

**The mission of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to love, welcome, nurture, and serve all people by following the example of Jesus Christ.**

Do you know that little dog down the street that is so fearless that he barks at the big dogs, and even at us, as if he were indeed the top dog? That little dog has so much spirit and self worth that he is not afraid to announce to others "Here I am, you talking about me?" In many ways I think that we, the people of St. Matthew's, are like that dog. We are a small congregation and that doesn't stop us from proclaiming "Here I am Lord, send me!"

At the top of this page is the proposed mission statement that the Church Council developed during 2004. It is radically short when compared with our previous mission statement. Like the little dog and like us, it is extremely powerful and bold.

**Love** - We show our love through our support of organizations such as Stand with Africa and LWR World Hunger. Another way that we show our love is through our active participation in the Jubilee Interfaith Organization.

**Welcome** - Look around during worship and you will see a very diverse group of people here. Pass the Peace with us or come downstairs for coffee hour and you will see how truly welcome everyone is.

**Nurture** - Listen one on one and see how we nurture each other. Visit the Creative Arts Club or attend IGSS and see how we nurture the youth and the old among us.

**Serve** - Our food pantry, rummage sales, Health Fair, Holiday Craft Fair and the Barrow Mansion are ways that we serve those who are here in our neighborhood.

Following the example of Jesus Christ is not always going to be easy. In fact, we are challenged to grow in numbers and in our spirituality. To welcome others here also means that we must make room for them so that they can contribute to our vitality with the unique gifts that God gave to them.

Another challenge that we face is to grow in our giving. This is the last year for which we will receive a Mission Support grant from the ELCA. This is also the last year for which Pastor will serve us on a 2/3 time basis. Beginning in 2005 we will be 100% responsible for our income and for Pastor's salary.

Let's commit to love, welcome, nurture and serve together. Let's be deliberate about growing so that our proclamation will be the ever stronger "Here we are Lord, send us!"

Sincerely,

Peter Jensen,

President, Congregational Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, January 18, 2004

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1. The meeting was called to order at 12:16 PM by Peter Jensen
2. The opening devotions were led by Pastor Gladys Moore
3. The required quorum of 10% was met with 24 voting members present
4. The minutes of the congregational meeting held on February 2, 2003 were approved unanimously
5. Financial Report for 2003: Peter Jensen summarized the budget activities and noted the following changes for this year:
  - There was a deficit last year which was covered by surplus funds from the previous years.
  - As a result of the In Debt No More in 2004 campaign, our level of indebtedness was reduced by almost \$26,000 during 2003
  - Net assets increased to \$96,169.58
  - The interest rate for the Mission Investment Fund loan is being lowered from 6.75% to 5.00%. Acceptance of this rate required the approval of the congregation. This was unanimously approved
  - The financial goal for 2004 is the eradication of our debt

The financial report was unanimously approved.

6. Report of the Pastor: Pastor led a discussion called "Scattering the Seed", which was centered on church growth. Those in attendance split up into groups to read scripture passages and discuss how the church can continue to grow. Ideas suggested by the congregation include:
  - Give people in the congregation opportunities to contribute to the growth
  - Train leaders
  - Offer adult Christian Education
  - Share the wealth/invite people into ministries
  - Remove physical barriers to worship (i.e., stairs to climb) to make things more accessible

This discussion was enthusiastically received.

7. Committee Reports: Individual committee reports were not presented during the meeting. The President encouraged the Congregation to read the written reports that are part of the Annual Report.
8. Old Business 2003: The kneelers. During last year's meeting, there was a motion (which was seconded) to remove the kneelers because they are disruptive when they fall over. This motion was seconded. A motion to the table the previous motion was moved, seconded and approved with 24 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention. The Worship and Music committee was asked to study the issue and to make a report to the Church Council. As the Worship and Music Committee did not make said report the issue remains open.

