



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✕ March 2025

Reverently Speaking

The choicest of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

Exodus 24:19

Dear People of St. Andrew's,

We have now begun the season of Lent. For some, Lent is approached with dread, like it is the one 40-day period of the year when we can't have any fun. Think back to this past Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. We call it Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). In other words, party today; do penance tomorrow.

Mardi Gras is also known as Shrove Tuesday, a day associated with fun, food and feasting. It's the day you round up everything you may be required to give up during Lent, like meat, eggs, sugar and butter, and you Google "Give me a recipe calling for meat, eggs, sugar, and butter." You then enjoy "savory meatloaf with sweet glaze" or "sausage and egg breakfast casserole with a sweet maple glaze." Pair it with a nice Shiraz or Pinot Noir, and eat like there's no tomorrow. Here at St. Andrew's we ate dozens of chocolate chip and blueberry pancakes.

Lent is when we fast and do penance. NFL usually means football, but this time of year it stands for "No Fun Lent." You don't even look like you're enjoying yourselves.

How did we end up in this situation?

We must go back to the early years of the ancient church when Lent was a time of fasting and penitence. The 40-day period (mirroring Jesus' 40 days of fasting in the wilderness) was seen as an opportunity for Christians to spiritually discipline themselves, often through the denial of bodily comforts, which included fasting from food and sometimes abstaining from other pleasures. Initially, the Lenten fast involved significant restrictions, especially abstaining from certain foods like meat, dairy and alcohol. Over time, the idea of "giving up" extended beyond food to include personal luxuries, habits or activities as an act of sacrifice and self-denial.

Fast forward to 2025, and it is not unusual for Christians to approach Lent with a pre-conceived plan to give up certain things or practices pursuant to a 40-day exercise in contrition, accompanied by appropriate weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. A partial list of now-excluded items might include: chocolate, sweets, television, wine, smoking, social media, fast food, pizza, emoticons, taking selfies, snacking between meals, swearing, gambling, complaining, coffee, eating out and sleeping in.

But perhaps we should emphasize the value of giving, rather than giving up. The Torah refers to giving to God out of the blessings that have fallen our way from the hand of God — that is, *to give, rather than give up!* Or, for the most contrite and supererogatory among us, *to give, in addition to giving up!*

The last few chapters of Deuteronomy (meaning "second law") are essentially Moses' last reminders to the "children of Israel" concerning Yahweh's expectations for them, and his as well. Consider them akin to Steve Jobs' commencement address, or Randy Pausch's "Last Lecture." Moses is trying to help us see the

importance of giving, not giving up. He addresses the importance of the “harvest of first fruits.” In practical terms, it is a ritual of giving.

The practice of offering first fruits is outlined in several parts of the Old Testament, particularly in Exodus 23:19, Leviticus 23:9-14, Deuteronomy 26:1-11 and Numbers 18:12-13. The Israelites were instructed to bring the first portion of their harvest to the Lord as an acknowledgment of God’s providential blessing. “The choicest of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God” (Exodus 23:19).

So, what are “first fruits?” In the ancient agrarian society of Israel, the first fruits were the *earliest and best portion* of the crops harvested at the beginning of the agricultural season.

And this is what we do in Lent: we give our best.

Think for a second about the conventional advice concerning Lent. Giving up for Lent is usually aimed at *self-improvement*, rather than community improvement or the betterment of others. That’s the difference. Giving up smoking, eating fast food, chocolate and so on are deprivations you undertake for yourself, for the sake of your health. There’s nothing wrong with that, of course, and there’s even a lot that’s *right* about it.

But when we give instead of — or in addition to — giving up something, we contribute to the common good.

During Lent, we are tasked not only with giving God our best, but also with trusting in the providence of God. When Israel brought the first of the harvest, they implicitly were saying that they knew that God would provide more in the future.

Lent reminds us also to live with grateful hearts, recognizing that everything we have comes from God.

