



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✕ December 2024

Reverently Speaking



God's word came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. John went throughout the region of the Jordan River, calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins.

Luke 3:2-3

Dear People of St. Andrew's,

Is there anything so exciting as a touchdown? It's football season! What makes football so exciting is the struggle, the raw energy, initiative, and strategy it takes to maneuver down the field toward the goal. Each time the home team gets another first down, a cheer of glee rises from the stands.

People will pay a lot of money and spend a good deal of time paying attention to who will make it through that jungle of bodies and equipment in order to win the game.

Perhaps nearly as popular has been the advent of survival shows. "Survivor" began back in 2000 and has survived for 47 seasons. Adventure, wilderness terrain, survival challenges, struggle – these things somehow thrill us. The thought of being alone on a desert island, out on the open seas, or in a dangerous jungle may set our teeth on edge, but it also gives us an adrenaline rush as we get in touch with our inner "wild thing," our primal humanity.

Each step, whether on the football field or in the survivor's wilderness, challenges us to think instinctively and creatively in order to make decisions that will not only get us ahead but keep us alive and uninjured. What is it about that super-hormonal rush that gives us such satisfaction? We truly are as humans in some ways just slightly above our animal friends. Games, whether video games or television or sports, allow us to get in touch with our wild place inside.

Advent too is about wild space. It's the time when God touched down right here on earth and started a movement that would reverberate throughout the planet. And it all started in the wilderness. In fact, if you look at the scriptures, every significant God moment happens somewhere in a wilderness place.

God always touches down in our wilderness place –the place in which we feel most alone, most barren, most despairing, most lost. It is in this place that we hear God's voice and feel God's presence calling us out, nourishing us, and giving us new direction. The wilderness is a place of change.

Think about space. Or flow. What happens when you interrupt that space or flow? It changes everything about it. Think about a still pool of water. Imagine in your mind that pool, whether it's the pool in your backyard or a basin on your table, or a pond in nature, or a birdbath. Imagine water that has no movement. It's just still. Now imagine a droplet falling into that water. Or if you're thinking about a larger body, a pouring of water. What happens next?

The water forms rings and they start expanding outward more and more until the entire body of water is changing and moving. It has changed direction. It has started into motion. The sand beneath has been rearranged. That one drop has changed everything about that pool of water.

Ever take a tour of a cave? Ever notice those amazing rock formations? We call them stalactites and stalagmites. They form long spikes and formations just from dripping water. Consistently dripping water. It's an amazing phenomenon. Even change that seems as slow as molasses can effect huge changes even in something as hard as rock over a period of time.

Time matters. Change matters. That's in a sense what happened when God touched down in the wilderness long ago in the desert place outside of Judea in the region of the Jordan River. God "interrupted" time and space, human culture and context, the earthly realm as we know it, and changed everything. There in that wild space, God began a movement that began with the prophet John and continued with the birth of Jesus.

The scriptures tell us, "God's word came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. John went throughout the region of the Jordan River, calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins" (Luke 3:2-3).

The "voice crying out in the wilderness" is the proclamation that God has appeared and that God's amazing plan for human and world salvation has been put into motion. Many folks didn't see that initial "drop of water" that began that colossal change. But John saw it. God made sure that John saw it. And the proclamation was born.

Advent is a time of what we call "repentance." Repentance sometimes gets a bad rap, as though we have been horribly bad people and must fall prostrate and ask for forgiveness. The kind of repentance John is talking about is a repentance we all need—a cleansing of the soul, a re-commitment to God as our sovereign and Lord, a removing of the debris of guilt and shame that we carry with us day to day and year to year, a renewal of our spirit. Just as that drop of water reverberates through the pond, God's salvation energy reverberates through each and every one of us, reminding us that God is near, God is active in the world, God is making change, and God wants to make that kind of change within us.

Repentance is a time when we remember our baptism and recommit our lives to Jesus. In a sense, God gets in touch with the wildest place in our soul and interrupts our lives in order to change our hearts, our minds, our intentions, and our actions for the future. God's touchdowns are always places where covenants are formed, whether in the desert or in the desert of our hearts.