9. Proposed Budget for 2004: The President presented the proposed budget and highlighted differences between it and the 2003 budget

For Expenses:

- The amount for Printed Resources was increased
- Line items for the Musician and Nursery were added
- Funds for the Organist were increased. The amount of \$160 per service and \$9,120 per year was unanimously approved.
- Designated Gifts was changed to Designated Gifts (Creative Arts Club) and was increased to \$2,000
- Total Expenses are \$171,039

For Income:

- Operating expenses increased to \$87,070
- Offering: Loose Plate increased to \$7,070
- Additions include: Stand With Africa, Synod Assembly, Christmas Postage, Narcotics Anonymous Rental Income
- It was noted that this is the last year we will receive a \$10,000 grant from the ELCA Division for Outreach
- Total Expenses are \$171,039

The budget was unanimously approved

10. New Business: Election of Church Council Members. A secret ballot was distributed and the following persons were elected to serve the terms noted:

- One year term ending January 2005: Timothy Andrews and Claudia Perry
- Two year term ending January 2006: Laird Ehlert
- Three year term ending January 2007: Bautista Castillo, Peter Jensen, Lisa Bishop, Stephanie Sheppard, and Nathan Hanson

11. In Debt No More in 2004: Pastor Moore reported on this debt elimination campaign. The following was discussed:

- 100 people paying \$1,200 each can wipe out the debt
- This amounts to an extra \$500 to \$1,000 per person
- This amount is in addition to the regular weekly giving

12. Pastor Moore led closing devotions.

13. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Rostovskis

## Pastor's Report for 2004

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In Paul's letter to the Romans he writes: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 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."

I want to begin this report by thanking you for the many ways in which you have presented your bodies to God as "living sacrifices". Whether by worshipping regularly, giving generously of your time, talent and treasure, serving on ministry teams, or assisting with various church events and activities, time and time again, you presented yourselves to God for service. Thank you.

I also want to commend you for your generosity. Although we are still a very small congregation, God has blessed us with a very big heart for others. We did not grow numerically during 2004; however, we grew tremendously in terms of our giving. The statistics below only show part of the story. For when you factor in what we gave to the "In Debt No More in 2004" campaign along with our friends, you begin to see that St. Matthew's is a congregation that is truly trying to practice what Jesus said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also". Notice that Jesus didn't say where your *heart* is there your treasure will be; but rather that where we spend our money is a sign of where our heart is.

I'm deeply grateful that at St. Matthew's, we have a heart for others, especially those who are the most vulnerable. Our mission support, our giving to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal and other special appeals like Stand with Africa, and to our partners and kindred in Senegal and Haiti are all signs of our generosity. So too is our commitment to serve only Fair Trade coffee and to have the SERV V Handcrafts Sale.

Another way in which we presented our bodies to God was through our increased outreach activities. Because of these events we not only became more visible in our community, but we also made it clear that "when the people can't get to the church, we will take the church to the people." Whether distributing ashes at the Grove St. PATH Station, processing through our neighborhood on Palm Sunday, opening our church to the Jersey City Gay Lesbian Organization's Mayoral Forum, participating in the Jubilee Interfaith Organization's public meeting of more than 1,000 persons, or singing Christmas carols in Van Vorst Park, St. Matthew's is becoming increasingly known as a public church. Just as Jesus did his ministry in the public arena, so do we and unapologetically so!

Thank you for trusting and loving me. Thank you for the privilege of allowing me to serve as your pastor. I thank God for each of you and all of you, and I look forward to our renewed commitment to becoming a congregation in which we love God, one another and the world deeply; and where we demonstrate that love through inspiring worship,

compassionate service, bold witness, and lots of good old-fashioned laughter and fun. To God be the glory!

In Christ's love,

Pastor Gladys G. Moore

Pastor's Report Part B: New Members and Pastoral Acts 2004

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Adult Members Received

Lisa Bellan-Boyer

Leroy Clouden

Liisa Lea Vaska

Deborah Payne

Elizabeth (Lisa) Tolomei

Child Members Received

Jessie Evelyn Janglee

Sophia Anthony

Sydney Norlem Muller

Emily Grace Tolomei

Caitlyn Grace Tolomei

First Communions

Lily Aycox: 6/13/04

Rodney Aycox: 6/13/04

Caprice Gunter: 6/13/04

Kevin Morali: 6/13/04

Cynthia Williams: 12/24/04

Funerals

Miguel Candelaria, January 19<sup>th</sup> 2004, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Frieda Faltings, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004, Scanlon's Funeral Home, Pompton Plains, NJ

Weddings

Caroline Hedberg and Matthew Duffie, March 13<sup>th</sup> 2004: St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Nathan Goldhaber and Stephanie Smolinsky, July 9<sup>th</sup> 2004, Ethical Cultural Society, NY

Charles Bergstresser and Helene Tobin, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2004: Hyatt, Jersey City

