



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✦ February 2025

Reverently Speaking

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Romans 7:25

Dear People of St. Andrew's,

The Super Bowl will be played this Sunday. If viewing habits are typical, more than 120 million viewers will tune in. Some people will watch in bars, while others will attend a neighborhood Super Bowl party. Most will probably be at home watching the game in the family room, perhaps with a friend or two.

The food will be plentiful. You can't watch a game without munchies. Pizza, popcorn, buffalo wings, nachos, pigs-in-a-blanket, spinach artichoke dip, meatballs, deviled eggs, sliders and, of course, chips. There are *always* chips.

The thing about munchies is that you find yourself eating them not because you're hungry but because the last chip you had didn't satisfy. And this phenomenon is at the heart of a new understanding of our unhealthy eating habits. The hypothesis is called the "Dorito Theory," so-named after Doritos, the nation's most successful snack with a market-leading share of \$1.5 billion in annual sales in the United States alone. The theory attempts to explain why we fall into toxic patterns in life, whether we're talking about food, relationships or spending habits.

You reach for "chip after chip," writes one observer, "when consuming a bag of Doritos ... because you are only enjoying the moment in which you taste the unhealthy snack, and not actually because your body is being nourished or satisfied by the act of eating them."

It's a modern Doritos version of the Pauline Dilemma of Romans 7:14-25, which goes roughly like this: "For I find it to be a law that when I want to do good, a bowl of chips and guac lies close at hand. For I delight in the idea of healthy eating as an inner principle, but I see that my taste buds are at war with my healthy ideals. This battle makes me a captive to my chip cravings, and it's driving me crazy. I'm such a goofball. How can I ever escape from the clutches of my cravings? It is going to be the death of me!"

Scripture views the heart as the center of a person's thoughts, intentions and will. It is where decisions are made and intentions are formed. When such a locus is deceitful, then even our reasoning and decisions can be flawed and self-serving.

But the Bible considers the heart to be even more. It is the moral and spiritual core of a person. It's where one's true character and motivations lie. So, this is what the Bible means by "heart" — the center of our being that includes our emotions, thinking, will, a moral compass and our spiritual core.

The delusional nature of the heart can manifest itself in a variety of forms.

For example, the delusion might be self-deception. Our emotions and thought processes can deceive us by making us believe that our desires and actions are justified when they clearly are not to any dispassionate outward observer (and certainly to God). We can rationalize wrong behavior, convince ourselves that we are doing good when we are not, and overlook our own faults. But it doesn't pass the smell test.

The devious nature of the heart might also be seen in our susceptibility to sin. This inherent clumsiness means that our moral judgments can be compromised, and we can easily stray from the straight and narrow. Often, we

simply don't understand why we do the stupid things we do. We don't understand why we reach — again — for another Dorito. We're stymied.

In utter despair, the apostle Paul asks: "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24). Paul's answer is: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:25).

This, then, is good news. Knowing that our emotions, thoughts and will tend to be self-serving and devious, there are checks and balances to safeguard our moral center and spiritual core.

The need for periodic introspection is like a regular wellness check. It is good advice concerning our physical body as well as our spiritual one. This might seem self-evident because the great thinkers of human history agree. But we tend to forget. Socrates, for example, is reputed to have said that "the unexamined life is not worth living."

Benjamin Franklin — the famous ambassador to Paris, politician, raconteur and author of *Poor Richard's Almanack* — said: "There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know oneself."

Self-examination is good practice. If we regularly examine our heart and motives, we will do ourselves a great service.

It would also be helpful to establish some spiritual disciplines to strengthen your inner life. These exercises might include, but not be limited to, daily Bible reading, praying, meditation and devotional reading. You may need to carve out daily quiet time, or find a place to do centering work, just as an athlete sets up a regular schedule at the gym to get in some reps. If we immerse ourselves in prayer and the study of Scripture, we will find it easier to identify those moments when our heart is not being honest with us. After all, God's word "is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). It helps us discern truth from deception.

