

Introduction

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.

We have come to the end of yet another year and St. Matthew's has been as busy as ever. Not only have we continued with our many ministries and activities we actual have added more. I know that it doesn't seem possible for such a small congregation to sustain all of the activities that we do, but blessedly we manage to carry on.

It's reasonable to question how and if we can continue to serve and keep our ministries going when we all seem so overloaded, overworked, and often overwhelmed with the hustle and bustle of our busy lives. It is also challenging to consider our ministries when we are faced with the uncertainty of our future as we enter into our time of transition.

Even with our questions, challenges and uncertainties, by God's abundance grace, we continue to serve, and overtime we witness our ministries at work. When reading the reports herein it is easy to become overjoyed about the remarkable works that are being done here at St. Matthew's, and overcome with gratitude for you the ministers of St. Matthew's and all that you do.

Please read the reports and see how we try to live up to our mission to love, welcome, nurture, and serve all people by following the example of Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,
Lisa M. Bishop,
Congregational Council Vice President

Minutes of St. Matthew's Annual Council Meeting, Sunday, January 29, 2006

1. The annual meeting of the congregation was called to order at 12:30 by President Peter Jensen, and Pr. Moore led the meeting in brief devotions.
2. It was noted that a quorum was present, with 36 members recording their attendance on the sign-in sheet.
3. Moved: to approve the minutes of the 2005 annual meeting (D. Kaese, D. McWilliams second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
4. Moved: to approve the minutes of the 2005 special congregation meeting (J. Veen, L. Bishop second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
5. Pr. Moore led the congregation through an exercise to describe the ministries of the congregation.
6. Lydia Brown presented her report as Financial Secretary.
7. Jon Veen, Treasurer, reported on the income and expenses for 2005. There was a \$23,000 deficit which was funded by a surplus going into 2005.
8. There was no old business, nor questions regarding written reports. Nathan. Hanson asked about the item of kneelers discussed at the last annual meeting. Peter Jensen reported that at the last meeting, the matter was referred to the congregation council. The council referred it to the Worship and Music committee, which made a recommendation to the council, and the council decided not to take action on the recommendation.
9. Peter Jensen presented and led discussion on the proposed budget for 2006. Of the proposed income, 15.6% is in-kind contributions and deficit. It was also noted that ELCA mission support ended this month, the congregation has lost a tenant (Bon Secours EAP), and the congregation needs to prepare for assuming an addition 1/6 of Pr. Moore's salary this June and the final 1/6 in June 2007.
10. Moved: to accept 2005 Income and Expense report, Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund report, and Bavendam Memorial Fund report (White, Bishop second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
11. Moved: to adopt the proposed 2006 budget (C. Perry, J. Veen second). The motion passed on a voice vote.

12. Moved: to direct the Treasurer to transfer the receivables for the Bavendam Memorial Fund from the checking account into the Bavendam Memorial Fund (C. Perry, J. Veen second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
13. Moved: to direct the Treasurer to transfer the receivables for the Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund from the checking account into the Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund (D. Kaese, C. Perry second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
14. Moved: to direct the Treasurer to transfer the excess In Debt No More gifts (~\$4,000) into the Accessibility and Major Repairs fund. (D. Kaese, C. Perry second). Lydia Brown proposed using \$600 of that be used to meet our unmet commitment to the ELCA Global Mission to Senegal, and that was accepted as a friendly amendment. The motion passed on a voice vote.
15. Moved: that the Financial Secretary apportion non-designated gifts as specified by the Congregation Council (C. Anderson, D. Kaese second). The motion passed on a voice vote with two abstentions.
16. There were three nominations for Congregation Council from the Nominating Committee: Lydia Brown, Leroy Clouden, and Carole McLeod. No nominations were made from the floor. Moved: that these candidates be elected by acclamation (Hanson, Bishop second). The motion passed on a voice vote.
17. Joe Brown announced a new Hunger for Healing weekly meeting beginning the second Wednesday in February.
18. Lisa Bellan-Boyer thanked the congregation for support of the icon ministry.
19. Pr. Moore recognized and thanked Gerry Bakirtjy for his work behind the scenes in church maintenance and as President of the Barrow Mansion Board.
20. Diane Kaese thanked the outgoing council members and Pres. Jensen for their faithful and devoted service.
21. Barbara Ervine stated "I love being a part of this church, but I would love to see more gospel music in our worship."
22. Peter Jensen led the meeting in an evaluation. Feelings: "honest, productive, interesting, focused, respectful, organized for a change, inspired." How did we do? Better organized! Learnings: the way a meeting should be conducted, there are lots of living ministries, we have an incredible number of faithful and committed people. Tensions: benevolence.
23. The Behrens/Haverlock family is donating a railing for the church's east entrance.

24. Moved: that the church council and property committee to really focus on dealing with structural issues of this building (D. Kaese, C. Perry second). The major problem is that the back wall is moving, problem first identified 1982 but deferred due to other financial priorities. It was observed that there is only a loosely-organized property committee, Pr. Moore called attention to the time and talent surveys to be returned next week. The motion passed on a voice vote.
25. Pr. Moore led the meeting in a closing prayer of thanksgiving and commitment. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 1:40pm.

Submitted by Paul Bellan-Boyer

Report of the Special Congregational Meeting, September 17, 2006

The meeting opened directly after church with a prayer from Pastor Moore.