Pastor's Report Part C: Parochial Statistics 2004

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Members Received: 10

Baptisms: 4  
Affirmations of Baptism: 5  
Transfers: 1

Members Removed for Statistical Adjustments and Other Reasons: 11

*(These are persons in our parochial register who no longer worship nor contribute at St. Matthew's, or who have died, moved, or do not wish to be retained as members.)*

Membership Statistics

Baptized: 104  
Communing: 97  
Confirmed/Communing/Contributing: 80  
Unconfirmed Communing: 14

Average Worship Attendance 2001-2004

Year	Attendance	Baptized Members
2001	32	86
2002	42 (+30%)	76
2003	53 (+25%)	105
2004	52 (-2%)	104

Congregational Giving to Current and Mission Support

Year	Current	Mission Support and World Hunger
2002	\$56,376	\$7,600
2003	\$68,282 (+22%)	\$10,853 (+42.80%)
2004	\$63,811 (-6.54%)	\$13,448 (+24%)

## Parish Deacon's Report

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Take delight in the LORD, and God will give you  
the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4)

“Deacon” has always been somewhat of an odd position. Historically, deacons have served as worship leaders, and have been involved in service to the church community.

As Parish Deacon I have concentrated on three things this year:

- Training and scheduling assisting ministers and readers – that worship serves the Word and the people of God
- Monthly preaching – you can better report on this than I can
- Attending Council meetings – taking minutes, participating in discussions about congregational life and direction

In addition, some of the more enjoyable and rewarding events of the year have been when we have been out and visible in our neighborhood: Ash Wednesday at the PATH Station, Christmas caroling, the Hamilton Park Festival, Health Fair, Pride Festival, rummage sales, holiday crafts festival, AIDS day service, mayoral forum.

My hope and wish for the coming year is that we will learn to better take delight in the Lord and each other, that our worship and community life is joyful, and that St. Matthew's is a place of spiritual growth and nurture.

Paul Bellan-Boyer

Parish Deacon

The Barrow Mansion Development Corporation

In the year 2004, the Mansion was fully occupied and generated a cash surplus of about \$5,000 after a \$5,000 debt repayment to the Church. The Mansion services seven monthly tenants, 15 twelve-step groups that meet at least weekly, a weekly Buddhist meditation group, a monthly cooking school class and the monthly meeting of the Van Vorst Park Association. During the course of the year, the Mansion was the venue for four special events from a young playwright's first play to a Halloween party.

2004 Income:

rentals	\$79,133
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2004 Expenses:

Salaries and Associated Taxes	34,522	
Utilities	15,525	
Insurance	13,395	
Maintenance	2,832	
Loan Interest	938	
Miscellaneous	2,379	
Bavendam Loan Re-payment	5,000	(This payment for the 2004 year is being made in January 2005)
Total expenses	\$74,591	

Variance

\$4,542 (Surplus)

The Board of Directors are Gerry Bakirtjy, Vice President; Laird Ehlert; John Hale, President; Peter Jensen; Lynn Saltiel; Phil Thomas, Treasurer; and Pastor Moore, ex officio. These Board members will continue into 2005 and these officers were re-elected for the coming year.

The Board has engaged a property management firm, BIS Management of Jersey City, to manage the building: collect the rents; deal with the tenants; direct repairs, maintenance and cleaning; and report to the Board. This service is being donated by Gerry Bakirtjy.

Respectfully submitted,

John Hale, President

## Care Team Report

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The Care Team was formed in September of 2004 as our congregational response to the need for us to take care of our members and to support and encourage non-members who enter our midst in search of a faith community.

It doesn't happen very often that a member of our congregation loses touch with us at a moment in time when he or she needs us the most, but it does. It is the mission of the CARE Team to become aware of those in need, make contact with them, and inform the congregation of the situation in order to ensure that the support and encouragement required, is lovingly offered.

The CARE Team members are Paul Bellen-Boyer, Joe Brown, Don Egan, Brian McGovern, Deanna Seppanen, and James Splond.

In September 2004, the CARE Team met with Pastor Moore. At that meeting, each team member was assigned a list of members, and non-members, with whom they were to make contact. Calls were made and emails were sent as St. Matthews reached out to its people with a simple message: We care about you. This was the beginning of what we hope and pray will become an integral part of the life of our congregation.

