



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✦ April 2024

Reverently Speaking

With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 4:33

Dear People of St. Andrew's,

In these post-COVID days, many of us are concerned about finding ways to entice people back to church. Here's a question for you: If you had to devise a bumper-sticker slogan to get people to take a good look at St. Andrew's, what would you write?

There was a Baptist group a while back that tried "Be kind, be merry, be Baptist." The word "merry" may not be the first one most people think of when it comes to Baptists, but hey, it's worth a try.

Then there's that old standby: "CH__CH: What's missing? Answer: "UR." Well, besides the fact that everybody on God's green earth has already heard that one, it offers nothing a prospective churchgoer might want to know about your church — other than the fact that your crowd likes a good pun (or even a bad one).

Acts 4:33 can be construed as a bumper sticker slogan. It says of those apostles of the first-century church, "Great grace was upon them all." How well do you think that one works?

That slogan may not work so well on a bumper sticker because it uses a word most everyone has heard, but few fully understand. That word is "grace." The word needs a little unpacking. Once you catch the vision of grace, though, you'll surely agree it's something the whole world is looking for.

There are lots of meanings of the English word "grace." To you, it may suggest a graceful ballet dancer, "social graces," or the "grace period" before you must start paying back a loan. That stuff's all good.

Our English word "grace" comes from the Latin *gratia*, which means "something pleasing." In classical Greek and Roman mythology, there are three sister-goddesses, known as "the three graces." They're identified with charm, beauty and creativity. Again, all good.

The dictionary gives another meaning: favor. Now that gets us closer to the theological meaning of grace. If parents have a favored son or daughter, they put that child on a pedestal. It's the proverbial child-who-can-do-no-wrong.

So, too, with the grace of God. God's favored Son, of course, is Jesus — but God doesn't put him on a pedestal. God puts him on a cross — or, at least, allows the horrors of the cross to happen. The beneficiary of God's favor that dreadful day is not God's Son Jesus, but us!

So the good news is that you have grace! You have it because of Jesus. And you haven't had to do a thing to deserve it. By his cross and resurrection, Jesus has already done it all. You just have to accept the gift.

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But it's difficult because we'd usually rather not admit we need such a gift, thank you very much. We'd rather see ourselves as people who are basically good, who've earned God's special favor by living exemplary lives.

In that respect, we're like a certain character in Jesus' famous parable of the prodigal son. You know how that story goes. A man has two sons. One stays home tilling the fields; the other cashes out his inheritance, flees to a far country and makes a mess of his life. He blows through every shekel in no time, and comes crawling back to dad, hoping for a little kindness for old times' sake.

Instead, the father throws a party — an expression of favor — such as that village has never seen. The older brother, who has lived a far more exemplary life, is jealous of the gala reception. Who wouldn't be? But — as dear old dad patiently explains — he's overjoyed because the son he thought he'd lost has now been found. The prodigal son is a parable of grace in action.

This sort of thing goes against every moral inclination hard-wired within us. Apart from the Christian gospel, common sense dictates that people ought to get what they deserve. "You do the crime; you do the time." The Franciscan theologian Richard Rohr calls this sort of thinking the "economy of merit." Those who have merit can expect to get good things in life. Those who don't can expect punishment. It's only fair, right?

Yet, if we're serious about following Jesus Christ, we have to make a fundamental shift in our outlook. We have to switch from the economy of *merit* to the economy of *grace*.

This doesn't come naturally to us. Making that switch is hard. It's especially hard for those of us who — skilled as we've become at beating ourselves up inside — tend to be our own harshest critics. Those of us who fit that description don't need some frowning magistrate to tell us we're bad people. We're already convinced that we are, and we remind ourselves of it a hundred times a day. If we're so busy judging ourselves all the time, it can be impossible to extend grace to others.

Here's how Richard Rohr describes the revolutionary power of grace:

"It is God's magnificent jailbreak from our self-made prisons, the only way that God's economy can triumph over our strongly internalized merit badge system. Grace is the secret undeserved key whereby God, the Divine Locksmith, for every life and for all of history, sets us free."

It's all a gift. You can't be a follower of Jesus Christ if you don't set aside that judgmental, rules-based thinking, and claim the joyful truth that you're *never* going to get what you deserve at the hand of God.

