

Saint Matthew's News

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Jersey City, NJ



April 2003

www.stmatthewsjc.com

83 Wayne St - Jersey City, NJ 07302 - Tel: 201-432-9319

A caring and diverse community of Christ, growing deep and wide.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:2 NRSV)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

St. Matthew's is in the process of transformation — we are changing and the changes are good! Worship attendance has doubled since this time last year and new people are coming every week. Adults are being transformed through Bible study, and our youth who come from far and near are getting to know one another through quarterly confirmation retreats. Our choir is singing monthly and our church is buzzing with the sound of visits, part of our Lenten in-reach and listening campaign. We are using Equal Exchange coffee to enable coffee growers around the world to earn a living wage. And our participation in the Jubilee Interfaith Organization is helping to change us from the inside out as we hold one another accountable for being the best servants God would have us be. Yes, we are in the process of transformation; we are changing and the changes are good!

Easter is the ultimate process of transformation. Easter is God's resounding "Yes!" to life as God raises Jesus Christ from death. Easter is about change and renewal, about new life rising from the tomb.

St. Matthew's has been living in Easter hope for most of its life as a congregation. Even when things seemed to be their bleakest, there were always saints among us who, not unlike Simeon and Anna, were looking for the consolation, for the renewal and redemption of God's mission within and among our people.

We are indeed an Easter people at St. Matthew's. God has much in store for us as we share the good news that Christ is alive. Come celebrate new life with us during the Easter season. Come freshen up your faith for these fearful days. Come renew your relationships with friends old and new. Come to St. Matthew's to meet the living God, who comes to us in Word and Sacrament as well as in the offering of our lives to bring healing and hope to the world. Come be transformed with us, as together we change the world!

May Easter Joy be Yours,
Pastor Gladys G. Moore



Join us for our Easter Events!



April 13 - Palm Sunday

10:30 AM Outdoor procession
11 AM Service [blessing of palms?]

April 17 - Maudy Thursday

7:30 PM Service

April 18 - Good Friday

Noon Service

April 19 - Easter Carols and Egg Hunt

11 AM - 1 PM
Van Vorst Park
1:30 PM Decorate the Church

April 20 - Easter

9:30 AM Continental Breakfast
11 AM Service

Some other inspiring activities!!!



May 2, Friday– Bowling Night 6:30 (meet at church to car pool)

May 3 + 10, Saturdays– Rummage Sale

May 18, Sunday– International Buffet Luncheon

May 31, Saturday – Hike and/or nature walk [rain date, June 14]

June 6, Saturday – Annual Health Fair on Wayne Street

June 22, Sunday – Picnic/outdoor event

July 6, Sunday – 10 AM summer services begin

July 13, August 10, Sundays – Worship services in the park

There will also be a camping/hiking/walking event in the summertime months.
Details to come soon.



When to call the Pastor?

As your pastor, I am available to talk with members of the congregation, their families and members of the community. Please call me when needed and especially:

I have lots of numbers. The best way to reach me is to leave a message on my home office answering machine (201-433-7793). I check for messages almost daily unless I'm away. Or, you can call me at the church office (201-432-9319) and leave a message there, or send me an e-mail at gmoore@njsynod.org.

I look forward to hearing from you! - Pastor Gladys G. Moore

- Before a hospital stay.
- When anyone is seriously ill.
- When counseling is desired.
- Before a child is born.
- To arrange a Baptism.
- When death draws near.
- When someone close to you dies.
- When a new neighbor moves in.
- Before funeral is scheduled.
- If you are planning to move.
- To schedule a blessing of your dwelling.
- If you lose your job.
- To make marriage plans.
- If your marriage or significant relationship is under stress.
- When there is mental illness.
- When a burden becomes too heavy.
- When a personal crisis arises.
- When a community crisis arises.
- If the congregation isn't meeting your needs.
- If you want to become a leader in the congregation.
- If you're angry at God.
- When you need to hear a word of forgiveness.
- When the pastor has said or done something that upsets or disappoints you.
- When you need guidance about what God wants you to do with your life.
- When you need a friend to talk to.
- If you're not sure whether or not to call.

What about Bowling...right down the middle.



"What do you mean?
...Three strikes is a good thing."



"This was all my idea..."