The council believed it was important that the whole congregation be better informed about our financial situation and our need to come up with strategies for increasing our income.

It was explained that St. Matthew's is running an annual deficit of approximately \$10,000 and has been doing so for the past few years. It was also noted that our building requires a great deal of care and maintenance and the major building problems need to be address soon.

Pastor Moore affirmed St. Matthew's for it's tremendously growth over the past 4 ½ years in terms of our monetary commitments. We paid off \$108,000 of a nearly \$500,000 17 year old debt in 18 months. Our mission support to the NJ Synod and ELCA has doubled in 4½ years, showing our commitment to care not just for ourselves but to support the needs of the wider church and community.

The congregation was presented with an up to date financial report. Members were encouraged to ask questions about our financial situation and brainstorm ideas on how to deal with the deficit. A suggestion from the council was to ask everyone to give every week, 52 weeks a year, whether they were in worship or not.

The council asked members for their input to help solve the problem of the deficit. Some members of the congregation decided to start a fundraising committee while other members gave written suggestions to the council.

No actions were taken.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Bishop, Council Vice President

Pastor's Report

By the time you read this report most of you will be aware of my upcoming resignation in early June of 2007. As I write this final pastoral report to the congregation, I am acutely aware of what the writer of Ecclesiastes said in Chapter 3:1 "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven." I know that the changes before us will be bittersweet, but I am convinced that the God who brought us together for these past five years in mutual ministry will continue to bless our work even as our ministries take different paths.

I first came to St. Matthew's 25 years ago in the late summer of 1982 as your intern or student pastor. How fitting it is that we should conclude our ministry together by sharing in the privilege of mentoring our wonderful intern, Vicar Marsha Anderson. St. Matthew's is a fine teaching parish and you are to be commended for taking seriously the opportunity and responsibility of helping to train future pastors of the church.

For the past six months I have met with Vicar Marsha weekly as her supervisor. What a joy it has been and will continue to be to pray, plan, laugh and learn with Marsha as she strengthens her gifts for preaching, teaching and leading. During her time with us we have reflected together theologically on various aspects of ministry; visited in our downtown community; attended weekly Bible Studies with our colleagues in the Hudson Mission Cluster; participated in the New Jersey Internship Cluster with three other sets of interns and supervisors; and completed mutual evaluations for the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia which is a required part of her internship.

Our Vicar has wonderful people skills, good pastoral instincts, and is a fine preacher, leader and administrator. It is an honor that we have played such a significant role in her seminary education. Vicar Marsha's last day with us will be Sunday May 13th. Please make a concerted effort to attend worship this day as we bid our Vicar Godspeed and Farewell and thank God for her ministry with and among us.

Besides supervising Vicar Marsha, my role this past year in the Jubilee Interfaith Organization took on a much greater significance. Mainly I worked at stabilizing Jubilee after our previous organizer left and helping to strengthen the statewide network of which JIO is a part, the New Jersey Regional Coalition. The culmination of our year's work was our participation in a statewide meeting in Atlantic City on November 16th. I felt so proud that St. Matthew's had more than 20 persons in attendance on a stormy night as we, along with nearly 1500 other people, made our voices and issues known to our state and local legislators. Our deacon, Paul Bellan-Boyer, has been and continues to be an excellent leader within both Jubilee and St. Matthew's. I pray that St. Matthew's will continue to support the work of faith-based organizing and reap its benefits by deepening our relationships with one another and our municipal government officials. This way we can also confront issues in our neighborhood which keep Jersey City from being a place in which all people can live and thrive.

One of the most exciting things we have witnessed this year is the development of new leadership at St. Matthew's as more and more of you have stepped up to take on new ministries for the building up of our congregation and our mission work in the community. Numerous examples abound. While I will mention some in this report, please know that this list is not exhaustive of the many old and new things that are happening at St. Matthew's which continue to make us such a warm, welcoming and vibrant congregation.

Thanks to Harvey and Carol Andersen we now have a monthly newsletter that is among the finest I've seen in any church. Laird Ehlert, Lisa Bellan-Boyer and Tim Andrews coordinated an amazing outreach event, the showing of "An Inconvenient Truth", which brought more than 100 people to St. Matthew's on a weeknight last fall to learn about the dangerous effects of global warming.

Jorge Candelaria and Carol Andersen are coordinating our not-so-new Nine-To-Dine groups, bringing more than 30 of our folks together monthly for meals, meaningful conversations and ministry as each Nine-To-Dine Group takes on a service project for St. Matthew's. Through this effort, the Food Pantry is up and running again; we went Christmas Caroling in the neighborhood and at the Hamilton Nursing Home; and other ministries are on the horizon. Thanks to all of you, named and unnamed who helped us "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

Our Congregation Council under the leadership of Brian McGovern and Lisa Bishop, along with the tireless work of Lydia Brown and Catherine Townsend worked very hard this past year to bring some clarity to our financial situation at St. Matthew's. In addition they have labored to keep us educated about our ongoing financial deficit. While this has been tough, I also believe that our faithfulness in giving and the growth in our giving are signs of a healthy and generous congregation. Please do your best to continue these practices because in so doing we bless one another and the world that God so dearly loves.

