



REPORT



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St. Matthew's Churches

April 2004

also known as : Prayer By Letters

also known as : St. Matthew 18:19 Publishing

also known as : St. Matthew Publishing

Post Office Box 3036
Tulsa, OK 74101

918-582-7167

www.saintmatthewschurches.com

Expiration Date: April 2006

Year, State Incorporated: 1977, Oklahoma

Affiliates:

Stated Purpose: "The principle mission of the Church is following the dictates of St. Mark 13:10...."

Evaluation Conclusions

St. Matthew's Churches (St. Matthew's) **does not meet** the following 2 [Standards for Charity Accountability](#).

11: Make available to all, on request, complete annual financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

The Alliance requested but did not receive a copy of St. Matthew's financial statements.



expenses in the same program, fund raising and administrative categories as in the financial statements, and (iii) ending net assets.

The Alliance requested but did not receive a copy of St. Matthew's annual report.

In addition, since the BBB Wise Giving Alliance did not receive requested information on St. Matthew's governance, finances, and fund raising, the Alliance is unable to verify St. Matthew's compliance with the following 13 Standards for Charity Accountability: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 19.

Charity Response: In response, St. Matthew's Churches stated, in part: "...St. Matthew's Churches is a church, a religious organization which does not and has never made any charitable solicitations. The Church is not a charity. It is an Evangelistic Church which reaches out and tries to convert the world to Christianity..." The Alliance notes that both the Alliance and BBBs from across the country have received public inquiries from individuals who have received direct mail letters from this organization.

St. Matthew's Churches meets the remaining 14 [Standards for Charity Accountability](#). Please note that as of the date of this report four out of the 20 Standards for Charity Accountability are not currently effective. As a result, these four Standards have not been applied in this evaluation. For additional information, please see the Implementation Guide to the Standards available on the www.give.org website.

Programs

St. Matthew's states that it publishes the Gospel. Materials are distributed through the mail in conjunction with St. Matthew's appeals for financial support. St. Matthew's also reports it carries out other activities such as church services and prayer meetings. In addition, St. Matthew's web site contains information about its religious beliefs and activities.

Governance

Chief Executive Officer:

Compensation*: Not provided

Chair of the Board: Not provided

Chair's Profession / Business Affiliation: Not provided



Fund Raising

Method(s) Used: Direct mail

In response to questions about fund raising, St. Matthew's states, in part, that, "The church engages in no fund raising activities and gives its members the opportunity to worship God with their tithes and offerings." In addition, the organization's "Articles of Faith" states in part that, "...We write our partners three letters a month, all of the same faith building nature. These items of faith, which we send along with our letters, have no power, but ... help people focus their faith in God." St. Matthew's does acknowledge that it also sends direct mail letters to nonmembers as part of its proselytizing activities. No fund raising expense figures are available since the organization did not provide requested financial information.

Tax Status

This organization is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is eligible to receive contributions deductible as charitable donations for federal income tax purposes.

Complaints

During the past year, the Alliance and local Better Business Bureaus received 46 complaints about St. Matthew's. These individuals requested removal from the organization's mailing list, raised objections to the content of the mailings or claimed that the recipient did not receive "financial blessings" referenced in the organization's letters. St. Matthew's has responded to complaints forwarded to its attention generally by removing the name of the complainant from the organization's mailing list. St. Matthew's has indicated that "[Complaints sent to its attention] will be addressed by the Church immediately upon receipt..." and that since the Church places orders months in advance for its direct mail printing, the complainants may receive additional mailings before the name and address removal becomes effective.

Financial

The Alliance requested but did not receive a copy of St. Matthew's financial statements.

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