This Advent, I invite you into an "immersion" experience with God, in which God can enter into the wildest part of your soul, the most primal part of you, and re-form you into a new creature, one that is at peace with the earth, with yourself, with your neighbors, and with God. God can begin in you a process, whether slow as a stalagmite or fast as a tsunami, that will change your heart and your life, so that you can go on to change the hearts and lives of others.

God can do all of this in your wilderness place. For God is the King of Touchdowns. God always wins. Let God interrupt your life and set you in a new direction. Happy Advent!

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. John Reese



SAINT ANDREW'S HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Friday, December 20 - 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Rectory Christmas Party
*159 W. Davis Boulevard
(NE corner of W. Davis and Barbados,
on Davis Islands)*

*

Sunday, December 22— 10:30 a.m. service
Christmas Pageant

*

Sunday, December 22
right after the 10:30 Service
The Greening of the Church
*Volunteers ages 8 to 80 needed! With many
hands this task can be accomplished quickly!*

*

Sunday, December 22 — 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Lessons & Carols
followed by Parish Christmas Party
(child care provided)

*

Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Eve services
5:30 p.m. — Choral Eucharist (Rite II)
9:00 p.m. — Choral Eucharist
(Rite I with incense)
A string ensemble will perform
at both services,
with pre-service music at
5:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

*

Wednesday, December 25
Christmas Day service
10:30 a.m. — Holy Eucharist (Rite I)

Gifts for Christmas Flowers & Music

Please return this form by
December 8 in order for your
dedication to be printed in the
bulletin.

\$ _____ donation
to Christmas Flowers:

In Memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving for _____

Given By: _____

\$ _____ donation
to Christmas Music:

In Memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving for _____

Given By: _____

This form may be mailed or
placed in Sunday's collection
plate. Proceeds beyond
Christmas expenses will be
used to fund other special
music and flower needs
throughout the year.

Stewardship 2025



It's A Wonderful Life

Soon it will be Christmas and with the season comes many TV shows that we've grown to love. One of those is "It's A Wonderful Life" where George Bailey's guardian angel, Clarence, shows how the world would be different had George not been in it. His family would have been different. His community wouldn't have benefited from home and business loans provided by his bank. People were less friendly toward each other.

St. Andrew's plays a big part in our community in a variety of ways. The homeless are fed daily and receive medical and other services through our partnership with Metropolitan Ministries. Some of them join us for Sunday services, often sitting in the back of the church near the street entrance.

Children and youth receive a foundation in God's word through Sunday School, Youth Group, and Vacation Bible School. Inner city kids receive school supplies to help them start the school year. Others have a Christmas celebration compliments of Gabriel Tree.

Marriages, baptisms, confirmations, and funerals are provided for many. Shut-ins are ministered to in their homes and hospital rooms. God's word is taught to us at Sunday services (both virtual and live), Bible Study, and Lenten programs. Even pets are blessed.

What would our community look like without the many ministries of St. Andrew's? Thanks to you, we won't have to find out because your financial support and personal involvement have made our ministries possible. Please prayerfully consider how you can support St. Andrew's efforts in providing for our community.

Sincerely,

Eric Hargens

Eric Hargens
Treasurer



From the Parish Register



Deaths

Callista Tolbert
Rebecca Blake

Marriages

Connor Healy & Isabel Aninat

Transferred Out

William DeBrine

New Flower Chart

The 2025 Flower Sign-Up Chart is in the parish hall. Don't delay in choosing important commemorative dates. Please help with this wonderful ministry to adorn the altar during worship by sponsoring flowers. High Altar flowers are \$150 for florist choice, personal choices can be arranged at an additional cost. Chapel Altar flowers are optional. If you'd like to sponsor both altars, the cost is \$250. If you have questions, please contact Charlotte Churchill 813-352-0162 cmchurchi18@gmail.com

Make a Pledge for 2025

Please return your pledge card for 2025 as soon as possible. If you did not receive a pledge card in the mail, cards are available at the back of the church, in the Parish Hall, or through the parish office (813-221-2035). Make a commitment and support St. Andrew's in the coming year.