Of course, while new leadership is important, so too is the continuation of those ministries that have helped us maintain our place as a congregation committed to its neighborhood while at the same time raising major funds for our church. Chief among these are the Rummage Sales. We owe a debt of gratitude to Andy Rhode, Emma Behrens and Carrie Haverlock for the untiring and faithful ways in which they keep these events going year-after-year.

There are many things that I will miss about St. Matthew's, but mostly I will miss you. You have been my teachers and my mentors in ministry. We have prayed together and played together, especially softball at the church picnics. (And yes, my team ALWAYS wins!) We have grieved together and celebrated the gift of new life with one another as we welcomed and baptized babies in the water of Jesus. We have experienced together the ups and downs of being an urban church in the 21st century with the inevitable transitoriness of young persons and families joining us for a while and then leaving for various reasons. But through it all, St. Matthew's has remained.

Indeed, St. Matthew's has been serving the people of downtown Jersey City for more than 146 years. While pastors have come and gone, this faithful community of believers has stayed in this place in good times and bad times to witness to the surpassing love of God in Christ Jesus for the whole world. St. Matthew's has been a gift of God to me, to Jersey City and to the world. May you always be the beloved treasure that you are!

There's so much more that I could say in this report, but thankfully, I will have four more months in which to serve with you and express to you all that you mean to me. So let me close with these words of St. Paul which so aptly describe how I feel about you: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (*Philippians 1:3-6*)

In Christ,

Pastor Gladys G. Moore

Pastor Gladys G. Moore

Pastor's Report Part B: New Members and Pastoral Acts 2006

Adult Members Received by Affirmation of Baptism

Diana and Dan Kinsley
Mark and Jill Pedersen

Child Members Received (Baptisms)

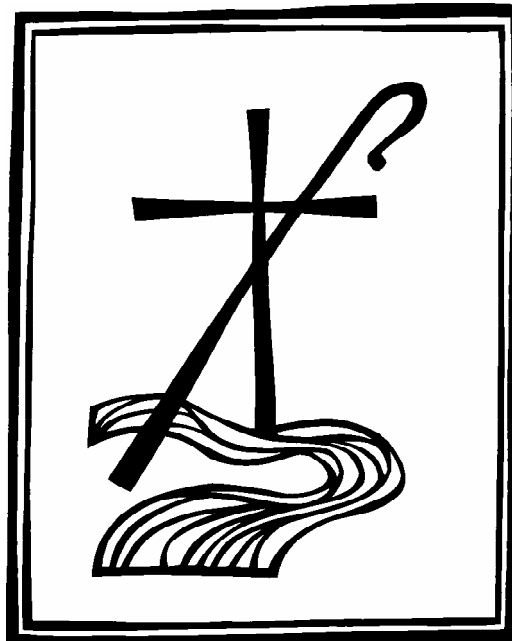
Noah Dylan Kinsley
Hailey Brennand Pedersen
Semaya Carole Vivian McLeod
Kenice Green

Funerals

Gladys Greenwald, October 27th 2006, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
John Wissinger, May 7th 2006, Introcasso-Angelo Funeral Home
Edith Redmerski, December 15th 2006, Greenville Memorial Home

Weddings

Deborah Comeau and Jill Trudel: December 23rd 2006, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church



Pastor's Report Part C: Parochial Statistics 2006

Members Received: 14

Baptisms: 4

Affirmations of Baptism: 4

Reinstatements: 6 (These are persons who had been removed for inactivity and have returned to the congregation.)

Members Removed for Statistical Adjustments and Other Reasons: 27

(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

Confirmed/Communing/Contributing: 84

Unconfirmed Communing: 12

Average Worship Attendance 2001-2004

Year	Attendance	Baptized Members
2001	32	86
2002	42 (+30%)	76
2003	53 (+25%)	105
2004	52 (-2%)	104
2005	55 (+5.8%)	117
2006	51 (-7.8%)	104

Congregational Giving to Current and Mission Support

Year	Current	Mission Support and World Hunger
2002	\$56,376	\$7,600
2003	\$68,282 (+21%)	\$10,853 (+42.80%)
2004	\$63,811 (-7%)	\$13,448 (+24%)
2005	\$72,917 (+14.2%)	\$17,742 (+32%)
2006	\$80,038 (+9.77%)	\$17,513

Parish Deacon's Report

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.
There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.
There are different kinds of work, but the same God
works all of them in all people.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Deacons have a ministry of word and service – proclaiming the word of God in liturgy (*the service*), and helping organize the people of God in service to the world and to each other.

Much of what I do is not much different from other congregation members, living out my vocation in daily life. But there are two things I do distinctively as Parish Deacon.

It is a joy in my life to have the opportunity to reflect deeply upon the lessons, and on how God is speaking to us in and through them. One Sunday each month this turns into a sermon. As a preacher I am often humbled at how God uses my efforts and my words to meet you. If there's one thing I might ask, is for you to please feel free to let me know what speaks to you (and what doesn't).

I also attend meetings of the Congregation Council, with voice but not vote. This helps me be in tune with our Congregation's leadership, and responsive to our mission and current needs.

In addition, while this might be done by any lay leader in the congregation, Pr. Moore and the Council have agreed that my work with the Jubilee Interfaith Organization is part of my service as your Deacon. We have a vision that organizing locally and statewide will both help a stronger church and bring about greater justice in our community.

