St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

119-15 135th Avenue South Ozone Park, NY 11420 Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Jamaica, NY Permit No. 553

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



We Worship Every Sunday at 10:00 am www.SouthOzoneParkChurch.org

Dear family of God,

Beyond a doubt, we are living in unprecedented times – times that are extraordinary, unparalleled and unmatched – times that have never existed before and cannot be compared to anything that we have ever known. Exclaiming or even worse, complaining that "our lives have been disrupted" is an understatement given the reality that thousands have died within our city, thousands more continue to be hospitalized, and millions are unemployed due to COVID-19.

Our Church community is no exception, losses have been felt within our family and every one of us knows someone whose life was either threatened or claimed by this devastating disease. No one being is spared – even the youngest among us are affected, life is not the same as school closures and remote-learning became the "new norm." And, yes, our in-person church worship services also have been canceled for the foreseeable future.

But there is good news, not all is lost while we P.A.U.S.E. statewide (observing Policies that Assures the Uniform Safety of Everyone) – I am grateful that we are able to stay connected thanks to technology. I thank God for the ability to pray and make telephone calls, send Whatsapp messages, conduct Zoom meetings, share YouTube videos, updates on Facebook and, for techies like Matthew Khargie to help navigate any challenge that may arise.

Now, scripture has always served as a major source of inspiration for me over the years, but during these times the Psalms especially offered small doses of hope: Psalm 23, 63, 139 and 150 are among my favorites. There is also a poem that was aired on the radio while growing up that I find most comforting in these days of disease. Please indulge me as I share it...



The Messenger

May 2020 Edition

DESIDERATA

GO PLACIDLY amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

By Max Ehrmann © 1927

Finally, in this Easter season that leads to Pentecost, as we watch the trees bud, flowers bloom and the birds make their nests, let us be grateful for the gift of life and death and sing together Psalm 150:

¹ Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament!

² Praise him for his mighty deeds:

Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

³ Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!

Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!

⁵ Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

⁶Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

With resurrection hope, Pastor Romeo Dabee



With the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) global outbreak, and the mandates from our religious and legislative leaders, we at St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church will continue to take the following measures for the foreseeable future:

- 1. **Remain Closed** for Worship Services and Meetings During this time, you can call the Church office to let us know if you are in need of Pastoral Care or special prayers.
- 2. **Reach out to our members and friends** You may join us in connecting with our church family let them know that they are loved. We strongly suggest you do so by telephone and avoid person-to-person contact...at the least, pray for everyone.
- 3. Your Church Offering You can mail-in your Offering Envelopes to the Church or if possible, drop them off (please, Checks only) in our mail slot on the side door. Contributions can also be made via your PayPal Accounts... https://www.paypal.me/StJamesStMatthews
- 4. Going forward we will continue to share our Sunday Worship Services online and have an audio version available for those who wish to dial-in from home phones. For Sunday 10:00 am worship services, please dial 646-558-8656 and enter meeting ID: 394-171-8778 #.
- 5. Video recording of **Sunday Worship** "Service of the Word" are posted on our website for your viewing: www.SouthOzoneParkChurch.org
- 6. Our **Annual Church Picnic** scheduled for Saturday, June 13 has been canceled due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, in an effort to keep in touch with our church family during this time, we will continue to send out weekly email blasts and posting updates on our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/St-James-St-Matthews-Lutheran-Church Email us at stjstm@aol.com if you do not get our weekly blasts, and "like us" on Facebook to get these updates when posted.

As we continue to shelter-in-place and do our best to cope with these times, you are invited to engage the Scripture Readings assigned for the month of May.

May 3 – Easter 4: John 10:1-10 May 10 – Easter 5: John 14:1-14 May 17 – Easter 6: John 14:15-21

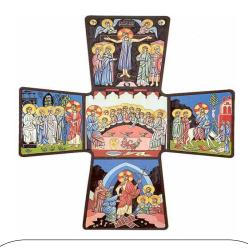
May 24 – Easter 7: John 17:1-11 May 31 – Pentecost : Acts 2:1-21 & John 20:19-23

In addition to meditating on scripture during these days, we also look to God in fervent prayer. Jesus in his farewell discourse (to his first disciples) promised, "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it." (John 14:13-14)

In 1952, President Harry Truman made the National Day of Prayer an annual observance, stating: "In times of national crisis when we are striving to strengthen the foundations of peace...we stand in special need of Divine support." Every year since, the 1st Thursday of the month of May has be designated National Day of Prayer—this year it's May 7th.

So, please pray with me—a prayer for such a time: O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen"

ELW, Evening Prayer attributed to Martin Luther



Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Contact us by Mail:

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