And it's a good thing, because, if you did, you'd never survive such wrath. None of us would. What we have, instead, is the bright promise of God in Jesus Christ, a promise of grace, hope and forgiveness.

Thanks be to God who gives us such victory and names us as favorite sons and daughters!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Reese".

The Rev. John Reese

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 28th** starting at **12:30 pm**. 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!

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News

Walk through the Bible's earliest source for the life of Jesus with scholar Amy-Jill Levine as she examines John the Baptizer, the Little Apocalypse, the Transfiguration, and several of Jesus's most notable stories and parables. The Good News of the gospel message comes alive in this video series as we see Jesus as divine and human, powerful and weak, approachable yet mysterious. We will engage in an in-depth study of select passages that illuminates the Gospel in its historical context and as a source for the other gospels. Amy-Jill Levine is a retired Professor of New Testament studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

Here is the rest of the line-up:

4/14 – Restoring Purity and Wholeness: Mark 5-7

4/21 – Sacrifice, Ransom, Prophet, Messiah: Mark 8-10

4/28 – Fig Trees and Tenants: Mark 11-12

5/5 — The Little Apocalypse: Mark 13

5/12 – Judas Iscariot and the Naked Young Man: Mark 14-15

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

Celebration of Life

Saint Andrew's is hosting a Celebration of Life for former parishioner, Vestry member and choir section leader, Stephen Rosser, on **Saturday, April 27th** at 2 pm. Some of you may have known Stephen before he departed for New York City ten years ago. His kindness, openness and talent touched many at St. Andrew's and around the Bay Area and he will be greatly missed. As part of our celebration we are gathering many who sang with him in our choir and other exceptional groups to raise our voices in hymns, anthems and songs Stephen loved.

If you would like to join us as a singer please contact Betsy Scheuer at elisa-betsy40@gmail.com or 813-434-5159 regarding your interest and for more details. If you would like to assist with or make a financial contribution for the reception following the celebration, please contact Irene Baker at ihbaker1011@yahoo.com or 571-481-8536. Whether you sing or help or attend, we look forward to seeing many of you on the 27th!

St. Andrew's Homeless Ministry

Most of you know about our church ministry which provides lunches and hygiene supplies to the members of our homeless community. What you may **not** know is that we do not have a budget for this ministry. We distribute bagged lunches Monday through Friday. These lunches are provided to us from Metropolitan Ministries. However, supplemental food items, cases of water, and TRAVEL SIZE hygiene supplies (soap, washcloths, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, and razors) are purchased with money that is donated from you, our caring and generous volunteers, and parishioners!

We are nearly out of all of our hygiene supplies at this time. We are once again reaching out to you all in hopes that you will support this critical ministry. You can help in one of two ways. If you would like to purchase items to be distributed, we are in the greatest need of the following: Travel Size Soap; Thin dark washcloths, and Travel size deodorant (men's and women's). We are exploring buying supplies in bulk, so, if you'd like to get the best bang for your buck, please consider donating money towards this endeavor. If you choose this option, please make your check out to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and write "Homeless Ministry" in the memo line.

Proverbs 11:25 reads in part "...those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." Thank you all for prayerfully considering how you can support this ministry!



From the Parish Register



Baptisms

Sloane Kendall Locke

Eden Avery Locke



Transfers In

Terri Diaz

Chaz Diaz

Rhys Diaz



Wine Tasting



See more pictures on the
website
www.saintandrewstampa.org



Easter Sunday



Easter Sunday



See more pictures on the
website
www.saintandrewstampa.org



Youth Group Kickoff



See more pictures on the
website
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February 2024 Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT – Fr. Reese

As of 2/20/24, there was \$228,944 in ops account and \$81,783 in the parish reserve account.

As of 2/20/24, there was \$26,766 in the Foundation's checking account – monies available to the vestry.

Total available funds from principal for years 2020 thru 2023: \$292,690.

There was \$3,092,638 in the Foundation principal as of 12/31/23 (as opposed to \$2,757,000 at the end of 2022, an increase of \$335,000 for the year).

There is also \$119,139 in the Dan Curtis fund for St. Andrew's within the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay. This fund is designated for church maintenance purposes. Current amount available is \$12,896.

