

St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

119-15 135th Avenue

South Ozone Park, NY 11420

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On Sunday, June 6th we will



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 as we emerge from some rather uncertain times!

I am delighted to share some good news with you—yes, in-person worship resumes at St. James-St. Matthew's on **Sunday, June 6.**

With the outbreak and potential devastation of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in New York City, we as a congregation were forced to put “in-person” worship services on hold.

Sadly, during these past months, some among our Church family have lost loved-ones, livelihoods, independence and a lot of freedoms taken for granted. As a people of God, we continue to grieve these losses but pray for healing and growth as we continue to live in the resurrection hope.

Thanks to modern technology, we were able to record and broadcast worship services and stay in touch with each other. However, experiencing worshipping through a screen and unable to partake of the Lord's Supper is not always fulfilling – By the way, we plan to continue having a recorded or live-stream of our Sunday worship... and, yes, we will have DVDs for those without internet access.

But there is good news, the number of new cases and subsequent deaths due to COVID-19 in NYC have declined drastically prompting our Church leaders to develop some protocols to resume “in-person” worship at St. James-St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

Congregations are advised to use common sense and intentional action with regard to preventing the spread of pathogens while gathering around the means of grace – word and sacraments. Therefore, under the guidance of the CDC, New York State and City Departments of Health, the ELCA and the Metropolitan New York Synod and knowing that these are simply plans – it is subject to change as the future unfolds:

The Messenger

June 2021 Edition

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.
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 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 are trained 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 is adjusted to be under 30 minutes.

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 or Holy Communion** will be celebrated and distributed as follows: the elements (wafer and grape juice) are pre-packed and sealed and each communicant will partake of the meal at home after removing their face coverings.

f) There will be an **Offering Plate** at the back of the worship space for your envelopes.

8. **Fellowship** of any kind is **discouraged** as we continue to have everyone’s safety and wellbeing as our top priority.

In the meantime, please do not let your guard down in these unprecedented times. It is our prayer 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.

Now, having read and digested the above information, should you have any questions, please contact the Church Office immediately.



Email us at stjstm@aol.com if you do not get our weekly email blasts and “like us” on Facebook to get these updates when posted. Video recordings of **Sunday Worship** are posted on our website for your viewing: www.SouthOzoneParkChurch.org

We will share our **Sunday Worship Services** (Zoom) online and have an audio version available for those who wish to dial-in from their home phones. At 9:55 AM, you can dial: **646-558-8656** and enter meeting ID: **394-171-8778 #**.

For those on computers, tablets or smartphones, you can join via Zoom – <https://zoom.us/j/3941718778>



We would like acknowledge everyone who has 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—see a “Special Offering” Envelope enclosed.
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>



A Pentecostal Revival By Pastor Dabee

Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Crossing all boundaries that would separate us, the Spirit brings the wideness of God’s mercy to places we least expect it—to a crowd of strangers of different lands and tongues, to dry bones, to our weak hearts.

The Hebrew word rendered as *ruach* means “spirit,” “wind,” or “breath.” This reading plays on the different meanings of the word. Just as the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision (37:1-14) are given new life, flesh, and breath (or spirit), so God will give the exiles God’s own Spirit and will bring them home to the land of Israel.

Fifteen months after the Coronavirus caused mayhem, death and destruction across the globe, we are beginning to emerge from lockdowns, quarantining, zooming and isolating. But, the Spirit of God continues to awaken us, rejuvenate and revive us for a time and space that is kinder, gentler and better place to live in – for us today and generations to come after us.

Let us pray... Mighty God, you breathe life into our bones, and your Spirit brings truth to the world. Send us this Spirit, transform us by your truth, and give us language to proclaim your gospel, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen



Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

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Contact us by Mail:

St. James—St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church

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