Be sure to surround yourself with a community of believers who can offer support, encouragement and accountability. Share your struggles and seek guidance from those who are walking faithfully with the Lord.

Finally, we should learn to find contentment not only with our relationship with Christ, but with the material things we have. Some people — and probably many thousands — will always have more than we have. Why not find our level and be satisfied? Paul the apostle puts it this way: "Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:11-13).

The Dorito Theory serves as a strong reminder of the deceitfulness of our hearts and the need for God's guidance in our lives. Just as we might struggle to stop at one Dorito, we struggle to find satisfaction and direction without the benefit of good spiritual practices.

Let's turn our hearts toward God, finding contentment with what we *have* while seeking to improve upon who we *are*. Let's not be afraid to be accountable and disciplined, and may we not fear self-examination. Getting a wellness check is a good thing. We might be surprised at what Dr. God finds and tells us.

One would hope that God looks at our MRIs and blood work, and rather than saying we need to lay off the chips, the Divine Physician gives us a good bill of health and sends us out into the world to be agents of change and blessing.

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. John Reese

Congratulations to our new vestry members:

Pam Billings, Patrick Keogh, George Levy, Jennifer Richardson, and Keri Thatcher.

2025 Executive Committee:

Piers Curry, *Senior Warden*
George Levy, *Junior Warden*
Eric Hargens, *Treasurer*
Nicole Carr, *Clerk of the Vestry*

Save the date to taste new wine and enjoy music

Acclaimed food critic Chris Sherman will host another wine tasting event in the Parish Hall on **Saturday, February 15th**, from 6:30 - 8:30 pm. The focus this year will be wines from regions south of the Equator. Heavy hors oeuvres will be served; and Allison Besselieu and Julie Tollen will play a selection of musical pieces. Tickets, \$10 each, will be on sale following church services during the first two weeks of February.

St. Andrew's Parish Picnic

Please join us for our annual [St. Andrew's Parish Picnic](#). This year, we will meet at beautiful Picnic Island Park on **Sunday, March 2nd** starting at 12:30 pm. The address is 7409 Picnic Island Blvd, Tampa, FL 33616, Shelter 609. 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!



Shrove Tuesday, March 4th

5:30pm Holy Eucharist in the Children's Chapel
6:00pm Pancake Supper in the Parish Hall
(hosted by St. Andrew's Youth)
6:45pm Lenten Series begins

Ash Wednesday, March 5th Service times at St. Andrew's

8:00am Holy Eucharist (Rite One) in the Chapel
12:10pm Holy Eucharist (Rite Two)
7:00pm Holy Eucharist (Rite Two with choir)
All services include imposition of ashes.



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. **We have currently 132 pledges for \$550,104.00**

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

Everywhere Is Jerusalem: Experiencing the Holy Then and Now

Location matters.

Christianity isn't a batch of spiritual thoughts or metaphysical truths. It's a journey of real people with their feet on the ground in real places. In *Everywhere Is Jerusalem*, The Rev. James Howell takes you on a spiritual pilgrimage to significant places in the ongoing story of the Christian faith. You'll go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, from the Jordan River to Assisi, and from the Sea of Galilee to Montgomery, Alabama. Along the way, you'll discover the profound connections between biblical stories and the places where they happened. You'll see how Christians throughout history have brought their faith to life worldwide, in their own cities and communities. And you'll find God calling you to bring your own faith to life right where you are, right now.

Part travelogue, part Bible study, this video series will take you on a spiritual journey to the places that are most important in our faith, and you'll discover that the most important place of all is the place where you are, right now.

Here is the rest of the line-up:

2/9 - Everywhere is the Mount of Olives: Standing Up and Courage

2/16 - Everywhere is Bethlehem: Prayer Walls

2/23 - Everywhere is Nazareth: Finding the Way Home

3/2 - Everywhere is Jerusalem: Places of Sorrow and Hope

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

St. A's Book Club Meetings for Feb-Apr 2025

Founded in October, 2024, our Book Club has grown to over twenty members. Our first two choices were Ernest Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (Nov 10) and Claire Keegan, *Small Things Like These* (Dec 8). In 2025, we shall usually meet on the first Sunday of the month, after the 10:30 am Eucharist, and in the third floor Library, room 302. Bring your coffee & snacks. If you enjoy good reading, challenging ideas, and cogent discussion, come and join us.

