

ECCLESIA MINISTRIES ***OF NEW YORK, INC.***

some questions and answers



***The gifts of the Church
for all God's people***

For more information please contact:

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WHY IS STREET CHURCH NECESSARY ?

- People in our City/State have lost hope. The promises our government has made go unfulfilled. Our poor and marginalized live in constant peril, the support system (safety net) has too often failed them; thus many have lost hope.
- People in our City/State have lost faith. The church which helped nurture many of our people has not remained relevant in their lives. The institutional church too often exists as a valuable social service resource for the poor, offering charity; but does not meet them in the depths of their spiritual hunger.
- People in our City/State have not always been given a sufficiently welcoming, attractive invitation to participate in our “housed” communities of faith. And too often those who exist on the street find even the warmest, most welcoming “housed” communities difficult or impossible to negotiate.

Ecclesia Ministries seeks the restoration of dignity and self worth in our homeless, poor, and marginalized by joining them where they are. And it accomplishes this goal by carefully and lovingly assisting our neighbors in the creation of new communities of faith.

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Ecclesia Ministries of New York is to form and support communities of faith in the State of New York. These communities are reflective of the broad spectrum of society, but are largely made up of the people who live on the streets without suitable shelter or other resources. Each ‘church’ worships out of doors in public space; spaces which already attract street people and serve as common ground for meeting and social discourse. These churches offer the same mutual support, pastoral care, and worship as traditional communities of faith, but with increased emphasis on needs and issues common to the marginalized of our society.

CURRENT & PLANNED CONGREGATION SITES

Madison Square Church
Bryant Park Church
Battery Park Church
Tompkins Square Church
Central Park Church

Ecclesia Ministries of New York, Inc. is a religious corporation in the City of New York and a not-for-profit corporation in the State of New York. Its 501(c)(3) status is pending with the Federal Government.

WHAT IS IT ?

At its core Ecclesia Ministries is a well supported lay ministry, which is deeply committed to engaging the poor and disenfranchised among us in the faith of Jesus Christ.

Its methodology is born of the great commission (*Mark 16*) and Gospel imperative (*Matthew 25*). It engages lay and ordained people of all denominations in its ecumenical effort to bring the people of God into worshipping communities.

WHAT ARE THE GIFTS OF THE CHURCH ?

Ecclesia Ministries believes the Church imparts its “gifts” to all those who participate. These gifts include: hospitality, welcome, continuity, forgiveness, worship, prayer, the open table, open hands and willing hearts, hope, community, a greater sense of self-worth, and a deeper understanding of God’s love as revealed in the life of his son, Jesus Christ .

WHY VOLUNTEER ?

- You will meet an interesting, diverse group of people.
- You will have fun, while living out your faith.
- You will be moved intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

WHO CAN VOLUNTEER ?

Individuals or groups of any Christian denomination are welcome to become a part of E.M. Although we are organized around the concept of base participation by “housed” congregations supporting our new ‘churches,’ we can also integrate any number of individual volunteers.

Existing congregations wishing to join the program need to provide a minimum of six persons.

Our model requires the continuing effort of six or more volunteers from five “housed” congregations who form and sustain each new street church. Each of these base congregations takes responsibility for pastoral care, worship, and hospitality one week in every month.

DO I NEED SPECIAL SKILLS ?

Participation in Ecclesia Ministries requires no special skills, although there is room for the expression of many talents in our efforts. Some of these skills include:

- Pastoral Concern
- Food Preparation and Serving
- Musical Talent
- Carpentry
- A Listening Presence

The one requirement of all who participate in Ecclesia Ministries is the desire to share the love of Christ with all those we encounter.

WHAT SORT OF COMMITMENT MUST I MAKE?

Volunteers will be expected to spend 6 to 8 hours per month providing pastoral care and participating in the Sunday afternoon Eucharist.

Occasional group meetings and time with a supervisor may also be scheduled, but not required.