

St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

119-15 135th Avenue

South Ozone Park, NY 11420

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We Worship Every Sunday at 10:00 am

Visit us at SouthOzoneParkChurch.org

The Messenger

March 2021 Edition

A Unique Lenten Series: 2021

Every season of Lent provides for us an opportunity to learn more about God's love for us through Jesus and how we can strengthen that love relationship – as individuals and collectively as the body of Christ in the world. This year's Lenten journey offers to take a closer look at how the gift of God's Holy Spirit is at work in our lives – during a global pandemic.

As we navigate the Coronavirus pandemic, we have become more aware of how complex, vital and underappreciated our respiratory system is...It is no secret that we have also come up short in caring for our bodies which described by the apostle Paul as the temple of the Holy Spirit within you. (1 Cor. 6:19) As such, we are provided a season to better understand how matter "air/breath/oxygen" things from outside of ourselves help us to function as human beings.

In the second creation account (Genesis 2:7) we read, "then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." During Lent this year, it is my hope that we will honor that breath of life from God and with grateful hearts, ensure that none of it is wasted, squandered, or taken for granted.

According to author James Nestor, "No matter what we eat, how much we exercise, how resilient our genes are, how skinny or young or wise we are – none of it will matter unless we're breathing correctly." Nestor posed the question: But why do I need to learn how to breathe? I've been breathing my whole life? To which he explained, "We assume, at our peril, that breathing is a passive action, just something that we do, breath, live, stop breathing, die. But breathing is not binary."

Our 5-Part Lenten mid-week devotionals continues through Wednesday, March 24, highlighting some helpful methods to both spiritual and physical launch an offence on this deadly virus that has claimed so many lives in the passed year. Join us on this unique journey!

A Lenten Discipline or Exercise for All:

Throughout this Lenten season, take about 5 or 10 minutes out of your rigid pandemic schedules to focus on you and your breathing.

First, find a quite space – turn off the phone, computer and television, make yourself comfortable, stand, sit, lie on the floor – maybe you can try this in the park on a warm day.

When you think that you are settled, I would like for you to gently close your eyes and try to hear each breath of air coming into your body through your nostrils.

Maintain your focus on your breathing and be mindful of each inhale and exhale – maybe try counting how many breaths you take in a minute.

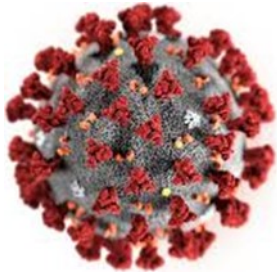
As you begin to feel comfortable, based on your ability of course, try slowing down your breathing and perhaps take deeper, longer breaths. Listen to the breath of life within you.

With each inhale be grateful that God has kept you among the living and as you exhale, rid yourself of any negative feelings or grudge that may be preventing you from being the child of God you have called to be in the world.

Let's do it 5-10 minutes a day—it could be more beneficial than you think !



***Devotional at 7:00 PM
continues through March 24***



Coronavirus & the Church

At the writing of this message, the positivity rate of COVID-19 cases in South Ozone Park, Queens is 9.3% (that is almost 1 in every 10 persons tested positive for the virus). In the same period (February 22-28) 134 lives were lost.

Our immediate neighborhood is still under attack and our neighbors are literally in the fight of their lives. Please get vaccinated as soon as you can and do not let your guards down as you continue to dwell amongst the living.

We have **suspended our in-person worship** until further notice (including Holy Week and Easter, 2021) and will continue with a 10 AM Zoom broadcast every Sunday. The Worship Services uploaded to our website and YouTube channel—thanks to our tech wiz, Matt Khargie!

The **Zoom link** for joining the Sunday Worship is: <https://zoom.us/j/3941718778>
You can also join the broadcast by **dialing 646-558-8656** and enter meeting ID: **394-171-8778 #**



Join us on **Sunday, March 7, at 10:30 AM** for a time of fellowship via Zoom—It's been a long time since we haven't seen many of you and we hope that you can stop by to say hello and reconnect with Church family.

The **Zoom link** for the fellowship 1/2 hour is: <https://zoom.us/j/3941718778> You can also access this service by **dialing 646-558-8656** and enter meeting ID: **394-171-8778 #**.

Pour a cup of tea or coffee with us!



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 PayPal at: <https://www.paypal.me/StJamesStMatthews>

Special Note:

Our 2021 Easter Memorials will be dedicated to replacing our almost 30 year-old roof that was battered by some ferocious storms and currently missing a number of shingles.



And please keep in touch with us: <https://www.facebook.com/St-James-St-Matthews-Lutheran-Church> “like us” on Facebook to get these updates when posted. Also, please communicate your pastoral care need with Pastor Dabee.

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

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Contact us by Mail:

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