Here are our Book Club 2025 dates and the books we shall discuss

Sun **Feb 9** / 5th meeting / Hernan Diaz, *Trust* (2023), 416 pp, \$10

Note: Moved to 2nd Sunday because of the Church Annual Meeting on Feb 2.

Sun **Mar 2** / 6th meeting / H.P. Lovecraft, *Case of Charles Dexter Ward* (1941), 118 pp, \$8.

Sun **Apr 6** / 7th meeting / Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist* (1988), 197 pp, \$15.

Come and join us. If you want to be on our mailing list or if you have any questions, please do email me, Ray Vince, Book Club secretary, at rvince@hccfl.edu or text me at 813-857-7419.

Youth News

Please join Children's & Youth Ministries for the following Upcoming Event:

Sunday, March 9th we will have a Family Busch Gardens Day after Sunday services! Youth in middle & high school are welcome to attend if they have season's passes or can cover the cost of tickets. All younger children are welcome to attend with their parents. We can cover the cost of a handful of tickets for youth in middle & high school who don't have passes, so please let Alicia know by Sunday, February 16th if you need a ticket!

Contact Alicia at aliciaschmid@rocketmail.com with any questions.

Gabriel Tree Party December 7, 2024



We received thank you notes from the children at Dunbar Elementary.
They are posted in the Parish Hall if you'd like to take a look!
For more photos please visit our website at www.saintandrewstampa.org

Donations to Saint Andrew's Foundation

*In Loving Memory of
Doug Rubottom*
Jan & Earl Smith

Admission to Daughters of the King Ceremony Jan 5, 2025



From the Parish Register

Deaths
Michael Kaney
Doug Rubottom

December 2024 Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT

As of 12/9/24, there was \$143,688 in operating account and \$68,995 in the parish reserve account.

As of 11/30/24, there was \$31,762 in the Foundation's checking account – monies available to the vestry.

Total available funds from principal for years 2021 thru 2024: \$299,541.

There was \$3,368,398 in the Foundation principal as of 12/2/24 (as opposed to \$3,092,638 at the end of 2023, an increase of \$275,760 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. Sutter came out again recently to repair some damaged roof tiles. This visit will be paid from the remaining 2024 funds.)

2025 Annual Stewardship Campaign – was launched at the end of September. Thanks, Don, for heading this up! 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). As of 12/9, we have 98 pledges for 461K (compared to 105 pledges for 344K as of this time last year).

There are still 56 pledgers who pledged 126K in 2024 whom we have not heard from for 2025. With that in mind, you will receive names and phone numbers of such people at the vestry meeting on Monday.

Diocesan Convention – was Thursday, 12/5 at 7PM. It was a virtual meeting. Our delegates were Allison, Martha, Wayne, and Piers (alternate).

Thanksgiving Eve Service – was on Wednesday, 11/27 at 7PM. It was a thankful little group.

Anchor Ball – was Saturday, 12/7 at the Pepin Center. Proceeds benefited Seafarers' Ministry at the Port of Tampa.

Gabriel's Giving Tree – Many thanks to all those who participated in this great outreach effort, especially Martha Cobb, Linda Busby, and a bunch of other terrific volunteers!

New Railings – New railing installed on steps under church tower.

Hurricane Impact on St. Andrew's 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 was replaced. Small tree fell in yard on side of house during Milton – was removed. Final hurricane expenses for rectory total about \$5,000. 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 did all the drywall-work gratis! This saved the church thousands of dollars. I have authorized (from my discretionary fund) a

December 2024 Operating Summary

	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budgeted</u>
Revenues	\$166,832	\$55,062	\$679,792	\$660,744
Expenses	\$65,979	\$55,062	\$680,766	\$660,744
Net	\$108,257	\$0	(\$973)	\$0

Lowe's gift card in the amount of \$500 for this very kind fellow. It cost \$1,000 to hang the new storage room door and install all the new molding in the garage and storage room. Last thing was painting the renovated walls and molding. Painter charged \$1,230 for that and completed it during Thanksgiving Week.

