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 Visit us at SouthOzoneParkChurch.org

Greetings Church family:

I pray that this note reaches you well, especially during these uncertain times!

Yes! In-person worship services resumed at St. James-St. Matthew's on Sunday, September 13. There is seating capacity for 45 worshippers (including the overflow into the Fellowship Hall) and the windows stay opened for airflow.

We will continue to have a recorded version of each in-person Sunday Worship Service available by 6 PM—same day on YouTube. And yes, a DVD with multiple recordings will be available for our members without internet access.

Our Resumption Team developed some protocols to resume "in-person" worship at St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, and they have proven to be very effective since we reopened our doors.

Congregations are advised to use common sense with regard to preventing the spread of pathogens while gathering around the means of grace – word and sacraments. Therefore, these are simply plans (though subject to change) as the season unfolds:

First of all, do not fear, for God is with us! Our entire building will be cleaned thoroughly prior to each worship service. If you feel sick or in that "vulnerable" population (elderly, with pre-existing medical conditions, asthmatic, etc.) please stay at home. You may call the Church office to inform us of your illness or need for Pastoral Care and prayers.

Secondly, in-person Worship Services will be very different when we resume. Here's how:

- 1. A **face covering** (masks) must be worn anywhere on the Church's premises. If you do not have a face covering, one will be provided for you.
- 2. Your **body temperature** will be tested prior to entering the Church building. You will NOT be permitted into the building if your temperature is above the prescribed range.

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- 3. You will complete a **Questionnaire** about yourself strictly for contact and tracing purposes.
- 4. You will be ushered to an **assigned/numbered seat** (6-feet apart) please stay in your assigned seat throughout the Worship Service. You will find a **worship bulletin** placed on your seat. Please **take your bulletin** with you when you leave.
- 5. There will be **no congregating** in the back of the sanctuary, aisles, restrooms or fellowship hall either before or after Sunday Worship.
- 6. **Restrooms** will be limited to **One Person at a Time** unless it's a family, parent/guardian and child.
- 7. The Worship Service will be centered around the **Word and Sacraments**:
- a) Ushers will be trained by the Resumption Team to ensure the safety of everyone in attendance at Worship. Please **listen** to them and **obey** their instructions.
- b) You will **remain seated** throughout the Worship Service which will be adjusted to be under 30 minutes in length.
- c) There will be **no singing** or communal responses (e.g. The Lord be with you...And also with you and The Lord's Prayer) by the congregation. Pathogens (droplets) spread the most in this manner.
- d) The **passing of the peace** is an integral way that the family of God recognizes the presence of the peace of Christ in its midst. After making eye contact with your sibling in Christ, simply bow to the person with clasped hands and gesture.



- e) The **Lord's Supper** will be celebrated and distributed very differently: the elements (wafer and grape juice) will be pre-packed and sealed and each communicant will partake of the meal at home following the removal of their face coverings.
- f) There will be an **Offering Plate** at the back of the worship space for your envelopes.
- 7. **Fellowship** of any kind **is discouraged** as we continue to have everyone's safety and wellbeing as our top priority.

Now, having digested the above information, take a look at this special "Welcome Back" Video (thanks to Matt Khargie): https://youtu.be/-p9eJo3AT9Y

In the meantime, please do not let your guard down in these unprecedented times. Further, it is my sincere hope that we let the old adage be our guide: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" and allow the Holy Spirit of God to inspire us to care for ourselves and each other.

With renewed hope, Pastor Romeo Dabee



We would like acknowledge and thank everyone who continued to contribute their offering towards the ministry of our Church. For those of you who are wondering how to make your contributions, you may:

- 1. Mail-in your Offering Envelopes to the Church.
- 2. Drop off (please, Checks only) your Offering Envelopes in our mail slot on the side door, or
- 3. Contribute via your PayPal Accounts... https://www.paypal.me/StJamesStMatthews



In order 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. Video recording of **Sunday Worship** "Service of the Word" are posted on our website for your viewing: www.SouthOzoneParkChurch.org



October 25 is Confirmation Sunday—join us to celebrate with our Confirmands and remember the beginning of the Reformation back in 1517.



5 Things you may not know about the Reformation

Excerpts from The Living Lutheran Magazine, 2017

- 1. The word "Protestant" was first used formally around 1529. "Protestant" originates from the Latin word *protestari*, meaning "declare publicly, testify, protest."
- 2. The name "Lutheran" originated as a derogatory term used against Martin Luther by German scholastic theologian Johann Maier von Eck during the Leipzig Debate in 1519.
- 3. The Luther rose (or Luther seal) was created at the request of printers to have a personal symbol representing the reformer's faith that could serve as a mark indicating something was an authorized publication of Luther's. It became widely recognized as the symbol for Lutheranism, and still is today.
- 4. The Reformation paved the way for what we still refer to as a "Protestant work ethic."
 Luther's teachings about the "priesthood of all believers" helped dissolve the wall between "temporal" and "spiritual" realms. In doing so, everyday work and labor was affirmed and seen as pleasing to God; it was no longer considered an inferior life to that of a monastic life or the priesthood.
- 5. On April 18, 1994, the Church Council of the ELCA officially repudiated and apologized for Luther's words and teachings that have been appropriated by anti-Semites for the teaching of hatred and violence toward Judaism or toward the Jewish people. The ELCA also pledged to oppose such bigotry within the church and in society and to pray for the increasing cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community.

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Contact us by Mail:

St. James—St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

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