Ash Wednesday Services – were 2/14 at 8AM, 12:10PM, and 7PM (with choir). Great attendance (151), almost as many as we get on Sunday morning!

Wine Tasting Event – with Chris Sherman and Chris Cobb was on Saturday, 2/17. Good turnout of about 40 winebibbers. Many thanks to Allison and her friend for playing viola and violin!

Lenten Series – Tuesdays starting on 2/13 (Shrove Tuesday) and continuing through 3/19. We've had about 35-40 in attendance each week. 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 6:45PM. Ryan Hebert is this year's presenter. Here is the line-up:

2/13 – Youth (Alicia Schmid)

2/20 – Parish Life (Allison)

2/27 – Choir (Barbara)

3/5 – Daughters of the King (Adrienne Love)

3/12 – Outreach (Derrick)

3/19 – Altar Guild (Adrienne Love)

Stations of the Cross – Fridays in Lent (2/16 through 3/29) at 12:10PM in the church. Come and join us each week for this simple, yet moving, service. It only lasts about 25 minutes.

Episcopal Visitation – Bishop Scharf will visit St. Andrew's on Sunday, 2/25 (the Second Sunday in Lent). We will have 8 youth and 16 adult confirmands. Parish Life is hosting the festive coffee hour after the 10:30 service.

Tree trimming – The crepe myrtles at the courtyard entrance are in desperate need of a haircut. We have engaged LS Gardens to do just that on Tuesday, 2/27. The cost of \$3,000 is to be paid from the reserve fund. (continued)

February 2024 Operating Summary

	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budgeted</u>
Revenues	\$42,474	\$55,061	\$91,491	\$110,123
Expenses	\$45,555	\$55,061	\$114,463	\$110,123
Net	(\$3,080)	(\$0)	(\$22,972)	(\$0)

Annual Stewardship Campaign – is now concluded. As of 2/20/24, we have 144 pledges for 500K, which is 58K more than last year at this time. There are still 23 pledgers who pledged 35K in 2023 whom we have not heard from for 2024. 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!

2024 Budget – was approved at annual meeting. Since we received additional pledges after the annual meeting, there would now be a surplus of 13K. With that in mind, we could use 9K of that and hire an off-duty TPD officer to act as security on Sunday mornings, 7:30AM until 12:30PM. Pay rate is \$43 per hour.

* **Discussion-** would be a week-to-week contract. Paul asked what responsibilities. Fr. Reese said enforce policies such as no backpacks, luggage or bicycles and direct overflow to bank parking lot. Also walk through building periodically.

* Nicole Carr moved we use 9K of the surplus and hire an off-duty TPD officer to act as security on Sunday mornings, 7:30AM until 12:30PM at a pay rate of \$43 per hour. Victoria Seconded.

Vote was unanimous.

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.

* Barbara moved to approve the parochial report. Martha seconded. **Vote was unanimous.**

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

- Parish Life - Allison (Chair), Martha, Derrick, and Don
- Christian Education – Martha (Chair)
- Helping Hands – Barbara (Chair)
- Outreach – Derrick (Chair), Wayne, Martha
- Homeless – Holly and Paul (co-Chairs)
- Building and Grounds - Richard Chapman
- Stewardship - Don Crawford
- Welcoming Committee - Brad and Wallace (co-Chairs)
- Media: Brad (Chair)
- Diocese Convention: Allison, Martha, Wayne, (Piers as alternate)

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). George Bedell and Pat Wolfe are eligible for re-appointment by the vestry to three-year terms on the board. George is willing to serve another three-year term. Pat is willing to serve one more year.

Brad moved to appoint George Bedell to a three-year term and Pat Wolfe to a one year term. Barbara seconded. **Vote was unanimous.**

Parish & Foundation Audits – time to form two audit committees to conduct 2023 audits. Who will come forth this year to chair each audit?

- Barbara and Allison volunteered for Parish audit.
- Victoria and Don volunteered for Foundation audit.

(continued)

New Nursery Attendant – Angie White had a series of mini-strokes and is out. Alicia and Pam are advertising for a replacement via Facebook.

Vestry retreat: Perhaps DaySpring? Fr. Reese will check with them for availability.