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.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

- Foundation is doing well. We had a good year in the markets. Will de-risk some of the portfolio. Confident in Northern Trust.

Incoming pledges look really good. Attendance is also good and tells us we are healthy. Hoping for a surplus budget so make sure to make the calls.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

- * Completed the post- Milton church roof repairs at a cost of \$2,517, to be paid from the Dan Curtis fund. Group doing the repairs (Sutter) takes a good photographic record of the repairs.
- * Fixed the broken rail on Southwest corner of the church – around \$650.
- * Only proposed improvement are the church steps we were sued over:
 - * One way is to put rails back on. About \$1,300
 - * Remove steps for \$1,450 and put landscaping there. Optimistic budget, so would ask for up to \$2,500 for project.
 - * Nicole Carr moved that we take up to \$2,500 from the Foundation to remove the steps and make the necessary repairs. Barbara Brotherton seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- * Slightly above on revenue, mainly due to non-pledge offerings. Parking is down but Santa Fest should help.
- * Power bill was lower.
- * Restricted accounts looks like there's an error for Outreach. Pam is looking into it.
- * Sunday was better than all of last month for pledges.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parish Life

- * Allision is getting organized for Lesson and Carols on Sunday. Lori and Doug are hosting coffee hour in the courtyard to make room for lessons and carols.
- * Parish Picnic - we don't have a location yet for 2025. We will need to pick a date in March. Picnic Island is a possibility.
- * February 15 for the wine tasting with Chris Sherman.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

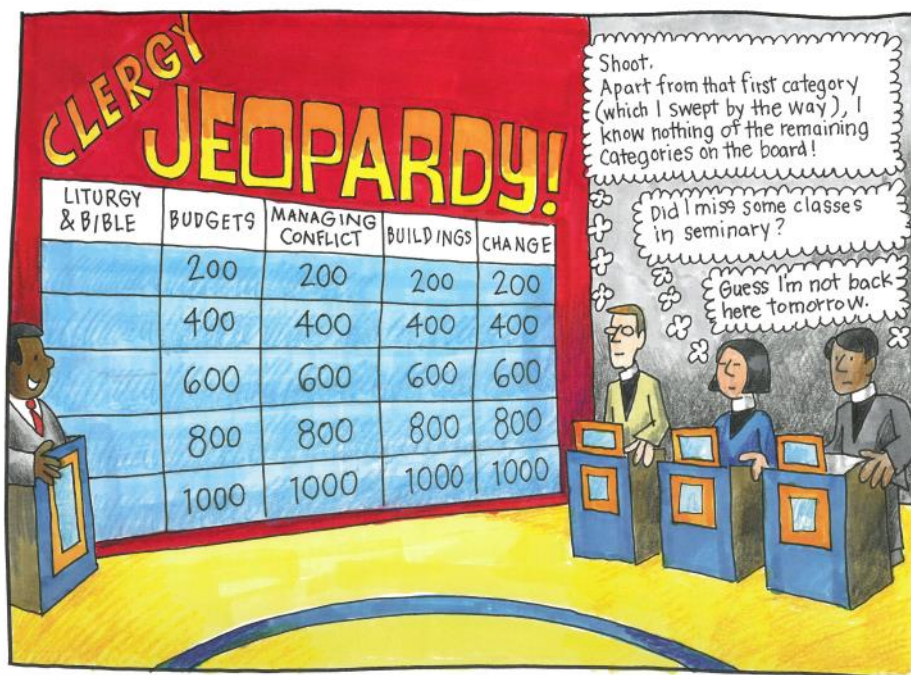
Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Ash Wednesday

March 5th

See page three for service times



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

The Rev. John Reese, Rector

Sunday Services

8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

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@](mailto:secretary@saintandrewstampa.org)

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.