We encourage all of you to let the CARE Team know of members and non-members for whom our simple message, we care about you, needs to be heard right now.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Brown, Team Leader

Creative Arts Club

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The Creative Arts Club (CAC) is off to another year filled with education and fun. Our numbers have grown from a consistent 11 children last year to 14 this year. The growth has been primarily in the upper grades, but we are actively looking to increase our younger numbers. For several of the children this is their last eligible year of participation.

The club has been restructured from the ground up. In the past, the children participated in Art, Drama, Dance and Music and they alternated weekly. The children only saw that teacher once a month and never really had an opportunity to bond with their instructor. Now, we have the children work on small group project with the teacher and the coordinator for six straight weeks. The six week intervals conclude with a performance or exhibition in the different genres (Music, Drama, Culinary Art, Visual Art, Photography, and a Musical).

2004 Income:

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Gifts	1,537	
Grants	10,500	Includes a grant for the 2003/2004 year. Includes a grant for the 2004/2005 year.
Total income	<u>\$12,037</u>	

2004 Expenses:

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Stipends and materials	\$6,752	
Variance	<u>\$5,286</u>	

We at the CAC are thankful to the José Garcia Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern New Jersey, and to all who have graciously given of their time and money in order that St. Matthew's will be able to make a difference in the community.

Sincerely,

James Splond, Coordinator

## Food Pantry

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Let's Celebrate's support of the St. Matthew's food pantry allows us to fill from 25-50 bags each month. While our \$300 monthly allowance remained the same, but we don't receive a check on a monthly basis. A change in the procedure at Let's Celebrate requesting that sites such as ours shop at the Community Food Bank has made this year a challenge. While the food offered from the Food Bank is cheaper than our usual purchasing source, it is only open on one Saturday a month. This has conflicted with rummage sales and available times for shoppers.

Generous donations from members have supplemented Let's Celebrate's funding. Many people are involved in unloading food, packing bags, taking inventory, and arranging for food pickups. We especially recognize Andy Rhode's efforts in this program. He is the key contact with individuals who pick up food directly from the church and is always available to help unload heavy cartons of cans on shopping days or nights.

Our food pantry needs to be stocked every month. You can help by donating any of the food items on our grocery list. To help make our shopping easier, a different grocery item is featured each month. Donations can be placed in the wicker basket located in the narthex.

Nancy J. Thomas, Chief Shopper

Month	Grocery List
January and November	Peanut butter
February and December	1-can meals, ravioli or stews
March	Cereal
April	Rice
May	Tuna fish
June	Canned tomatoes
July	Canned fruit
August	Canned vegetables
September	Bar soap
October	Quarts of Parmalat milk (shelf stable milk)

## Gay and Lesbian Outreach Committee

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The Gay and Lesbian Outreach Committee was formed in 2003 in recognition of the large GLBTI<sup>1</sup> community which has developed in the neighborhood in recent years. There is a particular need for outreach to gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender and inter-sexed people because of the constant stream of hatred, misinformation and lies which comes primarily from fundamentalist Christians in this country! We must separate ourselves from this misinterpretation of the Bible and let everyone know that all people were created into the loving family of God, and that all are invited to God's house. St. Matthew's became a Reconciling in Christ<sup>2</sup> congregation in 2000 by a unanimous congregational vote. This is one of numerous areas in which our church stands for social justice.

This year, I believe that 30 to 40 people have accepted our invitation to visit, and our presence in the community is now definitely more widely known.

Here is a brief summary of our activities for the year:

- A new, **general church brochure** was produced, along with some cards specifically targeting gay and lesbian people. Jan.
- Jersey City Gay and Lesbian Organization had a **community networking event** at the Doubletree Hotel. St. Matthew's had a table and 2 representatives there. Feb. 22
- **Hamilton Park Festival**: Volunteers from the congregation staffed a table with our church's literature and Lutheran World Relief's Equal Exchange coffee and chocolate. June 12
- Pastor Moore and Laird Ehlert attended the biennial **convention of Lutherans Concerned** - North America, the organization which "supports the acceptance and full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, their families, friends and allies, within the Lutheran communion". There were wonderful worship services. Seminars were available daily. "Transgender people in the church" was a featured topic at this meeting. Minneapolis, July 20 – 26.
- Tent and table staffed by members of the congregation at the **Jersey City Gay Pride Festival**. We gave out festive Mardi Gras beads and our brochures. We spoke to hundreds of people and invited them to visit St. Matthew's. Aug. 28

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<sup>1</sup> GLBTI has become a commonly used acronym which stands for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Inter-sexed. Transgender people are those who know with a certainty that their soul was born into a body of the wrong sex. Intersexed is the modern term for a hermaphrodite, a person whose genetics are a combination of both sexes. Their genitalia have indications of both male and female. This occurs in about one out of a thousand births.