You will also see me doing many of the same activities as other church members: singing in the choir, serving at the altar as an assisting minister, visiting congregation members and doing outreach, helping with the food pantry.

Submitted by the grace of God, and to the glory of God,

Paul Bellan-Boyer
Parish Deacon

Vicar's Report

On August 1, I began my internship at St. Matthew's, and since then, I have experienced many elements of ministry in the congregation and beyond.

Here is a list of many of my areas of involvement:

- Preaching once a month
- Visiting with St. Matthew's members and friends and initial calling in the neighborhood
- Coordinating Vacation Bible School
- Sunday School leadership
- Internship Committee
- Jubilee Interfaith Organization – core team and various regional events
- Gamaliel 7-Day National Leadership Training (Nov. 12-19)
- SERRV Sale
- Worship and Music committee
- Interactions with other church leaders
 - Hudson Cluster pericope study
 - Quarterly Internship Cluster meetings with NJ Vicars and Supervisors
- Assisting Ministers
 - I have served as an assisting minister on Sundays when not preaching.
 - I will coordinate the assisting ministers in the spring,
- Choir
- Nine-to-Dine
- Miscellaneous ministries of St. Matthew's : i.e. Pride, Gingerbread Houses, the Comeau-Trudel wedding, the funeral of Gladys Greenwald, ELW hymnal Workshop

It has been a joyful 5 months, and I'm looking forward to the 2nd half of my year here at St. Matthew's. I will be here until the middle of May 2007.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicar Marsha Anderson

Barrow Mansion Development Corporation

2006 was a pretty good year for the BMDC. We continue to provide meeting space for many 12-step groups, neighborhood groups, and other community service organizations as well as leased offices to five not-for-profits and five for-profits. There has also been an increase in rentals for one-time events such as weddings and birthday parties. Although we have had some tenant turnover, we expect the one remaining vacant office to be rented by next month. Several of the tenants have signed long-term leases.

The rents have been re-structured to cover our annual expenses and a reserve fund for long-term items. The for-profits pay a higher square foot rent than the not-for-profits. We closed out the year solidly in the black with approximately \$35,000 in reserve after repaying St. Matthew's loan (with interest).

Stanley had to resign from his cleaning responsibilities for medical reasons but has continued on with his security duties. We have hired a new part time cleaning person and cleaning and maintenance have generally been improved. New carpet has been installed on the main stairs and second floor, and cabinets for the first floor kitchenette have been ordered.

There should be thirteen directors on our board, six St. Matthew's representatives, six community representatives, and the pastor. We currently have three, one, & one. A primary goal for next year is to recruit additional directors, which will allow us to expand our community outreach and apply for more grants to continue the building's renovation.

Sincerely submitted,

Gerry Bakirtjy, President

Worship and Music Team

Our team of 6 members (including several valuable temporary and new members) met each month throughout the last year, to read and discuss the scripture lessons for each Sunday; then review, discuss, and plan many aspects of our worship services, including:

HYMNS - We have tried to strike a balance between selecting familiar, well-known hymns, and selecting new high-quality hymns with meaningful words. In order to help the congregation learn the newer hymns, we have employed a variety of techniques: the hymns are initially played on the piano or organ during communion, preludes, and offerings in the weeks preceding their use in congregational singing; then the choir sings the new hymn earlier during the service on the day the congregation sings it; and finally when the congregation sings the hymn, the choir stands together facing the congregation while we all sing it together. We have made a special effort to broaden our range of musical styles in hymns, especially more gospel, ethnic, and contemporary hymns.

NEW HYMNAL - In October, our team attended a special Saturday workshop to learn about and sing from the new hymnal published in October 2006 by our parent church, the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). Many years in the making, this new hymnal brings together most of the familiar hymns from our current green and blue book hymnals, along with the best of newer hymns from several sources, many of which we have already sung from music printed in our Sunday bulletins, including new favorites such as "All Are Welcome." We are planning the introduction of these new hymnals into congregational use as soon as they arrive this month.

LITURGIES - The music we sing as a congregation every Sunday besides the hymns, beginning with the Kyrie and ending with the Post-Communion Hymn, comes from various settings of the Liturgy. In recent years we have learned three different settings, which we rotate throughout the year to keep them familiar while also making our services fresh and newly meaningful.

CHOIR - The choir has gone through a major revival this year. In years past when we had a choir, it only rehearsed twice a month for about 45 minutes and only sang anthems twice a month at most. We now rehearse every week on Thursday nights for an hour-and-a-half, and sing one or often more pieces of music during the Sunday service virtually every week. We have also made a concerted effort to sing a wider variety of musical styles, especially more gospel, ethnic, and contemporary anthems. In addition, the choir now rehearses and leads the congregation during the singing of new hymns and other music, so that everyone can learn and join in making this new music into newly familiar music. If you have enjoyed this new choir revival, be sure and let the highly dedicated choir members know what their time and efforts have meant to you as we worship together each Sunday.

PRAYERS - We have increased the opportunities during the Prayers of the Church each Sunday for congregational members to voice their prayer concerns. We hope that this, plus the additional of very soft organ music during the prayers, makes it possible for everyone to feel encouraged to join their prayers with the prayers of the whole church on a regular basis.

