



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

THE CALL

Honoring the Past — Embracing the Future!

Downtown Tampa, Florida ✦ November 2024

Reverently Speaking

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8

A man came home after a hard day at the office and fighting the traffic and greeted his wife and little 3-year-old daughter. He stooped down in front of his little girl and said, "How about a kiss for Daddy?" She must have had a hard day, too, for her only response was "NO!" Seeing the hurt look on the father, the mother said, "I'm ashamed of you, Melanie. Your Daddy works hard all day to bring home a little money, and you behave like that?" Taking the cue, the father asked again, "OK, honey, come on now, where's that kiss?" The little 3-year-old looked him in the eye and replied, "Where's the money?"

Well, I guess it's inescapable. Money is a part of us. If you had to draw a symbol of your life, using something familiar or abstract or a combination, what would that symbol look like? We may have allowed an affluent, technological society to implant the dollar sign as the symbol, the estimator of the value of our lives. As Christians, we need to carefully examine our lifestyle and create a symbol that shall be expressive of what we intend for our lives as men and women of faith. And then, in our theology and practice of stewardship, we need to redeem the symbol of the dollar sign as an authentic Christian symbol.

Jesus had a lot to say about wealth because he knew that if you weren't careful, money would not only be a part of you but could even become *all* of you. A dollar sign could become your life symbol. It could get such a hold on you that, after a while, the man and his money could become so intertwined that you couldn't tell where one ended and the other began.

It isn't the amount that's the deciding factor - it doesn't matter whether you've got 5 hundred or 5 million dollars; it's your attitude, your relationship to it that makes the difference. I guess this is where the most misquoted verse in the Bible comes in. You know how we say, "Money is the root of all evil." Psychologically, that phrase is very appealing because it lets us off the hook. We can project the blame on something outside ourselves. But money isn't the culprit - the problem is within ourselves and our attitude, for Scripture says the *love* of money is the root of all kinds of evil. For love of wealth people will cheat, lie, betray, murder, try to keep up with the Joneses, manipulate others, find loopholes, go further in debt to give the impression or illusion of prosperity.

We start by possessing a few things; then we strive to possess more; soon we're adrift in a sea of things and strive so hard to have new and beautiful things that we don't have time to be persons. Soon our wealth possesses *us*, and the channels of love become clogged up and we love things and use people instead of using things and loving people. The dollar sign becomes etched on our hearts and directs our lives more than we'd like to admit.

How can we break the hold wealth has over us? One way is to face realistically the battle in our lives. Jesus said it's like trying to worship two gods - the eternal ultimate and the temporary monetary. He said they can't co-exist - one will displace the other on the throne. The temptation is to displace God from the center of our lives. When the dollar sign becomes our life symbol, we are worshipping ourselves.

We begin to measure off this little corner of the world and say "this is mine"; I am God here. This I own and reserve the right to determine what I shall do with it. We are right back to man's original sin of pushing God aside and taking charge ourselves. To face this battle and realize the stakes is to take the first step in dethroning the dollar sign from our lives.

Another step to take is participation in Christian stewardship. Recognizing that we are not the owners but the tenants of our wealth, our bodies, our time, and our talents lead us to stewardship. Stewardship is a grateful response we make to God's love and providence by using our resources and abilities to fulfill Christ's mission to the world. Giving away our wealth will help break its hold on us. That is what Jesus told the rich young ruler, but he did not want to pay that kind of a price. Every Christian should be sure he practices the art of giving. This is one of those areas where we learn by doing - where we act first, and then the right feelings follow. If we wait until we feel like giving generously, we may never break the stranglehold.

Stewardship of giving doesn't mean salving our conscience; it's not buying God off; it's not giving till it hurts; it's not giving foolishly. It is an orderly, discerning, proportionate way of giving so that I am constantly reminding myself that God is the owner, and I am His steward. Not that what I give is His and what I keep is mine - that's not it. It's all His and I am the trustee. And what I do with what I keep is just as much a part of my Christian stewardship as what I do with what I give away. Isn't it time to Christianize the use of our wealth, removing the dollar sign from our lives so that it can be reclaimed as an authentic Christian symbol? For it can be that, if it is not the symbol of the meaning of our lives.

If the dollar sign has been the symbol of our lives - even if by default - what shall take its place? There are some who would take Christ's cross of sacrifice as the demanding symbol of their intention to live sacrificially. Some would take the towel and basin as the symbol of the servant discipleship to which Jesus calls us. Some might choose the classic praying hands as a constant call to deeper devotion.

What kind of symbol would express the thrust of *your* commitment as a person of faith? We need to be intentional about our life symbol. We need to be intentional about our stewardship of giving - a stewardship that is sacrificial, urgent and people-centered. In the stewardship of our wealth, how can we convince a skeptical world that the church means business? Giving God what's left over won't convince anybody. Holding on to our wealth will only make us uncomfortable in the presence of Jesus; it will also say to the world that the dollar sign is our life symbol, too - and we're no different than anyone else when it comes to money.