<sup>2</sup> *Reconciling in Christ* is the name given to the program which indicates that people of all sexual orientations are welcome in the congregation.

- **Mayoral Candidates Forum** held at St. Matthew's in conjunction with the Jersey City Gay and Lesbian Organization. Oct. 6
- Added our church listing to **www.welcomingchurches.com** homepage. Nov.
- Barrow Mansion host site for Jersey City Connections Transgender Day of Remembrance (of Transgender murder victims) on Saturday, Nov. 20th
- "The Living Quilt". Testimony and remembrance in **celebration of the lives touched by HIV / AIDS**. Co-operative event with Grace Church Van Vorst and the Jersey City Gay and Lesbian Organization. Dec. 1

Team members include Pastor Moore, Don Egan, and Brian McGovern.

Respectfully submitted,

Laird Ehlert, Team Leader

## Health Fair

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Although the Health Fair is scheduled for June we start contacting agencies and individuals as early as February to enable us to register as many providers as possible. Through many phone calls and letters we were fortunate to obtain seventeen organizations this year.

The following organizations had representatives that participated in the Health Fair:

- National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependency of Hudson County
- Hyacinth Foundation
- Horizon Health Center
- Jersey City Family Health Center
- Jersey City Fire Department
- Jersey City Police Department
- Jersey City Connections (HIV buddies)
- New Jersey Cares 2000+
- Puerto Rican Community Organization
- Sister Joan Riggs, Parish of the Resurrection (blood pressure checks)
- North Hudson Community Action Center (health van)

The following organizations provided materials for distribution during the Health Fair:

- Department of Health and Human Services
- United Way of Hudson County
- Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey
- American Diabetes Association

Since it threatened to rain on our fair, we relocated to the Barrow Mansion. Over a hundred individuals were tested for blood pressure, cholesterol, or received valuable information about health concerns and services.

We extend our appreciation to all the volunteers, agencies and organizations who set up, cleaned up, manned tabled or who served our healthy refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Rhode, Team Leader

## Holiday Arts and Craft Fair Report

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This is the second year of the Holiday Arts and Craft Fair. This year, the committee solicited volunteers at church at Sunday services. A few committed laborers responded to the harvest call. Led by the Spirit - we created another successful outreach event for the church.

For the past two years, the Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair has continued to bring a heightened sense of awareness of the church to the greater community of Jersey City, broadened its commitment to Fair Trade, and raised monies for St. Matthew's on a zero budget. Amen.

How did we do it? First - there is no other Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair of this magnitude in Jersey City. Second- the media- over 42 media outlets were sent communications on the event. Many carried the information or a full press release. This is no small feat since St. Matthew's does limited media contact. Anything in the local media assists us in our mission of awareness and outreach. Third, new communities were reached- artists, business owners, non-church persons and neighborhood residents. St. Matthew's came alive during our joyous season. Fourth, as for dollars- we increased our profit 25 % from last year. Amen!

### 2004 Income:

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Table rentals	511	
SERRV - fair trade handcrafts	810	Proceeds for LWR
SERRV - fair trade handcrafts	199	Proceeds for St. Matthew's
Holiday Table	200	
Total income	<u>\$1,720</u>	

### 2004 Expenses:

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Publicity	0	Donated by Baker Boys
Garland decorations	0	Alan

It is hard to put a number on the amount of folk who entered our festive hall but it is safe to assume over 150. But to those who saw flyers, read announcements in papers or online- do we even dare to say --thousands.

Big Thanks to Andy, Peter, Laird, Jorge, Ginny Ann, Robert, Brian, Emma and Carrie , Nancy, Pastor Moore and her crew on the SERRV table; and many others outside the church who donated the evergreen (Alan), printing and design of posters and handbills and vendors who spread the word.

Unfortunately, Baker Boys Café will not be sponsoring the Holiday Fair in the future. Baker Boys is willing to pass the torch over to new leadership within St. Matthew's.

