



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✦ January 2025

Reverently Speaking

...and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

Matthew 2:9

Dear People of St. Andrew's,

This shop-til-you-flop, buy-til-you-bust culture says Christmastide is about presents. But the angels announced a star that signaled presence more than presents. For the wise men who began following this star, it was the beginning of a long, life-altering, all-consuming journey. That the alluring star the wise men identified and hitched their future to kept on moving as it guided them on their way demonstrates the fluidity and flexibility every traveler must embrace. From every night's camp, and from every town and village along the way, the star's location would look different. But because it was moving to a specific destination, a point of fulfillment, any traveler starting from anywhere in the region could have arrived at that small house in Nazareth or Bethlehem.

Try this experiment:

Write down any 3 digit number. (The number can't mirror itself like 979 or 454)

Reverse the number you just wrote down.

Now subtract the lower/smaller number from the higher/larger number. If the subtraction yielded a 2-digit number (99), add zero in front of it (099).

Now, reverse the result and add it to the preceding answer/result.

If you followed the instructions carefully, you all should have the same answer: 1089. Wherever you started, with whatever number, you all end up at the same place: 1089.

We all start at different places when we decide to Follow That Star. Some of us start out in mansions; others begin in public housing. Some of us start in the warm arms of a loving family. Others begin in a barren childhood of absentee parents and outright rejection or abuse. Some of us start with a heritage of faith and a solid church family; others begin without any spiritual direction whatsoever. Some of us start early in life, seeking faith and fulfillment in childhood; others begin late in life, looking for spiritual solace only when wrinkles and grey hairs have contoured and colored our perspective.

But no matter where your journey begins, if we faithfully "Follow That Star" our destination is determined. We will come into the Light. We will experience the One who is The Way, The Truth, and The Life. We will come to the baby, lying in his mother's arms, to the rabbi preaching, teaching and healing all over the countryside, to the Son of God hanging on the cross, to the risen Savior standing by our side and calling us into the Light.

(continued)

Here's a little litany for the New Year:

Today, when I awoke, I suddenly realized that this is the best day of my life, ever!

There were times when I wondered if I would make it to today; but I did! And because I did, I'm going to celebrate!

In 2025, I'm going to celebrate what an unbelievable life I have had so far: the accomplishments, the many blessings, and, yes, even the hardships because they have served to make me stronger.

I will go through 2025 with my head held high, and a happy heart.

I will marvel at God's seemingly simple gifts: the morning dew, the sun, the clouds, the trees, the flowers, the birds. In 2025, none of these miraculous creations will escape my notice.

In 2025, I will share my excitement for life with other people. I'll make someone smile. I'll go out of my way to perform an unexpected act of kindness for someone I don't even know.

This year, I'll give a sincere compliment to someone who seems down. I'll tell a child how special he is, and I'll tell someone I love just how deeply I care for them and how much they mean to me.

This is the year I quit worrying about what I don't have and start being grateful for all the wonderful things God has already given me.

I'll remember that to worry is just a waste of time because my faith in God and his Divine Plan ensures everything will be just fine.

Tonight, before I go to bed, I'll go outside and raise my eyes to the heavens. I will stand in awe at the beauty of the stars and the moon, and I will praise God for these magnificent treasures.

As the day ends and I lay my head down on my pillow, I will thank the Almighty for the best year of my life. And I will sleep the sleep of a contented child, excited with expectation because I know tomorrow is going to be...

The Best Year of My Life!

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. John Reese

Un-Greening of the Church

Come and help take down the Christmas decorations at the church after the 10:30 service this Sunday, January 5th. Many hands will make for light work!

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30 December 29th through Jan 19th

The Wired Word, facilitated by the Rector, examines a current event from the previous week and analyzes it through the use of Biblical references. Come and see how Scripture can help us make sense of what's happening in the world today.

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

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 line-up:

- 1/26 - Everywhere is Galilee: The Downward Call
- 2/2 - Everywhere is the Jordan: Baptism and All the Waters
- 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

Annual Parish Meeting
Sunday, February 2, Noon
following the 10:30am service

St. A's Book Club Meetings for Jan-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 **Jan 5** / 4th meeting / Charles Portis, *True Grit* (1968), 240 pp, \$17.

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.

Christmas Pageant

~ December 22nd ~

Greening of the Church



Visit our website at www.saintandrewstampa.org for more photos!!

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 cmchurchil8@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. **We have currently 115 pledges for \$513,164.00**

2025 Pledge Report

<i>Pledges received</i>	<i>Total Amount Pledged for 2025</i>	<i>Total Amount Pledged for 2024</i>
115	\$513,164.00	\$481,720.00
	11 <i>New pledges for 2025</i>	
	43 <i>Increased their pledge for 2025</i>	
	10 <i>Decreased their pledge for 2025</i>	
	51 <i>Made the same pledge in 2025 as in 2024</i>	
	115 <i>Total number of pledges received for 2025</i>	

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 Besseliu 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.

Donations to Saint Andrew's Foundation



From the Parish Register

Donations to Saint Andrew's Foundation

✠
*In Loving Memory of
Callista Tolbert*

Claudia & Ward Seller
Richard & Lynn Tombrink
Stephen & Debra Rotolo
Kevin & Cathy Tolbert

✠

✠

Deceased
Analee Mayes

✠

✠
*In Loving Memory of
Arthur "Bubba" Turner*

Pat Wolfe

✠

*In Loving Memory of
Elizabeth Sellas*

Sara Owens

November 2024 Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR’S REPORT

As of 11/19/24, there was \$140,133 in operating account and \$75,472 in the parish reserve account.