In effect, Lent is a big challenge, not just to flex our muscles and see how self-disciplined we are as we give up this or abstain from that. Perhaps there is a time for sackcloth and ashes. But as we start our Lenten journey, let’s explore how we can creatively become the people of God we are called to be.

Yours in Christ,

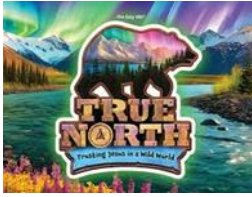


The Rev. John Reese

Stations of the Cross: Fridays in Lent 12:10pm

Come and join us for this 30-minute devotional, observed on Fridays in Lent at 12:10pm running through Good Friday on April 18th. Our Stations of the Cross, a gift from Nathan & Jane Simpson, are a series of pictures representing certain scenes in the Passion of Christ, each corresponding to a particular incident. Formerly the number of stations varied considerably in different places but fourteen are now generally acknowledged. The object of the Stations is to help the faithful to make in spirit, as it were, a pilgrimage to the chief scenes of Christ's sufferings and death. It is carried out by passing from Station to Station, with certain prayers at each and devout meditation on the various incidents in turn. It is very usual, when the devotion is performed publicly, to sing a stanza of the "Stabat Mater" while passing from one Station to the next.

Youth News



Vacation Bible School 2025 will take place August 4-8, 2025. The VBS theme this year is True North: Point kids to Jesus, a faithful friend we can always trust. Guide kids on the ultimate Alaskan adventure where northern lights glow over majestic mountains, racing rivers, and glistening glaciers. As kids trek the tundra, they'll explore how easy it is to lose sight of what's true in our wild world today. Pointing them toward Jesus, True North VBS shows them that he is a faithful friend we can always trust. He's our True North! Stay tuned for supply lists, but feel free to contact Alicia at alici-aschmid@rocketmail.com to volunteer for a week of faith, fun, and fellowship!

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

The Grace of Les Miserables

Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* is a truly epic story. Whether you've read the novel, seen the Broadway musical, heard its soundtrack, or seen the several screen adaptations, you already know the power in the story. In this six-week video study, Pastor Matt Rawle of Asbury UMC in Bossier City, Louisiana, dives into six ideals found in the story—grace, justice, poverty, love, revolution, and hope—each represented by a character in Hugo's story. As these imperfect and relatable characters interact, we can see how these ideas work together (perhaps even in spite of each other) out in the world. Rawle brings us to the intersection of Church and Pop Culture by drawing parallels between the iconic story and musical and our Christian calling, inspiring us to both understand our faith and live it out in our daily lives.

Here is the line-up:

- 3/9 – Grace Well Received: Valjean
- 3/16 – When Grace and Justice Collide: Javert
- 3/23 – The Poor Are Always with You: Fantine
- 3/30 – The Gift of Love – Marius and Cosette
- 4/6 – Building the Barricade: *Les Amis*
- 4/13 – The Blessed Garden: A Hopeful Vision

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

BE INVOLVED IN A NEW LAUNCH OF AN OLD MINISTRY

St. Andrew's once again will be partnering with the Dominican Development Corporation, a branch of the Episcopal Church, to help build churches in the Dominican Republic. This ministry fits in with the Great Commission, To Spread the Gospel Throughout the World.

We will have an informational meeting to discuss:

- The details of involvement for those who choose to help in the build, including accommodations, description of the work, overview of the Dominican Parish being served, costs, possible scholarship, etc. Those who have served on previous Dominican trips will be on hand to answer any questions.
- Organizational needs to make this a successful and continuing ministry at St. Andrew's.
- Open forum for contributing ideas for this important ministry.

Please join us **Sunday, March 30, 2025**, during coffee hour in the 3rd Floor meeting room. Feel free to contact Eric Hargens at 813-416-1132 should you have questions in the meantime.