Remember, God is not calling us to be successful; he's calling us to be faithful. And to whom much is given, much shall be required.

Yours in Christ,

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

The Rev. John Reese



Our Annual *St. Andrew's Fish Fry* will be on **Sunday, November 17th** after the **10:30 am service**. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children with proceeds benefitting "*Gabriel's Giving Tree*", supporting needy children from Dunbar Elementary School. We will again be pre-selling tickets each Sunday prior to the lunch.

A Magnificat Holiday

Celebrate the holiday season with the Plant City Community Chorale, the Concert Chorus and Virtuosi Orchestra from Dr. Kiran C. Patel High School as they present Francesco Durante's masterpiece, *Magnificat in Bb!* Under the direction of Coleman Flentge, the concert will feature this Baroque masterpiece as well as other holiday favorites to provide some magic to your Christmas season. We hope to see you here at St. Andrew's on **Thursday November 21 at 7PM!** Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the door or at [pccchorale.org/upcoming-concerts!](http://pccchorale.org/upcoming-concerts)

Daughters of the King

ECW of Southwest Florida and the Southwest Florida Diocesan Assembly of the Daughters of the King are pleased to present a joint event this November at DaySpring. THE WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL DAY at DaySpring Conference Center on **November 23rd** is from 9:00am - 3:00pm.

We invite you to join us and guest speaker Bishop Glenda Curry, Bishop of Alabama and Province IV DOK Chaplain, for this Women's Spiritual Day, **Take My Hand, Precious Lord**. Bishop Douglas Scharf will celebrate the eucharist.

Contact Adrienne Love at 813-391-5129 or alove6984@gmail.com if interested. Registration fee of \$25 includes continental breakfast, snacks, and lunch.

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE

Choral Eucharist

Wednesday, November 27 - 7:00 p.m.

A wonderful day of the year to give thanks to our God!

Joy! A Winter Spectacular

Musicians from Dr. Kiran C. Patel High School are excited to return to St. Andrew's for their fourth annual winter concert! This year's theme is "Joy!" and will be a showcase of music intended to spread joy and light to our community! We hope you will mark your calendars and be a part of this truly festive celebration. The concert is here at St. Andrew's on **Thursday December 12 at 7PM**. Tickets are \$10 for adults and free for children 12 and under.

Adult Christian Education

Sunday mornings at 9:30

Signs and Wonders: A Beginner's Guide to the Miracles of Jesus

In *Signs and Wonders: A Beginner's Guide to the Miracles of Jesus*, Amy-Jill Levine explores selected miracles of Jesus in historical and theological context. For each miracle, she discusses not only how past witnesses would have understood the events, but also how today's readers can draw meaning from Jesus's words and actions. Levine is Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Hartford Seminary and Professor Emerita of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University.

Here is the lineup:

11/10 - A bleeding woman and a dead girl: The importance of women's bodies

11/17 - Giving sight to the blind: Metaphors of understanding (Mark 8, John 9)

11/24 - The raising of Lazarus: Taking death seriously

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

Outreach News

The Outreach Committee is kicking off our annual Metropolitan Ministries Thanksgiving Boxes of Hope.

We are asking that you purchase and bring to church the following items based on the first letter of your last name:

A-E: gravy packets, soup, cereal, canned fruit, canned yams

F-M: bagged or canned beans (black, pinto, refried), cranberry sauce, boxed macaroni and cheese, canned vegetables

N-Z: bagged or boxed stuffing, bagged rice (yellow or white), canned or boxed potatoes, dessert mix, cookies

Instead of labeled boxes, we will use the barrels provided in the Parish Hall for your food donations. Metropolitan Ministries will sort all our donations at their facilities this year. Gift cards for turkeys are also welcome, as are check donations made out to St. Andrew's with "Turkey Pack" in the memo line. Gift cards and checks should go in the offering plate, not in the barrels.

The deadline is Sunday, November 17th. Metropolitan Ministries has a critical need this holiday season to serve Tampa's less fortunate population, so let's make this our best year of giving ever!

Gabriel Tree Project

The Parish Outreach Committee is again sponsoring the 2024 Gabriel Tree Project. This supports students and families at Dunbar Elementary, a local Tampa public school. Our two previously sponsored schools were closed this year by the county.

Tags with 100 children's names, sizes and wish gifts will be available starting November 3rd in the Parish Hall. The sign-out list contains children of all ages, as once a child is nominated by the school social worker, we sponsor all the children in that household up to age 18. This is a great time to select a child or children close in age and interest to your own children or grandchildren and make a family tradition of shopping and wrapping to help those less fortunate.