Potential Tenant for half of the 5th floor - Michael Shea who does pro-bono legal work would like to rent the space for St Michael's Legal Association. He is going to send us a proposal. Looking for a long-term lease of 5-10 years since they will pay for the build out. Helps with child custody cases and meetings are virtual so not a lot of foot traffic.

Senior Warden:

Parrish picnic on April 28- vestry please sign up to help set up or take down.

We need Sunday coffee hour hosts.

Junior Warden:

Second floor restroom came in under budget by almost \$1,000. Total cost was \$46,573.

Water test done to determine location of the church roof leaks. \$8,800 quote from one vendor for repairs. Is seeking a second quote. Would like approval to spend up to \$12K on potential repairs, taken from the Dan Curtis Fund.

Nicole moved to approve to spend up to \$12K from Dan Curtis Fund for the roof repairs. Derrick seconded. **Vote was unanimous.**

Estimate of \$43K to \$68K to repave parking lot, depending on if we repave just asphalt or also pave cover the concrete section of the lot. Will also fix the irrigation around parking lot perimeter, which currently does not work, remove a tree from corner of lot, potentially add new signage. Also re-stripe parking spaces. Martha brought up widening the parking spots. Brad asked how long it would take; depends on time of year, but looking at 3 days ideally. Would lose revenue for a week. Discussion indicated interest in moving forward.

Treasurer:

Looks like we are over the budget for January but 717 is behind on parking- should recoup the next month. Fr. Reese informed everyone that the January check actually came today. We also had quarterly insurance due which made the balance sheet for January look off.

Helping Hands:

Barbara asked about reception for Steve Rosser's memorial service on April 27th.

Parish Life:

Allison said the Bishop's Coffee Hour went great. Sink in kitchen is clogging. Next thing is the Easter coffee hour- need a little bit of help from everybody and she passed around a sign-up sheet. Martha said we already have a ham to use.

Confirmed the parish picnic date to be Sunday, 4/28.

NEW BUSINESS:

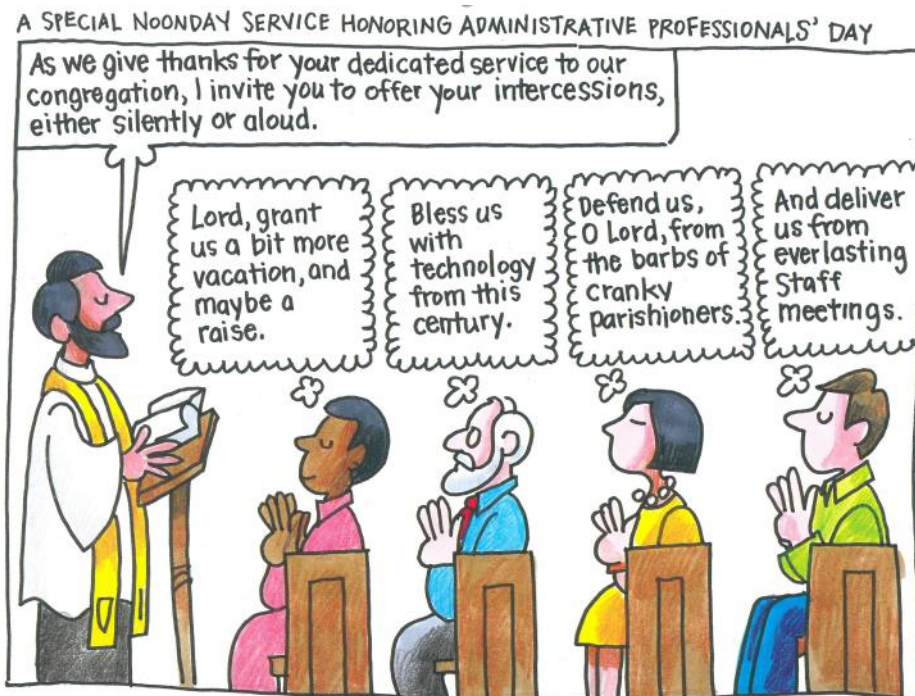
March 24th first Youth Group Meeting at Martha Cobb's House. Starting with 6-12 grade. Will put the announcement in the bulletin. Martha and Ben Borsch will lead the group.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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.