Good News of Freedom / The Lenten Series 2025

Raymond M. Vince

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-19 NRSV)

Jesus in Luke 4 describes the mission of the Messiah using the words of Isaiah, chapter 61. He claims that this scripture is now fulfilled in him, that he himself would bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed.

In this Lenten Series, we shall examine the good news of Jesus by asking six foundational questions, about God, the world, knowledge & faith, our neighbor, the nature of time, and how we should live.

5:30 pm Eucharist in the Chapel / 6:00 pm Supper
6:45 pm Lent Series begins / 7:30 pm end.

Good News of Freedom

1. Who is God? / Creator, Word, & Spirit.
Shrove Tuesday, 4th March 2025 (Hosted by the Youth)
2. Where are we living? / Somewhere East of Eden.
Tuesday, 11th March 2025 (Daughters of the King)
3. How do we know? / Knowledge is personal & changing.
Tuesday, 18th March 2025 (Parish Life)
4. Who is our neighbor? / The one to whom we show mercy.
Tuesday, 25th March 2025 (The Choir)
5. What time is it? / The time is now, here at hand.
Tuesday, 1st April 2025 (Outreach)
6. How should we live? / To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly.
Tuesday, 8th April 2025 (Altar Guild)

Wine Tasting



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



From the Parish Register

Transfers In

Ricardo Sanchez

From St. Mark's, Tampa

Transfers Out

Pat & Peggy Baskette

To St. Stephen's, PA

Deaths

Deloris Lewis

Thanks to those who have pledged in 2025!

Chris & April Adams
Patrick & Alison Allman
DeHart & Patty Ayala
Irene & Peter Baker
Mr. & Mrs. Alston Barrow
Siegfried & Linda Barry
George Bedell
David Belcher & Mallory Lykes
Desmond Benjamin
Bill & Allison Besselieu
Mike & Pam Billings
Benjamin & Jeannie Borsch
Edwin & Judith Bourdeau
Thomas & Juanita Boyd
William & Kathryn Boyd
Mr. & Mrs. John H. Boyet
Barbara Brotherton
Derrick & Beverley Brown
Donreece H. Brown
Kerry Brown
Richard & Laurie Brown
Warren Brown
Don & Campbell Burton
Norton & Linda Busby
Julian H. Byrd
Steve & Debbie Cantler
Nicole Carr
J. Frazier Carraway & Claire B. Carraway
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen F. Chambers
Richard & Ginger Chapman
Charlotte Churchill
Holly Clemmons &
Katie Pastorius
Chris & Martha Cobb
Gary Cotter & Sharon Colucci
Richard Connor
Peter Connors
Don & Summer Crawford
Piers & Pamela Curry
William & Stacy Curtis
Wayne A. Daley
Robin DeLavergne
Terri Diaz
Michael & MaryBeth Dickinson
Wallace A. Dixon
Edward and Lynn Dorman
Dennis & Melinda Dundore

Lindell Dye
Dr. James & Sunny Endicott
Rodrick & Lucinda Evans
Susanna Fenhagen &
Tony Morrison
Richard Ferlita &
James Carmichael
Ms. Pat Frank
Mr. & Mrs. William A. Gillen Jr.
Bradley & Alicia Hall
Hiram & Wynnette Hampton
Eric & Loueita Hargens
Mary Beth Harris
Vernon & Charlotte Henderson
Paul Henley & Joanne Byars
Staige & Tricia Hoffman
Bill Hudson
Christopher Hunt
Michael & Christean Hursey
Margo & Larry Kemm
Beth Kennington
Judy Kent
Patrick & Sharon Keogh
Fran Kerr
Robert & Elaine Kimble
Carole T. King
David King
Susan Kiniry
Victoria & Charles Klug
Laura Kruper
Jack & Anne Kutchmire
Katherine Lawless
George & Rosemary Levy
Alex & Kim Liggett
Adrienne Love
Sue MacIsaac
Rosemary S. McAteer
Kirk McCann & Dorothy Peters
Lloyd & Barbara McFarquhar
Michael & Linda McGhee
Warren L. Miller
James M. Moore
Michael & Michele Morris
John & Susan Mueller
Michael & Janet Norona
Bill Nipper
Anne T. Paige
Charles & Elizabeth Palm
Robert E. Parr