As of 11/19/24, there was \$16,844 in the Foundation’s checking account – monies available to the vestry.

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.)

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 11/19, we have 78 pledges for 339K (compared to 94 pledges for 312K as of this time last year).

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 re-scheduled for Thursday, 12/5 at 7PM. It will be a virtual meeting. Our delegates are Allison, Martha, Wayne, and Piers (alternate).

Halloween House – was on Friday, 10/25 from 6PM to 8PM at St. Andrew’s. Alicia reports that it went smoothly and was well-attended.

All Saints’ Evensong – was on Sunday, 11/3 at 5PM, followed by a very nice reception in parish hall hosted by Parish Life. Great music and good attendance (95)!

Annual St. Andrew’s Fish Fry – was on Sunday, 11/17, following the 10:30 service. We filled the parish hall and raised \$860 for the Giving Tree project. Many thanks to all the Outreachers who made this such a successful fishy event!

Diocesan Clergy Retreat – was at Dayspring 11/18 through 11/20. The Rector attended and was refreshed.

Memorial Service – for Callista Tolbert will be on Friday, 11/22 at 10AM at St.Andrew’s.

Thanksgiving Eve Service – is on Wednesday, 11/27 at 7PM.

Anchor Ball – is Saturday, 12/7 at the Pepin Center. Proceeds benefit Seafarers’ Ministry at the Port of Tampa.

Rectory Christmas Party – on Friday, 12/20, beginning at 6PM.

Christmas Pageant –on Sunday, 12/22, during the 10:30 service. Dress rehearsal is on Saturday, 12/21 at 10AM.

Hanging of the Greens – will be on Sunday, 12/22, after the 10:30 service. Come help decorate the church for Christmas!

November 2024 Operating Summary				
	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budgeted</u>
Revenues	\$48,831	\$55,061	\$512,959	\$605,681
Expenses	\$38,208	\$55,061	\$612,660	\$605,681
Net	\$10,622	0	(\$99,700)	0

Christmas Lessons & Carols – is on Sunday, 12/22 at 5PM in the church. Reception afterward hosted by Parish Life.

Christmas Eve services will be on Tuesday, 12/24 at 5:30PM and 9PM, with pre-service music beginning 30 minutes prior to each service.

Christmas Day service will be on Wednesday, 12/25 at 10:30AM.

Sunday services as usual on 12/29.

Diocesan Visioning Day – is Saturday, 1/4/25 from 9AM to 3PM at DaySpring. One can attend in person or virtually. This event is not just for convention delegates but is open to the general public.

New Railings – need new railing on steps under church tower and also at steps on Marion St. by main entrance to church.

Hurricane Impact on St. Andrew’s Church – 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.

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. Current hurricane expenses for rectory stand at 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 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 will be painting the renovated walls and molding. Painter gave a quote of \$1,150 for that and will do it, hopefully, 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

Absent

JUNIOR WARDEN’S REPORT

- Just painting left to be done at Rectory – see rector’s Report above

Handrails repair needed on church tower steps

TREASURER’S REPORT

- Still a deficit for the year, but moving in the right direction

Plate collection is up, parking revenue is down.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

Old Business - None

New Business - None

The meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

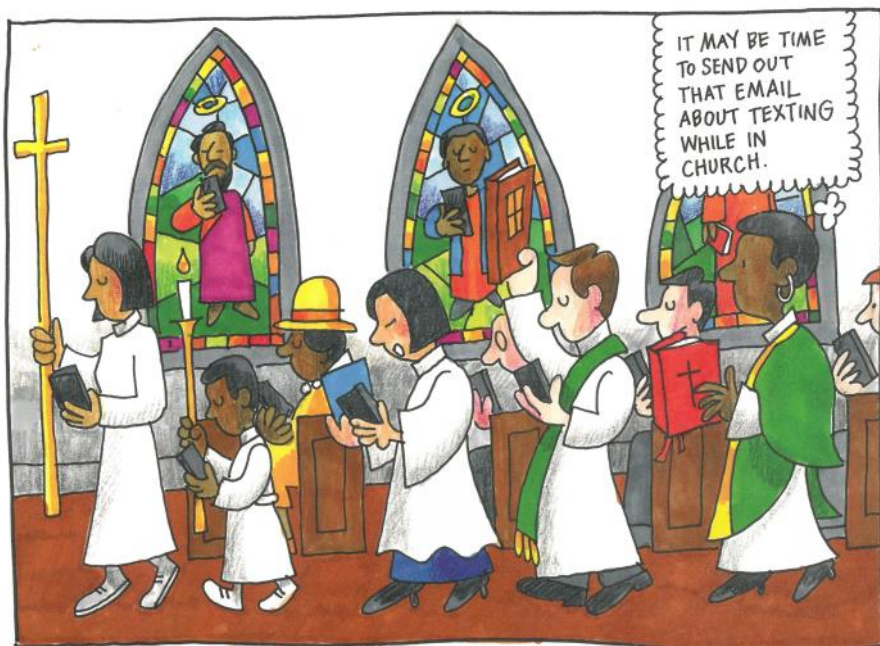
Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, February 2nd

at noon



©2025 Church Pension Group

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@](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.