"Did I do that?"



"Go ahead Tom... Lets see what that glove can do."

Just ask any one of the 22 St. Matthew's members who bowled on Friday, night April 4th about how much fun bowling can be. We have to thank Earlyne Muamba who thought bowling might be a great fellowship event—she was absolutely correct!

Even though there have been only three first-Friday bowling nights, it has proven to be great fun for members of all ages and the numbers of attendees keeps growing.

The April event was not just "bowling for fun"—a number of people bowled for pledges for the "Bow! for Kids' Sake" program sponsored by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hudson County.

Friday, May 2nd is the next bowling night. Meet in front of St. Matthew's at 6:30 PM to car-pool to the lanes on Rt. 440.



"You owe me twenty buck!"



"That's what I'm talkin' about!"



"The lane must have a tilt to it..."

New Faces

Kim Rostovskis

Kim is one of the ever-growing younger members of St. Matthew's who came to Jersey City from Cherry Hill, New Jersey via Monclair where she had been living for 4 years. With her position at a health-advertising agency in New York City, residence in Jersey City makes lots of sense. She actually moved to Jersey City because of a friend and loves it because of the diversity and mixture of cultures.

Kim says that she was more of a "holiday church goer" before officially joining St. Matthew's a month ago. She has somewhat of a mixed Lutheran background with a Lutheran Mom and Catholic Dad. She attended St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Cherry Hill. How did she find St. Matthew's? Kim says that she walked by the church on her way to the PATH train and realized how close it was to her apartment in Dixon Mills. She says that she finds St. Matthew's "a warm place that is positive and growing."

She has an interest in travel and explored Montreal last year and plans a trip to Australia in the near future. She also enjoys reading and photography.



Stephanie Sheppard

Stephanie is another "new face" at St. Matthew's even though she has lived on 2nd street for about 10 years and actually knew other members of the church. She found us accidentally when going to her daughter's high school and then venturing off to the post office. Even though she originally belonged to the Anglican Church in her native Tobago, she finds a great many similarities in the Lutheran Church.

Stephanie is a hair colorist who currently works for PATH as a passenger information agent. She is a single mom with a daughter, Shannon who is 18 years old. Her son, Andre is 21 and in the navy. These days she is very concerned about his safety.

When not working at her full-time job or doing hair "on the side", Stephanie likes to sew, read and cook.

Of St. Matthews, she says: It's a warm and friendly place.



Abel and Pins Ang and Lukas

Pins and Abel, along with their joyous son, Lukas, are a trio of the new faces at St. Matthew's. Their road to our church comes from a far corner of the world in the Asian country of Malaysia. Pins was actually born there. Abel was born in Germany and grew up in Singapore.

In August of 2002 Abel came to the United States with his family to take a special Master's program at Rutgers College in Newark. Sadly, Abel already has a position waiting for him when he finishes and they will all return to Singapore in September.

When they first moved to Jersey City, Pins and Abel tried another church, but didn't feel like they fit in with the congregation. Abel stopped by St. Matthew's rummage sale one Saturday and met Andy Rhode. Andy gave a great introduction to St. Matthews by giving Abel a tour of the church. Now Abel thinks that if the first impression of St. Matt's hadn't been so good, they might not have become regular attendees. They both enjoy the warmth of the people of St. Matthews.

They love Jersey City's accessibility to New York and say that one of their favorite pass times is eating out.



This photo includes Pins's mother who attends St' Matthews when she is visting

The Creative Arts Club

By James Splond

The Creative Arts Club (CAC) is an after school program for at-risk children in Jersey City in grades 3-8. The program meets once a week, every Wednesday, from 4 to 7 p.m., at St. Matthew's Church. It consists of tutoring/homework help and creative arts, such as music, dance, drama, and arts and craft instruction. Each week there is a light supper served before dismissal.

History (The Seed)

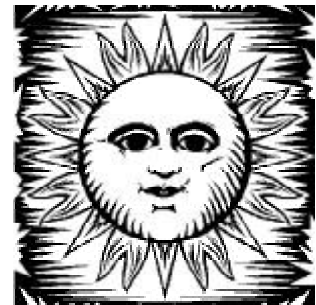
The Creative Arts Club began as the brainchild of Pastor Moore and myself. While in transit to Glendale, California for a conference this past summer we bounced around ideas that would utilize the strengths of the church while providing a service to the community. We felt that the CAC was one of the ideas that could be implemented in a relatively short time. After our first conversations in August of 2002 we began an intense search for funding. The Jose Garcia Foundation answered the call. With the grant from the foundation, CAC was on its way.