Bill & Ingrid Peterson
Sally Phethean
Craig & Louise Polley
Anna Putney
Ryan & Dana Putney
Tom Rankin
Larry & Joan Rayburn
The Rev. & Mrs. John Reese
Janis Temple Riasanovsky
Edward R. Rich
Jennifer & Charlie Richardson
Kristi Roberts
Victoria Rubel
Catherine & L. Gray Sanders
Paul & Elisabeth Scheuer
Chip Sellas
Chris Sherman
Mark & Maria Shroka
Jim & Diana Shuler
Ron Simmons
Jane & Nathan Simpson
Donald & Virginia Sink
Earl & Jan Smith
Gregg & CJ Smith
Jennifer Smtih
Maxwell & Teri Sobel
Carol Jean Spoto
The Rev. & Mrs. Jerold Stadel
Linda K. Stevens
Paula Stewart
Kathleen Stoy
Catharyn Szuba
Matt & Carolyn Tapie
Doug & Lori Taplow
Keri Thatcher
Arlene & Steve Tonnesen
Betty Trueblood
Nancy Turner
Georgia & Milton Vahue
Ray & Jeanne Vince
Christopher & Maureen Watson
Jaret West
Jack Wheat
Pat Wolfe
Betty Wood

January 2025 Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT

As of 1/21/25, there was \$227,556 in the operating account and \$65,194 in the parish reserve account.

As of 12/31/24, there was \$31,775 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 \$3,275,936 in the Foundation principal as of 12/31/24 (as opposed to \$3,092,638 at the end of 2023, an increase of \$183,298 for the year). And that's with transferring 124K from principal to checking during the course of the year in order to pay for various projects.

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 \$500. (We spent 12K from this fund to repair leaks in the church roof this year.) Community Foundation will let us know the amount of the 2025 distribution at the end of February.

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 1/22, we have 129 pledges for 544K (compared to 133 pledges for 480K as of this time last year).

There are still 27 pledgers who pledged 51K in 2024 whom we have not heard from for 2025. Many thanks to all the phone calls & contacts you have made with folks. Your valiant efforts are very much appreciated!

Preliminary Budget – see your email. The proposed 2025 budget is balanced. But keep in mind that we have yet to hear from those 27 pledgers who pledged 51K in 2024 but have not weighed in for 2025. There is a proposed raise of 4% for all employees in 2025.

New Office Computer – Pam needs a new computer. Cost is \$1,579. It can be paid from the reserve fund.

Rectory Christmas Party – was on Friday, 12/20. We filled the rectory!

Hanging of the Greens – was Sunday, 12/22, after the 10:30 service. Excellent turnout. Church was decorated in just a couple of hours or so and looked fabulous. Many thanks to all the decorating elves! (The un-hanging on 1/5 went quickly as well.)

Christmas Lessons & Carols – was on Sunday, 12/22 at 5PM in the church. Attendance was good – 128 souls! Great music and a lovely dinner party afterward. Thanks to the Choir & Parish Life!

Christmas Eve services were 12/24 at 5:30PM and 9PM, Christmas Day service 12/25 at 10:30AM. Overall attendance was 434, best since COVID. We also had 283 Facebook views at the 5:30PM Christmas Eve service and 325 views at the 9PM service.

Ryan Hebert Retiring – on 4/27. Coleman Flentge also plans to leave us in the spring. However, he is willing to stay with us through the summer, if it would help us with the transition. Ideally, the new organist/choirmaster post will be a single position, rather than being split into two positions.