SUMMER SERVICES - In addition to the enjoyable outdoor services we've had during the summer, we have benefited from the new air conditioning donated and installed downstairs in Bavendam Hall. The number and quality of the musical sounds in our keyboard instruments has been significantly increased this year, and have been available both upstairs and downstairs, because the congregation helps move this equipment downstairs at the beginning of the summer and back upstairs at the end of the summer.

SPECIAL SERVICES - In addition to the church year Festival Sundays such as Reformation Sunday and Easter, and the always welcome baptism and new member Sundays, we observed a number of new special theme Sundays - often in common with others around the country - such as Mental Illness & Domestic Violence Awareness

Month, and World AIDS Day. Even on "regular" Sundays, we try to identify a theme in the scripture lessons to focus on, and make every Sunday "Special."

We encourage all of you to speak to anyone on our team anytime, and share your thoughts, ideas, and feelings about the worship experience at St. Matthew's. (Our team is currently: Pastor Gladys Moore, Vicar Marsha Anderson, Deacon Paul Bellan-Boyer, Lisa Bellan-Boyer, Kim Aycox, and Tim Andrews.)

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Andrews

Hospitality (Coffee Hour)

Our after service coffee hour is going great! From last year to now, it has improved beyond great expectations. I was very impressed when I saw the sign up sheet 97% filled up. In comparison to 2005, church members have accepted the challenge of providing for coffee hour. By serving at coffee hour, it is a great way to get to know other members of the church, and do a bit of community service.

We have begun to coordinate healthy foods and fewer sweets at the table. I must say the coffee hour servers have done a marvelous job of balancing the food selections.

On a final note, 2006 was a successful year for the coffee hour ministry. I want to say thank you to Andy Rhode for handling the coffee hour sign up sheet when I was out sick. Thanks to the members of the congregation for doing a marvelous job.

Let us have another great year in 2007. Once again thanks to all.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Sheppard, Coffee Hour Coordinator

Food Pantry

Let's Celebrate support of the St. Matthew's food pantry this year has stopped. This has happened partly, due to their internal problems, and partly because we have not been able to actively pursue them for financial support. Due to Phil and my move, we have not continued to shop for the pantry. With Andy Rhodes innovative thinking, the pantry has been maintained. The outreach to the congregation has helped fill some of the needs. In order to help Hyacinth [the main recipient of the food pantry bags] in 2007 our Nine-to-Dine group has offered to start a program of shopping with The Community Foodbank at Hillside, New Jersey. Phil, Pastor Gladys and Gary Bakirtjy went for an orientation at the Foodbank. St. Matthew's has now been approved as members. This is a great place to shop as they offer a huge value for our money. As always, we 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. Without him, this program could not be maintained.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Thomas, Food Pantry Shopper

Pot Roast Dinner

Food Bags, Hyacinth Foundation and a Pot Roast Dinner: What a combination, and what does one have to do with the other?

As many of our members are aware, we do supply food bags for Hyacinth on a monthly basis. We have not been receiving financial support for our pantry for a while now so this is the second year the funds received for our Pot Roast Dinner have been designated to assist our pantry.

Fliers were mailed, food prepared and members asked to bring salads or desserts. Our turnout was not as high as last year but we had the honor of having Patrick Bocco, director of Hyacinth in Jersey City present at our dinner where he spoke about Hyacinth, their clients and the work done by their organization. He expressed his gratitude to St. Matthew's for our support not only at the dinner, but also with a follow up letter.

Approximately \$600 was raised which will enable us to purchase food at the Food Bank so we can continue to supply bags for Hyacinth on a monthly basis.

We are most grateful for all those who attended the dinner, for those who provided salads or desserts and to those who served and cleaned up.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew C. Rhode Jr.

SERVV Report

For the third year in a row, St. Matthew's held a Holiday Craft Fair to sell goods provided by the Lutheran World Relief Handcraft Project (SERVV), as well as Fair Trade coffee and chocolate. SERVV provides handcrafted items made by artisans in developing countries. St. Matthew's sells the items and keeps a portion of the proceeds. The rest is used by SERVV to provide a fair wage to the artisans in the developing countries. This year, the table was open from November's rummage sale to Sunday, December 3, 2006. This year, St. Matthew's sold most of the items, and raised about \$142.25 for the new hymnal fund. Thanks to Vicar Marsha Anderson for helping to organize the fair, as well as the many members of St. Matthew's who helped make the fair a resounding success.

Submitted by,
Monyca White

Vicar Committee Report

St. Matthew's has been blessed with the presence of Vicar Marsha Anderson. To assist Vicar Marsha, St. Matthew's has formed an intern committee. According to the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries, "[t]he congregations Internship Committee aims to assist a seminarian to become better prepared for effective pastoral ministry." The Committee serves four functions: to consult with the intern in the formulation of her Learning Covenant, to give feedback to the Vicar (sermons, etc.), to evaluate the Vicar and provide two evaluations (mid-term and final) to the seminary and candidacy committee, and to serve as a sounding board for the Vicar. The Vicar Committee meets monthly. The members of the Committee are: Harvey Andersen, Kim Aycox, Marian Courtney, Jill Trudel, and Jon Veen.

Submitted by, Jon Veen,
Vicar Committee, Chairman

Health Fair Report

St. Matthew's 8th Annual Health Fair took place on Saturday, June 4, 2006. The event was coordinated by Andrew Rhode and Kim Aycox.