The beginning

The inaugural meeting of the club was on January 8, 2003. The entire staff was present at the first meeting. John Russell would be in charge of organization. Music would be taught by Donna Romero, dance with James Splond. Earlyne Muamba would be in charge of visual arts and crafts, and Robin Daniels would be at the reigns of drama. Due to a schedule conflict, Earlyne had to resign her position with the program. All of our teachers are experienced in their field and in teaching.

Current status

The students are interested and interesting. At this point, all the teachers have had at least two to three classes with the students. As our numbers grow, our little family changes. We started with an average of nine students. Now we are averaging 13 student per class. The CAC looks forward to continuing to grow and helping Big Brother Big Sister of Hudson County (BBBSJC) and St. Matthew's become a beacon of the arts for children in Downtown Jersey City.



St. Matthew's Web site

Have you been to www.stmatthewsjc.com lately?

Not only does it have our schedule of events, but it also has photos of people and events happening in and out of the church.

What kind of information would you like to see on our site? Let us know!

Spinning a yarn in fellowship

Members of St. Matthew's and a group of non-members sat together on four Saturday mornings and learned to knit or enhanced previously learned skills. During the first few learns everyone concentrated on their needles and yarn, but once the group felt more comfortable knitting and purling there was time to chat and get to know each other. Knitters showed off their skills by wearing completed hats and scarves.



The fees charged for the class were donated to St. Matthew's so the program also generated a little income for the church. Nancy Thomas and her employer, Lion Brand Yarn Company, donated materials provided for each student.

If you didn't learn or want to continue to work on your knitting projects, Nancy promises to offer another series of classes later this year.

Confirmation Class

Overnight Retreat at CrossRoads Camp

When Pastor Gladys asked for a volunteer to go on an overnight trip with the confirmation class to Camp Crossroads, I jumped at the opportunity. My mind was immediately filled with visions of campfires, camp songs, snipe-hunting, bad morning hair, crazy fun kids, hikes in the woods and junkfood! We experienced all that and some really great concentrated confirmation study. The kids split up in teams and after answering questions on one of the chapters they had to read, they taught each other the lesson from another chapter. Angela and Wyn started us out with a creative interpretation, Dana and Phil



created an awesome timeline (including pictures) for their chapter, and Marion, Avery and I acted out the life of King Saul and King David. We all learned something new and had a great time.

The kids are looking forward to more confirmation class retreats in May and June. Please let Pastor Gladys know if you are interesting in helping out!



Crossroads is located about an hour and a half west of Jersey City near Tewksbury. It is currently co-owned by the ELCA New Jersey Synod and the Episcopal Dioceses of Newark. We hope to have a church picnic there this summer – it is a great resource and a nice get-away.

What is In-Reach/Visitation?

How does it relate to you?

During lent, we have been focusing on our relationships to God and each other. This was done by a visitation campaign of one-on-one encounters with members. A group of St. Matthew's members were trained to conduct visits that would help to build relationships and foster community. This group has gotten to know everyone's stories, listened to dreams and passions as well as fears and frustrations. Members have talked about their families, communities and world.

Hear the outcome of these visits at the International Buffet luncheon on Sunday, May 18th.

Pancake men in action

A few years (3 or 4) ago “someone” had an idea to replace our Spring Brunch with a pancake breakfast hosted, cooked and served by the men of St. Matthew’s. Even though many of the behind-the-scenes faces have changed [with Phil Thomas chairing the event since its inception], the event continues to get a great turn out of both cooks and “eaters”—must be the made-to-order omelets and generous servings of breakfast meats that does it!

March 2nd, the Sunday of this year’s breakfast had a great force of “guys” in the Barrow Mansion kitchen. Thanks to those who so generously helped out this year. Much missed from this event was Jeremy Brown who was a great cook’s helper in past years.

We all look forward to the 2004 pancake breakfast.



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