We invite you to participate in one of several ways:

A. Take a tag and sign up for the child's name, purchase and wrap the gifts, and drop them off at the Parish Hall by Sunday December 1st or any time earlier.

B. Avail yourself of the ELF shopper's service. At the end of the program, you will receive a thank you note with photos of the gifts that were purchased for the child you selected.

· Choose a child, indicate that you want the ELF to shop for this child when you sign up, and give a donation to the church office, either cash, check or on-line donation (please specify Gabriel Tree).

· Send a donation to the church and the Parish Elf can select a child and shop/wrap for you. Let Lin Busby know via text or phone call (813-486-1683) that you would like her to select a child for you. You can specify a boy or girl, and age range if you wish.



From the Parish Register

Deaths



Charlene Maxwell

James Arthur "Bubba"
Turner

Beth Sellas

Charles Cernuda



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.

Halloween House Extravaganza

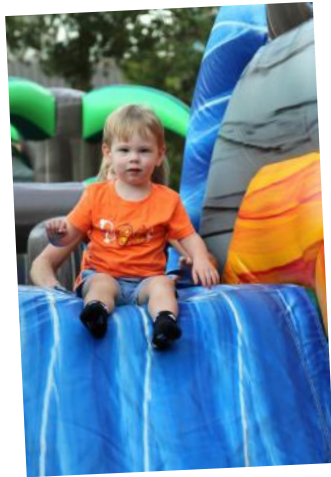


See more pictures on
our website
www.saintandrewstampa.org

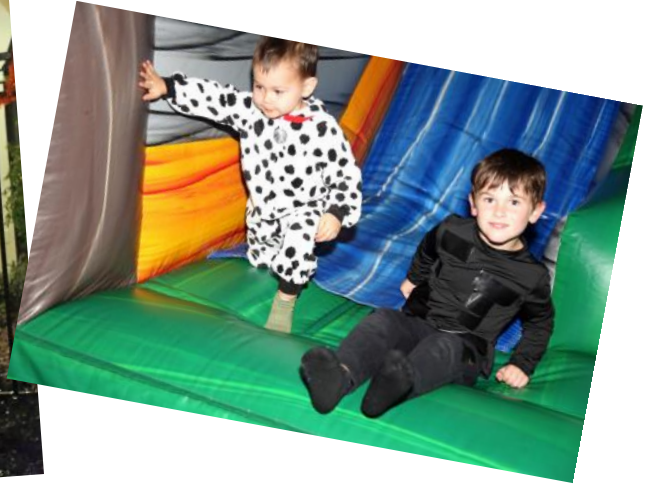


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Dear Friends in Christ,

As we enter this season of pledging, I invite you to reflect on what our church means to you. The open doors of our church are more than just a physical space—they are a symbol of the warmth, welcome, and community we experience here. Within these walls, we gather to support one another, to worship together, and to extend an invitation to those we have yet to meet.

In Romans 15:7, we are reminded, *“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”* Our church embodies this spirit of acceptance, and it is through our offerings that we ensure this message continues. Whether through our time, talent, or treasure, our collective commitment is what keeps these doors open for all.

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 25:35, *“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.”* Our church has always been a place where we care not only for one another but also for strangers, those who are seeking a spiritual home, and those who are in need. We are called to extend the same welcome we received when we first arrived.

As you consider your pledge for the coming year, I ask you to thoughtfully reflect on how our church has welcomed you—how its open doors have provided you with a place to belong, to grow, and to serve. Your pledge is not just a financial contribution; it is a way to ensure that we continue to welcome others, offering them the same sense of belonging and love that we have all found here.

May God bless you as you prayerfully consider your commitment.

In Christ’s love,

Piers Curry

Piers Curry, Sr. Warden

September Vestry Meeting Highlights

RECTOR'S REPORT

As of 9/3/24, there was \$146,443 in ops account and \$76,959 in the parish reserve account.

As of 7/31/24, there was \$77,006 in the Foundation's checking account – monies available to the vestry. (37K of this will pay Alto for parking lot re-paving and 12K will pay Griffin for the new AC unit in the church, which was installed on 8/13.)

There was \$3,302,999 in the Foundation principal as of 7/23/24 (as opposed to \$3,092,638 at the end of 2023, an increase of \$210,361 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. Instructions for access were provided and information can be added to the Parish directory. Piers suggests updating the parish e-mail list to ensure everyone is receiving the Wednesday e-mail blast. Fr. Reese suggested contacting Lauri Harder for this.

Planned Giving – The Foundation Board would like for the parish to begin a serious effort at promoting planned giving. They plan on putting out planned giving brochures to all parishioners and would like to have an estate attorney come and address the parish. A legacy society can then be established from the people who have named St. Andrew's in their wills.

New Nursery Attendant – Abby Lorren (a college student) has returned.