Participant tables were moved inside the Barrow Mansion because of rain. A mobile health-screening unit provided HIV and pregnancy tests. The Jersey City Fire Department was on hand to distribute free smoke alarms. At least 16 organizations and agencies were represented.

We were joined by several more organizations when the Hamilton Park Health Fair was rained out. A DJ hired by the Hyacinth Foundation for the park event, came to finish out the afternoon at the Barrow Mansion. The music helped to attract more guests.

The Saint Matthews Health Fair is a service to our community. It increases the congregation's visibility in the neighborhood. This may allow more opportunities for growth.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Rhode and Kim Aycox

Youth Ministry Report

During the second half of 2006 St. Matthew's increased its focus on ministry among the children of the congregation and the neighborhood.

A summary of the activities and programs:

1. Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center
 - During August, 3 children attended Cross Roads Summer Camp for 1-2 weeks.
 - Kim Aycox was asked in November to serve on both the Cross Roads Board and the Curriculum Committee.
2. Vacation Bible School
 - St. Matthew's had its first VBS in over a decade this August. We used the "Gospel Express" curriculum from Augsburg Fortress, and volunteers from the congregation led 20 children from the congregation and the neighborhood in crafts, stories, movies, games, and music.
 - On August 20, VBS participants and parents worshiped with us and presented several songs and activities to the congregation.
3. Sunday School
 - On September 24, St. Matthew's started a new Sunday School program that ended in December due to lack of participation. We used the Seasons of the Spirit lectionary-based curriculum.
4. Creative Arts Club
 - The CAC was open early in the year under the leadership of James Splond who left the position in March. In October, Vicar Marsha became the new director, and the program re-opened on November 29. There are 15 children enrolled, and they will learn about drama, ceramics, dance, and music this school year.
 - St. Matthew's members have been very generous in providing meals each week.
5. Gingerbread Houses
 - On December 9, St. Matthew's children built gingerbread houses under the leadership of Diane Kaese. 13 children from the congregation, the CAC, the neighborhood and friends attended.
6. Saturday Surprise
 - Saturday Surprise is a brand new ministry for children of all ages that began with an event on Saturday, January 13 and will occur once a month through May. Possible topics include communion, acolyting, stained glass windows, and perhaps even an Easter pageant.

Thanks to all who provided leadership for Youth Ministry Events this year:

Vicar Marsha Anderson, Sophia Anthony, Kim Aycox, Rodney Aycox, Jaime Crosby, Diane Kaese, Pastor Gladys Moore, Rannie Morali, Deborah Payne-Job, Stephanie Sheppard, Deb Comeau Trudel, Jill Trudel, Rutha Turner

Respectfully submitted,
Vicar Marsha Anderson

St. Matthew's Messenger Report (Newsletter)

The St. Matthew's Messenger received an exciting new format change in 2006, and a new Publisher and Editor. Since many newer St. Matthew's visitors and members find their way to St. Matthew's through the church website, Pastor and the Council had been seeking ways to update and continue the publication so it could be linked to the website. We hope you have enjoyed the first seven issues of the St. Matthew's Messenger (June – December 2006). Articles and photos that share the life of St. Matthew's with our members, regular visitors, old and new friends continue in the new format and have received very positive responses. The deadline each month for the upcoming issue of the St. Matthew's Messenger is the 25th. We hope you will consider sharing an article in the member's corner and participate in many of the service, worship, and fellowship activities that are featured in the Messenger. Happy Reading!

In Christ,
Harvey and Carol Andersen

Nine to Dine Groups

Nine to Dine is a new congregational fellowship ministry for members and regular visitors of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Thirty-nine Nine to Dine members, in four groups are enjoying participating in this first year of the St. Matthew's Nine to Dine program. September through May, each Nine to Dine group member (single or couples) takes a turn hosting a meal for their group. Other members bring food selections to accompany the theme selected by the host/hostess. The Nine to Dine member who brings the bread for the month shares a meditation to spur discussion and reflection by the group. Each group selects a service project to do one month of the year to support and expand the other mission and service efforts that are currently underway in our congregation. Some of the groups got together in December to go Caroling at an area Assisted Living Center, a Retirement Home, and in the community. They concluded with a soup and chili supper, sandwiches, fruit and dessert at the church and helped bag up the Food Pantry bags for December that go to clients of the Hyacinth Foundation. All the Nine to Dine Groups will complete their projects and year together in June at the All Church Picnic, where they will share with members and guests about how they have grown closer in fellowship, deeper in faith, and stronger in service in the Nine to Dine program. Next year's Nine to Dine groups will begin in September 2007, so don't miss the fun and plan now to come join us!

Submitted by,
The Facilitators and Members of the 2006-2007
St. Matthew's Nine to Dine Program

Rummage Sales

Although signs are posted thanking people for their donations to our rummage sales and requesting they wait to be notified when more can be accepted, it is never known what may appear on our door steps as we arrive each morning.

With people moving, cleaning up or redecorating, we are never at a loss for new and sometimes exciting items from members, friends, or neighbors.

Our February, May and September sales raised \$7,168 and the November and Christmas sales added another \$2,100 for a total of \$9,268. Having members who belong to Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, we received a matching grant of \$1,300 bring our grand total to \$10,568 for 2006.

We are most grateful for our sales and donations and for those who assisted us in so many ways.