Key Learnings of the Holiday Craft Fair

1. Church leadership needs to find new ways of enrolling **new** people to assist with events.
2. Communication of events at the church within the membership to their networks of contacts is crucial to growing the church. We need to find ways to enroll evangelists within the congregation. NCD.NCD.NCD. (Natural Church Development) Hmmm.
3. St. Matthew's leadership needs to think about the role the outside community should play in this event if any; and more importantly- the church leadership needs to reflect on how businesses can be a contribution to St. Matthew's. A true reflection session needs to occur on the notion of what does it mean to be a "contribution" to a nonprofit in a business growth area. In short, what does it mean to be a "**contribution**" to St. Matthew's if you are a business?
4. Other churches in the neighborhood are finding that kids' activities draw families to their church. Perhaps, the Holiday Fair needs to expand into the Barrow Mansion and have a major kids' component to it. Ginny Anne can be instrumental in assisting the new leadership team in thinking about creative ways of getting kids involved. She had a very unique table this year.

Let us lift each other up in love as we toil in the fields of missional outreach. Without supporting each other we will fail.

Sincerely,

Donal Egan, Team Leader and Sponsor

## Jubilee Interfaith Organization

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This year Jubilee Interfaith Organization continues to work for Social Justice and Equity across northern New Jersey. Jubilee has performed several important actions this year that have affected Immigrant Rights, Worker Justice, and Metropolitan Equity.

The Immigrant Rights task force has worked to correct cases of injustice at the Elizabeth Detention center as well as lobby for the passage of an In-State tuition Bill.

This year also included the North Jersey Metro Equity Summit where former Minnesota Congressman Myron Orfield presented solutions to the current state of economic, social and environmental inequity. This work is part of a statewide effort to restructure the systems that shape our communities and quality of life.

The Worker Justice task force has broadened its efforts to insure that employees can afford to live in the communities where they work, with access to affordable housing and good jobs.

The big event this year was the Public Meeting on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Fifteen of us from St. Matthew's joined over a thousand other JIO members to present our public leaders with the issues that demand their attention. As Jubilee looks forward to the upcoming year we do so with a much closer tie to the executive committee, our own Pastor Moore has accepted the position of President of JIO. We are very proud of Pastor's commitment to the efforts of Jubilee and we look forward to a more just and equitable northern New Jersey.

Respectfully submitted,

John Seppanen, Team Leader

## Pilates

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Class began on Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. with the intention of having class every other Monday. We had a full class (10 people). Pilates is a series of controlled movements that engage the mind and body in developing strong, flexible muscles, without building bulk.

As the sessions continued a core group of participants (8) continued on with class. We had our last class on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The new schedule for 2005 has not been finalized.

I am trained in Stott Pilates and has a certificate in holistic health counseling from The Institute of Integrative Nutrition in New York City. I am also a member of IDEA Health and Fitness Association and I teach at Maximum Motion Fitness in Jersey City, NJ.

Sincerely,

Liisa Vaska, Teacher

## Pot Roast Dinner

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During our annual spring clean up we were fortunate to receive a new four burner electric range which was installed by Gerry Bakirtjy and his assistant Rocky. They installed a new dedicated 220V outlet and over 130 feet of wiring! The range was donated by Charles and Stephanie Rockford.

So now you are asking what this range has to do with Pot Roast. It was invaluable as we used it for cooking and warming the dishes that we served.

As always, members assisted in preparing and donating salads and deserts and in setting up and cleaning up.

Although we missed several of our friends from Christ Our Saviour Lutheran Church and Montgomery Towers this year, we were grateful to all who attended and assisted in raising over \$500 for this event. The food was delicious and the company was wonderful.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Rhode, Chief Chef

## Publicity Committee

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Here are a few highlights of events and publicity at St. Matthew's in 2004

Fundraisers: Rummage sales, fall pot roast, Holiday Craft Fair

Social events and community service: Outdoor services, health fair, a spring pancake breakfast. The main source of unpaid coverage is through the newspaper free community/religion press coverage including occasional spots on the Community Bulletin Board on cable TV.

Ads are on the Religion Column page in the Friday edition of the Jersey Journal (twice a month). Feature paid ads are placed in the Hudson Reporter and Jersey Journal for events such as the rummage sales and health fair.

Andy Rhode places posters in our neighborhood to announce events as well as on our board outside the church and sends postcards and letter mailings on many events. Our newsletters and monthly updates by Peter Jensen get much need scheduling information out. We thank for their involvement in all these wonderful activities!

Remember that the best way to let everyone know about St. Matthew's is to "talk up" our events with your friends and family and to participate in our ministry.