Open Foundation Board Position – Pat Wolfe is retiring from her position on the board after 16 yrs of faithful service, all of which have been as treasurer. This opens up a 2 yr unexpired term to be filled by appointment by the vestry. George Bedell, Foundation Board Chairman, recommends Lori Taplow for the position. Lori is willing to serve.

Vestry Nominations – we have five nominees for five slots (Pam Billings, Patrick Keogh, George Levy, Jennifer Richardson, and Keri Thatcher).

January 2025 Operating Summary

| | <u>MTD Actual</u> | <u>MTD Budgeted</u> | <u>YTD Actual</u> | <u>YTD Budgeted</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Revenues | \$50,723 | \$59,451 | \$50,723 | \$59,451 |
| Expenses | \$83,485 | \$59,451 | \$83,485 | \$59,451 |
| Net | (\$32,761) | \$0 | (\$32,761) | \$0 |

Annual Meeting – Sunday, 2/2 after 10:30 service – includes vestry election. No mail-in ballots were sent out, since we have five nominees for five slots. Election will be by acclamation during the annual meeting. We will ratify the 2025 budget during the annual meeting, along with voting for two members of the Foundation Board to serve three-year terms. Piers Curry and Richard Ferlita are willing to be re-elected.

Wine Tasting Event – with Chris Sherman and Chris Cobb is on Saturday, 2/15, from 6:30PM until 8:30PM (or the wine runs out) in the Parish Hall. Chris Sherman is a retired food critic for the St. Pete Times. *As an added bonus, Allison and her friend, Julie Tollen, will be playing at this event!*

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 \$6,000. It was \$200 to fix garage door sensors, \$545 to replace garage door opener, \$1,200 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 was painting the renovated walls and molding. Painter charged \$1,230 for that and completed it during Thanksgiving Week.

Many thanks to our outgoing vestry members for their leadership and ministry: Barbara Brotherton, Derrick Brown, Victoria Klug, Richard Chapman, and Brad Hall.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

- Note on the annual pledges- thanks to everyone for making calls. Thanks to Don for leading the campaign. The fact that we will be running at a surplus is a reflection of the health and vibrancy of the congregation.
- Foundation reminder- the Board had a conversation about the fact that their job is just to oversee that the funds are well-cared for. But the vestry is responsible for making the decisions on how to allocate it.

Thank you to Barbara Brotherton, Derrick Brown, Victoria Klug, Richard Chapman, and Brad Hall for serving on vestry.

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

New Garbage disposal will be in tomorrow. Steps at NW corner of church have been removed. All that is left is painting and landscaping.

TREASURER'S REPORT

We had a good year- even with TECO, insurance and hurricanes. 717 was late with December parking payment. Also late is half of contribution for the Ferguson Choir- so it WOULD have been a positive year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Helping Hands – February 15th funeral with reception.

Outreach Report- Dunbar Elementary could use clothing donations. Uniforms, washing machines, socks/underwear.

Parish Life- Picnic will be Sunday, March 2nd at Picnic Island Park.

Homeless Ministry – going well.

Education- Alicia and Martha are meeting with the group next Sunday to plan events for the rest of the year. Could outreach/education funds be used for Youth? Also have some college students interested in helping. Also looking at VBS dates.

New Business –

- Brad Hall Moved to approve the 2025 Budget. Barabara Brotherton seconded. Discussion about property insurance increases. Diocese CFO is working on not having double digit increases. Don Crawford inquired if the new organist will be on budget at \$43K. Fr. Reese thinks there's some room in the budget to adjust up if necessary. The budget was approved unanimously.
- Piers Curry moved that we spend \$1,579 for a New Office Computer for Pam from the Reserve Fund. Brad Hall Seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Voted to appoint Lori Taplow to the Foundation Board for an unexpired two-year term. Pat Wolfe is retiring from the Board. Barbara Brotherton made the Motion. Brad Hall seconded. Approved unanimously.

Tuesday, March 4, is the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper hosted by Youth.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Lenten Series

See Lenten Series schedule inside

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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

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.