Deanery Convocation – for Diocesan convention delegates was on Wednesday, 9/4 at 7PM at St. Mark's, Tampa. Piers reported on this. They discussed insurance deductibles, and acquiring audits from individual parishes to determine who may be eligible to increase their deductible to 3 percent.

Rally Day – is Sunday, 9/8 after the 10:30 service.

Oktoberfest – is on Sunday, 9/22, after the 10:30 service.

2025 Annual Stewardship Campaign – will launch at the end of the month. 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 will write 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 – is Saturday, 10/5 at 10AM in the church courtyard. Bring your furry or scaly friend!

(continued)

September 2024 Operating Summary

	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budgeted</u>
Revenues	\$30,238	\$55,061	\$390,027	\$495,557
Expenses	\$39,093	\$55,061	\$514,266	\$495,557
Net	(\$8,855)	(\$0)	(\$124,239)	(\$0)

Diocesan Convention – Saturday, 10/12 at the Punta Gorda Convention Center (w/ optional workshops on Friday, 10/11). Our delegates are Allison, Martha, Wayne, and Piers(alternate).

Halloween House – for the kids is on Friday, 10/25 from 6PM to 8PM at St. Andrew’s. Planning meetings and sign-ups are after the 10:30 service on 10/6 and 10/13.

The Property Insurance Conundrum: How do we adequately insure the church property without going bankrupt? The deductible will be increased from 2% to 3%. There are four structures covered. The church is insured for 7.4 million dollars, or \$1,054.00 per square foot. The Western Union building is valued at 8.8 million dollars, though may be worth 5 million as our parish only uses three or four of the six floors. The children’s chapel is valued at 1.4 million dollars. The rectory is valued at \$500,000 dollars, which is undervalued at \$152 per square foot, and should be updated to at least \$750,000 dollars. The diocese owns our property and must approve any changes. No insurance claim has been made during Fr. Reese’s tenure. A Zoom call with the insurance company is being scheduled to go over the details. Piers, Eric and Richard will pursue changes to increase the deductible and possibly change the valuation of some of the structures.

SENIOR WARDEN’S REPORT

Piers attended the deanery convocation on 9/4/24, and reports it was a preview of the diocesan convention in October. Highlights included increased programming, hiring a new director at DaySpring, and increasing revenue there. It currently runs at a six-figure deficit. There is programming throughout the year at DaySpring, and our parish would like to promote participation in this. Alicia encourages our youth to participate in camps and weekend retreats. Four percent of the diocesan budget goes toward maintaining DaySpring. The diocese eliminated \$40,000 in advertising, moving to online advertising as opposed to paper. The convention will be October 12 and anyone may attend. The diocese brings in 4.2 million dollars annually, and of that, 3.4 million is from the apportionment. Salaries make up about 1.1 million. Fourteen percent of the budget goes to the national church. The diocese is working hard to address insurance policy changes, including looking at competitive quotes for the future.

JUNIOR WARDEN’S REPORT

Richard reports parking lot landscaping & mulching will begin on Mon, 9/9. There will be new signage. There was a little surface flooding in the parish hall. No leaks in the church. Anguel cleaned the drains at the entrance to the parish hall. The basement in the Western Union building can flood, but is equipped with pumps. The ice maker & garbage disposal in the kitchen are working well.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Eric reports contributions increased by 34 percent in August. There may be an increase in parking revenue with the start of hockey season. Expenses are off by 50-60 thousand due to insurance. Fixed assets are undervalued, at around seven million, and should be around 16-17 million. There is concern about a problem in the future should an insurance claim be required. Operating expenses are below budget other than unavoidable property insurance costs. TECO plans another rate increase.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Report – Derrick reports the Operation Smart Start drive for Dunbar Elementary School was successful, delivering 21 backpacks & other school supplies, which benefitted many children this year, as well as teachers. Victoria and Martha coordinated delivery. Rally Day is tomorrow, 9/8, and they will have a sign-up sheet available. Oktoberfest planning is underway, with several signs around the parish to advertise. There will be a meeting on 9/15 to solidify the committee’s plans for this. Tickets will be available beginning Sunday, 9/8 and sold every Sunday after the church service.

Parish Life – will host coffee hour with Lucinda Evans on Sunday, 9/29, to celebrate Father Stadel’s retirement. The next event for parish life will be Evensong in early November.

Homeless Ministry – Paul reports he has invited Chris Gates, the homeless lunch program liaison at Metropolitan Ministries, to Oktoberfest so he may meet parishioners and thank them for their support.

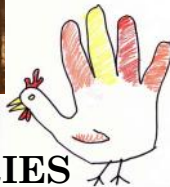
The meeting adjourned at 11:12 am.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

509 East Twiggs Street

Tampa, Florida 33602

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



TURKEY DINNERS FOR METROPOLITAN MINISTRIES

(see page 4 for how you can help)



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

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.