As with all our sales, we continue to donate clothing, shoes and books to Delany Hall in Newark where people come for rehabilitation when released from prison and Tom Schwalenberg recently called to express gratitude from people at the Bronx Church for all the various items they receive.

Please continue to support our rummage sales by donating or purchasing as it enables us to assist our Church, our neighbors and underprivileged people.

Respectfully Submitted,
Andrew C. Rhode Jr.

Property Committee Annual Report

The Property Committee has concentrated on doing the background work necessary to address the issues with the back wall. The church has been measured and drawings are ready for submission to the engineers. Our goals for next year include execution of inspection openings to help determine the extent of the issues related to the south wall. We anticipate the design and placement of preliminary stabilization measures.

Energy efficient fluorescent bulbs were installed throughout the Sanctuary. As result of this change, the cost for lighting the sanctuary has been reduced by 2/3rds.

Work is progressing on the installation of a new handrail for the church entrance nearest the Barrow Mansion. This fall drawings were prepared and an application was submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission for approval of the railing. Once approval is received, we will go ahead and have the railing made. Carrie and Emma graciously donated money for this purpose.

Over the past years a variety of cast-offs and other "junk" has accumulated in the back yard. Members of the congregation as well as members of the Barrow Mansion board worked to clean up the yard as well as other areas in the two buildings.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Jensen

Outreach Committee

The Gay and Lesbian Outreach Committee was formed in 2003 in recognition of the large GLBTI¹ community which has developed in the neighborhood in recent years. There is a particular need for outreach to gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered 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 Christ² congregation in 2000 by a unanimous congregational vote. This is one of numerous areas in which our church stands for social justice.

After several years of outreach activities, we learned that many heterosexuals were present at "gay" events and that you can't reach out to one group without encountering all groups, so the Committee now functions as the Outreach Committee.

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

Tent and table staffed by members of the congregation at the **Jersey City Gay Pride Festival**. This year we shared a booth with the good folks from St. Johns Episcopal Church, Union City. Once again, we decorated everyone at the festival with our limitless supply of colorful Mardi Gras beads and invited them to visit St. Matthew's. Aug. 26

An Inconvenient Truth starring Al Gore was shown in the church, with about 100 community members attending. The film highlights the disastrous effects of CO₂ produced by the burning of fossil fuels, and the concomitant destruction of forests. Refreshments and mingling followed in Bavendam Hall. One hundred compact energy-saving fluorescent bulbs were sold for \$2 a piece. Oct. 2

Barrow Mansion was the host site for Jersey City Connections **Transgender Day of Remembrance** (of Transgender murder victims) in November.

"The Living Quilt". The quilt is a testimony and remembrance **in celebration of the lives touched by HIV / AIDS**. Co-operative event with the Jersey City Gay and Lesbian Organization held in St. Matthew's Bavendam Hall Dec.1, 2006.

Hyacinth Foundation representative attended St. Matthew's International Dinner, which served as a fundraiser in support of our food pantry that donates to Hyacinth.

Respectfully submitted,
Laird Ehlert, Team Leader
Team Members: Pastor Moore, Jill Trudel, Brian McGovern

¹ GLBTI has become a commonly used acronym which stands for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered and Inter-sexed. Transgendered 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.

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

Report on the Ministry of Icons and Images in Worship, Education, and Outreach

"I like icons!"... "I read the first part of the story before service started, and I couldn't wait to see how it ended!" ... "I look at icons differently now."

These are some of the responses to this ministry of Word and Image that I have heard from congregation members this year. Activities included a "Temple Talk" during Lent; and the Palm Sunday Procession, which included a collage depiction of the Procession into Jerusalem that was created by Miss Lily Aycox. Other children and young people who have participated in the use of icons in our liturgy this year include Sophia Anthony, Dana and Reed Bakirtjy, and Semaj McLeod.

Worship -- Wonderful "synergy" results between the music, spoken word ministries, sermon themes and the children's sermon, and other aspects of our worship. Icons and images are selected with attention paid to the lectionary passages, the calendar of saints' days and commemorations, holidays and historical events, and community concerns. Information is presented in a variety of ways, including written materials, "teaching moments" during the liturgy, and the occasional children's sermon.

Education – Icons play an important role in Christian education and faith formation. They remind us of the struggles and courage of people of faith from every time and place, in every generation; and the richness of the symbolism rooted in Scripture. Along with teaching as part of Sunday worship, I have presented adult educational forums at St. Matthew's, and hope to do more such forums in the future. When possible, I attend the Cluster Pericope Study, attended by local pastors, deacons, and lay leaders who have preaching and teaching ministries in their congregations, and bring contributions based in this ministry. I teach courses in the Diakonia curriculum: as of the date of the Annual Meeting, I will have begun teaching a course for this year's program, titled: "Biblical Images in the Life of the Church." Diakonia is a lay education program open to all interested persons. It meets at St. John's in Jersey City Heights on Thursday evenings. Anyone interested in learning more about this program is warmly encouraged to ask Pastor Moore, Deacon Paul Bellan-Boyer, or myself.