In addition to the work noted above, the publicity committee also formulated important policies that were approved by the Church Council. Those policies follow this report.

Sincerely,

Nancy J. Thomas, Team Leader

## Publicity Policies

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The following policies regarding publicity were approved at the April 22, 2004 meeting of the Church Council.

1. Graphics and photographic images of the people of St. Matthew's should reflect the diversity of our membership, such as: age; ethnicity; familial relationships; and other categories which demonstrate that we are "*A caring and diverse community of Christ.*"
2. Corporate donors and for-profit businesses whose financial contributions and in-kind gifts help to underwrite programs, events, and publications of St. Matthew's should be acknowledged in the bulletin, newsletter articles and on the web site. *Examples of how we may acknowledge a corporate donor are: The Annual Craft Fair was sponsored and underwritten by The Baker Boys Café; and Materials for the Knitting Club were donated by Lion Brand Yarns.*
3. Partnerships with other nonprofit secular or religious organizations that work with us within the framework of specific ministries, programs, and social initiatives should be acknowledged in the bulletin, newsletter articles and on the web site. *Examples of how we may acknowledge a partner are: Additional funding for the Creative Arts Club was provided by the Jose Garcia Foundation and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hudson County; and Groceries for the food pantry are provided by Lets Celebrate and are prepared for the clients of Hyacinth Aids Foundation.*

## Rummage Sale Season

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2005 was quite an exciting, interesting and rewarding year for St. Matthew's Rummage Sales with friends donating furniture, books, framed art along with clothing and other items.

Pastor Moore mentioned in two sermons how we suffer from "affluenza and our treasures on earth." Our members responded by clearing out and cleaning up for the Rummage Sales.

With a fine selection of house wares, clothing, shoes, books and appliances, we were enabled to raise \$3,761 for our February and May sales. The September sale was outstanding with the furniture, pictures, toys and clothing bringing in \$2,900, of which \$150 was for furniture. The November sale became just as thrilling as we raised another \$2,000. Together, the four sales raised \$8,661. We were able to contact the local branch of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to receive a matching grant of \$1,300 which brought our grand total to \$9,961. The \$8,661 is used to cover some of the operating expenses of St. Matthew's. The grant from Thrivent was contributed to In Debt No More in 2004!

We are most grateful for our fantastic sales and donations from members and neighbors and for those who assisted us in so many ways. We are further thankful for the opportunity to share our surplus with other churches and organizations who serve those in need. Please continue to our Rummage Sale Ministry as it enables us to serve our neighbors and those in need.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Rhode, Team Leader

## Worship and Music Team

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Our team of 6 members met each month during the year. Some of our activities this year included: planning worship services; selecting hymns relevant to the scripture lessons for each Sunday and representing a variety of musical styles and cultures; choosing and teaching liturgy settings for each church season of the year (including 1 new and 2 familiar settings); and working to provide new and continuing opportunities and training for members to serve in roles such as greeters, ushers, assisting ministers.

In addition, we planned and developed special events and services such as: Advent events and Christmas services; Christmas caroling around the neighborhood; Holy Week services; concerts; summer outdoor services; guest musicians; assisting minister training workshops, choir workshops; inclusive language discussion events; and the upcoming 'What Is Worship?' discussion series.

We gave a good deal of consideration to revising and upgrading the bulletin and liturgy music formats, especially so we could be both user-friendly and environmentally sound. Sometimes, we're not able to accomplish both, but we strive to do so. We also discussed and supported new and creative uses of visual arts in our worship spaces; introduced opportunities for silent meditation before Sunday services (especially during Lent and Advent); supported the evolution and improvement of our keyboard musical instruments (both upstairs, and downstairs for the summer); and many other activities.

Particular highlights have been: learning how to pray, work, and grow together both individually and as a team; the increase in choir membership from 9 to 19 singers; the increased frequency and variety of choir anthems and special music and musicians; and the activities, regular services, and special events that have introduced us to more of our neighborhood residents, and which have brought new friends and members to our fellowship. We continue to encourage you all to speak to anyone on our team and share your thoughts, ideas, and feelings about the worship experience at St. Matthew's.

Members of the Worship and Music Team are Pastor Gladys Moore, Timothy Andrews, Paul & Lisa Bellan-Boyer, Nathan Hanson, and Claudia Perry.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Andrews, Organist and Team Leader