Adult Christian Education

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

Experiencing Christmas: Christ in the Sights and Sounds of Advent

Discover how everything changed when God was born.

Everything seems different at the end of the year. We put lights on our houses to dispel the growing darkness, Christmas music floods local radio stations, eggnog flows, and wrapping paper and tape are always ready. Things just look, smell, and taste differently during the Advent and Christmas season, and these differences are a sign to us that God is about to do something radical and different. Christmas is when God surrounded the divine with senses of his own. That first noel was when God had eyes to see suffering, ears to hear our cries, and hands to hold those in need, and all of these senses were bundled in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. "This will be a sign to you," the angel told the shepherds, and they traveled to Bethlehem and found a child. What signs do you see during the Advent and Christmas season that point you to the divine?

Join us for this video study led by Matt Rawle, Lead Pastor at Asbury United Methodist Church in Bossier City, Louisiana.

Here is the rest of the line-up:

12/8 – Do You Hear What I Hear?

12/15 – Do You Taste What I Taste?

12/22 – Do You Feel What I Feel?

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

Youth News

Our annual Christmas pageant, put on by children and youth, will take place **Sunday, December 22nd at the 10:30 service. All children and youth who would like to be involved in the pageant must attend the rehearsals.** Rehearsals will be held the following weeks:

Sunday, December 8th at 9:30am in the children's chapel

Sunday, December 15th at 9:30am in the children's chapel

Final Dress Rehearsal Saturday, December 21st at 10am in the sanctuary

Pageant Sunday, December 22nd at 10:30am (FULL CAST meets in the Children's chapel at 9:15am)

We will have a Christmas Party for all participants after the Pageant/ 10:30am service and coffee hour on the 6th floor! Parents are welcome to stay as well, but the church would also love to have your assistance with the greening of the church (you can contact the main office at 813-221-2035)!

*We will meet in the Children's chapel for all rehearsals and move to the sanctuary for the final dress rehearsal. We need children and youth of all ages!

Please contact Alicia Schmid today at aliciaschmid@rocketmail.com to find a part for your child or teen!

October Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT

As of 10/7/24, there was \$133,932 in operating account and \$76,959 in the parish reserve account.

As of 9/30/24, there was \$26,763 in the Foundation's checking account – monies available to the vestry. (\$9,929 of this will pay Oasis for the landscaping around the perimeter of the parking lot, thus reducing the balance to \$16,834.)

Total available funds from principal for years 2021 thru 2024: \$332,459.

There was \$3,376,554 in the Foundation principal as of 9/30/24 (as opposed to \$3,092,638 at the end of 2023, an increase of \$283,916 for the year).

There is also \$119,139 in the Dan Curtis fund fbo St. Andrew's within the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay. This fund is designated for church maintenance purposes. Current amount available is about 3K. (We spent \$9,582 from this fund to repair leaks in the church roof this year. Sutter Roofing came out on 8/14 to address the remaining leak in the NW corner of the church.)

Pictorial Directory – Is now up and running on the parish web site.

Rally Day – was Sunday, 9/8 after the 10:30 service. We had several folks sign up for various ministries.

Oktoberfest – was on Sunday, 9/22, after the 10:30 service. We filled the parish hall! Food was great - many thanks to the Outreach Committee.

2025 Annual Stewardship Campaign – was launched at the end of September. Thanks, Don, for heading this up! As has been our custom, we will be looking for folks willing to stand up and give a 2-3 minute stewardship oration/plug at Sunday services in October and November. Don wrote the letter for the first pledge card mailing (end of September), followed by Senior Warden (end of October), Treasurer (end of November), and Rector (early January).

Blessing of the Pets – was Saturday, 10/5 at 10AM in the church courtyard. Lots of canines and three felines as well.

Diocesan Convention – was supposed to be on Saturday, 10/12 at the Punta Gorda Convention Center (with optional workshops on Friday, 10/11). But it has been postponed until a future date TBD. Bishop says it will be a combination of in-person and virtual. Our delegates are Allison, Martha, Wayne, and Piers (alternate).