Outreach and Inreach – Icons have been part of many events this year, ranging from house blessings; to the visitation of the homebound; the annual Community Health Fair; and the screening of "An Inconvenient Truth" that took place in our sanctuary, coinciding with St. Francis Day and the Blessing of the Animals. At the film screening, 125 "Cookies and Stories" packets were distributed to our visitors, each containing three windmill cookies, wrapped in a story about St. Francis, along with an explanation of the Christian symbolism of windmills. Other aspects of this ministry have included:

- The leave-taking of Nathan and Lara Hanson.
- The recent wedding of Jill Trudel and Deb Trudel-Comeau.
- In response to bereavements and illness, including the Day of Prayers for the Mentally Ill.
- A consultation during the year on how to select an appropriate icon for a wedding gift.
- Religious Studies classes at HCCC, in a secular academic context
- Participation in the Hudson County Brotherhood/Sisterhood for Inter-Religious Dialogue and Affairs, an interfaith community group of clergy and lay leaders, meeting since September 11th, 2001.
- In ministry with the Faith Walks Program of Koinonia NYC.

I would like to expand the use of icons in visiting the sick and homebound during the coming year. If others are doing the visiting and would like to take the patient something that will last

longer than flowers, this is a wonderful way to do that. It is a nice way to give someone a personalized and meaningful gift, and share the joys and sorrows of our community. You can email me: LBellanB@aol.com or leave a message for me at the church office. Depending on what else is happening, I can usually respond with some suggestions within a couple of days.

There are many more ways that ministry with icons and images can be active at St. Matthew's, and it's always great to hear about more possibilities and suggestions for this ministry. I have been invited by our sister congregation, St. Matthew-Trinity in Hoboken, to do a program for them on their stained glass windows; and by the Waterfront Ministry, to do a program on the history and symbolism of the labyrinth; and I hope to develop these opportunities. As we encourage programs for children and young people, such as Creative Arts Club, there are many opportunities available for possible collaborations. I am very grateful and blessed by the support, encouragement, and participation of our community of faith, and look forward to a new year of service and praise.

Iconographer: One who "writes" (paints, embroiders, or otherwise creates) icons, and writes about icons, opening these "windows" onto the depth and richness of God's realm for others to see and find inspiration.

Blessings of Christ's Peace,
Lisa Bellan-Boyer, St. Matthew's Iconographer

Financial /Treasurer Reports

The following financial reports are in this section.

- Summary of 2006 Actual Income and Expense
- Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund (MIF)
- Bavendam Memorial Fund (endowment)
- Summary of 2007 Proposed Budget

Summary of 2006 Actual Income and Expense

2006 Budget vs 2006 Actual

Income	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
General support	95,000	88,906	(\$6,094)
Earned Income	31,945	32,998	\$1,053
Mission	10,500	13,520	\$3,020
Designated Gifts	10,500	31,960	\$21,460
Other	0	2,500	\$2,500
In-Kind / Challenge Factor	27,379	0	(\$27,379)
	\$175,324	\$169,884	-\$5,440

Expense	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
Staff	96,549	91,304	(\$5,245)
Building	43,625	42,350	(\$1,275)
Mission	15,000	17,513	\$2,513
Witness and Service	9,550	5,344	(\$4,206)
Office	6,800	5,974	(\$826)
Worship	3,800	2,102	(\$1,698)
Transfer of designated gifts	0	19,023	\$19,023
	\$175,324	\$183,610	\$8,286

Total shortfall:	\$13,726
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Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund

Accessibility and Major Capital Repairs Fund

Interest bearing account*

opening balance	20,000
expenses	(3,500)
interest paid year to date	388
ending balance	16,888

Accounts receivable

loan to cover 2006 operating shortfall	7,000
designated contributions in 2006	5,527
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	12,527

Total Fund **29,415**

*MissionFirst account at Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

Rev. F. Arnold Bavendam Memorial Fund (endowment)

ENDOWMENT FUND: Rev. F. Arnold Bavendam Memorial Fund

Vanguard	30-Dec-05	30-Dec-06	Income	Reinvested
GNMA Fund Advisor	31,015	32,744	1,650	0
Long-Term Treasury	33,940	34,681	1,856	0
Short Term Inv.	29,121	31,277	1,356	0
500 Index Fund Inv.	33,362	40,564	0	658
	127,438	139,266	4,862	658
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Recievables				
contributions	\$100			
 Total Endowment		\$139,366		
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Investments made in 2006				
loan repayment from BMDC	\$7,775			
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Portfolio allocation				
Bonds		71%		
Stocks		29%		

Summary of 2007 Proposed Budget

Summary of 2007 Proposed Budget

2007 Income	Actual 2006	2007
General support	80,038	83,750
Other Giving	8,868	5,000
Mission	13,520	11,850
Designated Gifts	21,505	7,968
Earned Income (rent, fundraisers, investments)	32,998	28,000
Vicar	10,455	5,800
BMDC Loan repayment	2,500	0
	\$169,884	\$136,568

2007 Expense	Actual 2006	2007
Staff	91,304	75,700
Building	42,350	39,000
Mission	17,513	11,850
Witness and Service	5,344	11,197
Worship	2,102	4,000
Office	5,974	5,250
Transfers to designated	19,023	10,659
	\$183,610	\$157,656

Shortfall	(\$13,726)	(\$21,088)
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Finance Motions

1. Proposed motion: to accept the 2006 Income and Expense Report, the Rev. F. Arnold Bavendam Memorial Fund (endowment) and the Accessibility and Major Capital Repair Fund Report.
2. Proposed motion: to adopt the 2007 Proposed Budget for Income and Expense.