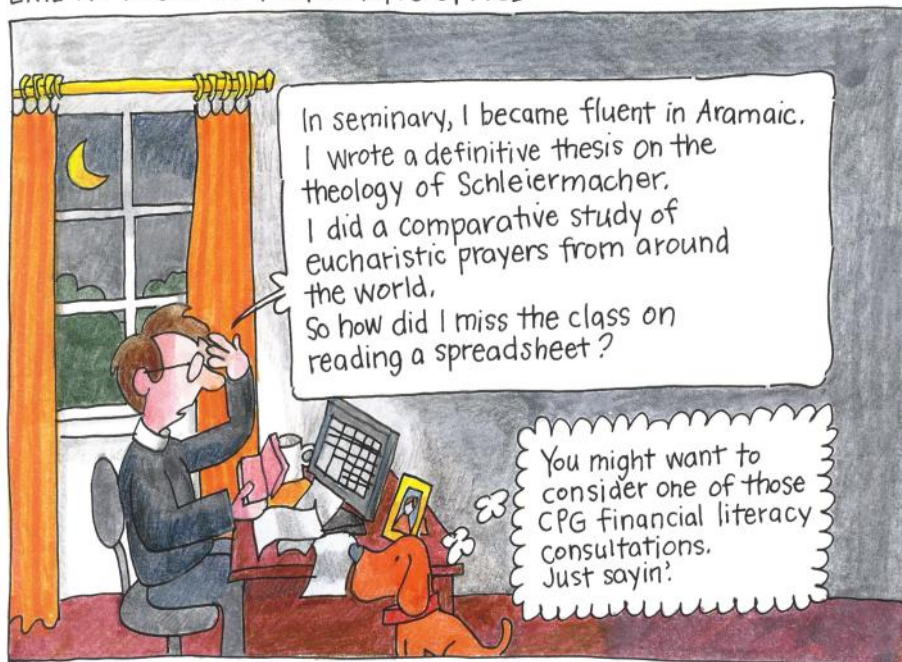
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LATE AT NIGHT IN THE RECTOR'S OFFICE



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

The Rev. John Reese, Rector

Sunday Services

8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m. Children's Church

9:30 a.m. Christian Education
for all

Church Location:

Marion & Madison Streets

Mailing Address:

509 E. Twiggs St.

Tampa, FL 33602

Phone: (813) 221-2035

Fax: 224-0945

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saintandrewstampa.org

**Deadline for articles for
The Call:** 15th of each month
for the following month's
newsletter. Submit articles to
Lauri in the church office.