Hurricane Impact on St. Andrew's – No damage at church. No leaks in church. Ceiling tiles in Children's Chapel Lobby wet from storm. Not a drop of water anywhere in the Parish Building. Many thanks to the Scheuer family, Paul Henley, Craig Polley, and Janet Norona for cleaning up debris at church on Friday, 10/11!

Rectory garage was flooded during Helene, water rising about 16 inches there. Fortunately, water did not get into the house. Appropriate amount of drywall in garage has been torn out and will be

October 2024 Operating Summary				
	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budgeted</u>
Revenues	\$74,100	\$55,061	\$464,128	\$550,619
Expenses	\$60,185	\$55,061	\$574,451	\$550,619
Net	\$13,915	\$0	(\$110,323)	\$0

replaced in about two weeks. Small tree fell in yard on side of house during Milton – waiting for that to be removed. Current hurricane expenses for rectory stand at about \$2,200. It was \$200 to fix garage door sensors, \$545 to replace garage door opener, \$200 to replace hot water heater, \$300 for electrician to properly re- connect hot water heater after plumber improperly connected wires, \$350 to remove downed tree in yard, and \$600 for new drywall and door that connects garage to back storage room. Wonderful neighbor/friend is doing all the drywall work gratis! This saves the church thousands of dollars.

The Diocese reports that 14 congregations have suffered damage and will be making insurance claims (which means each of those churches has many thousands of dollars in damages). The Diocesan House at DaySpring suffered sewer water intrusion and will have to be mitigated. Staff (including the Bishop) have relocated elsewhere on the DaySpring campus.

The Anchor Ball is coming up on December 7th, 2024, at 5:30 pm at the Pepin Center. The Bakers have purchased three seats, and Saint Andrews will purchase an additional five seats for \$1,000 with finds from the Outreach foundation. All proceeds will benefit the Seafarers' ministry at the port. Richard moved to approve the motion, and Barbara seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Piers will launch planned giving by utilizing the newsletter for promotion. Planned giving allows Saint Andrew's to continue to support our church, it's ministries, and remain a welcoming home for its parishioners. Piers hopes to bring a trusted estate attorney to speak and answer questions after the 10:30 service in November.

Book club will begin soon, led by Raymond Vince. The first book to be discussed is the short story "Snows of Kilimanjaro" by Ernest Hemingway.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Richard reports the parking lot is completed, and the mulch is done around the perimeter. No leaks in the church following the hurricanes, and no major damage. Problems at the rectory (see above) are being addressed. One of two air conditioners on the second floor of the parish building will need to be replaced within the next week. Richard proposed a motion to replace the second floor air conditioning unit using money from the Foundation, pending a quote. Barbara moved to approve the motion, and Brad seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Eric reports expenses are under budget. Pledges are behind. At the year to date, from contribution revenue, we are 15 percent under, and expenses are 3.6 percent over the budget due to increased insurance this year. In October of 2023, insurance increased from \$70,000 to \$97,000. In October 2024, insurance will increase to \$110,000. Attendance is at a post-COVID high, as are plate offerings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Helping Hands – Barbara reports there are two funerals in the next two weeks. The funeral for Helen Gilbert will be Saturday, 10/26/24. She was a great supporter of the Florida Orchestra. A string quartet from TFO will perform, and conductor Michael Francis will attend, along with about 150 people.

Outreach – Derrick reports he is having a committee meeting on Sunday, 10/27, after the 10:30 service. Next events for Outreach are the Fish Fry, on 11/17/24, and Gabriel's Giving Tree, which Martha and Linda Busby will organize. For the fish fry, needs are potato salad, chips, iced tea, coleslaw, set-up, including roping off the area near the playground for the frying station, and clean-up. Thank you to Holly Clemmons for enlisting her nephew to fry the fish.

Parish Life – Will host the Evensong reception on 11/3. There is an e-mail circulating to organize the food, and we have plenty of helpers.

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 pm.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



ST. ANDREW'S HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

see page three



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 ages

Church Location:

Marion & Madison Streets

Mailing Address:

509 E. Twiggs St.

Tampa, FL 33602

Phone: (813) 221-2035

Fax: 224-0945

Web: saintandrewstampa.org

E-mail: [secretary@
saintandrewstampa.org](mailto:secretary@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.