

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

In-person Worship resumes
Ash Wednesday, March 2 at 7 PM



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

Greetings Church family:

I am delighted to share some good news with you—given the declining number of cases, hospitalization and deaths related to COVID-19, our Church Council has decided to resume in-person worship at St. James'-St. Matthew's on **Ash Wednesday, March 2nd at 7 PM.**

With another outbreak and potential devastation of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in New York City, we as a congregation were forced to suspend “in-person” worship services and go to the recorded versions once again—Thanks Matt!

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.

Now, if you feel sick or in that “**vulnerable**” population (elderly, with pre-existing medical conditions, etc.) please stay at home. You may call the Church office to inform us of your illness or need for Pastoral Care and prayers.

The Church leaders have revised the safety protocols for in-person Worship Services as our world is evolving—very different from 2 year ago. Here's how:

1. A well fitted **face mask** must be worn anywhere on the Church's premises. If you do not have a face mask, one will be provided for you.
2. Your **body temperature** will be tested prior to entering the Church building.
3. You will be ushered to an **designated seat** (6-feet apart) – please stay in your seat throughout the Worship Service.
4. There will be **no congregating** in the back of the sanctuary, aisles, restrooms, or fellowship hall either before or after worship.
5. **Restrooms** will be limited to **One Person at a Time** – unless it's a family, parent/guardian and child.

The Messenger

March 2022 Edition

6. The Worship Service will be centered around God's **Word and blessed 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.

c) 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.

d) 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.

In the meantime, please do not let your guard down in these unprecedented times. Maintain those safety protocols that have kept us safe thus far and get tested and vaccinated.

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.



Wednesdays in Lent

Lent: A Time to Encounter God's Amazing Grace.

Traditionally, Lent is the season in our church year when we focus on practices and exercises that will help strengthen our faith and draw us closer to God. God knows how much we need this season given our experiences of living through a global pandemic. The direct and ripple effects of COVID-19 have touched each of us and to a certain degree taken a toll on our bodies, minds, wallets, intellect and faith.

The Psalmist (46:4-5) writes, "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most-High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns." By all indications, a new day is dawning among us – dare we say the beginning of the end of the pandemic? But, regardless of our opinion of the timeline, it is at this juncture, we are forced to ask our fellow sojourners: *How are you doing?*

In this five (5) part Lenten Series, we will engage scripture, pray and seek God's guidance – in other words, the "Graces of God" which have and continues to "keep us among the living." (Ps. 66:9)

Week 1: March 9 at 7 PM
How are you doing? *Physically*

Week 2: March 16 at 7 PM
How are you doing? *Emotionally*

Week 3: March 23 at 7 PM
How are you doing? *Financially*

Week 4: March 30 at 7 PM
How are you doing? *Academically*

Week 5: April 6 at 7 PM
How are you doing? *Spiritually*



As part of our mission as a called-out community of believers known as the church is to bring the gospel (the good news of Jesus) to those in need. St. James'-St. Matthew's has observed the need in our community for food, as such a Food Ministry is being established.

In collaboration with Stacy's Pantry in Elmhurst, we will launch this new ministry on **Thursday, March 24, at 5 PM**. The plan is to provide this service monthly on the **4th Thursday of the month**.

What this means is that there is a wonderful opportunity to enrich your lives of service to God and your neighbors. Please contact the Church office either by phone 718-845-8770 or email stjstm@aol.com and let us know if you have any resources, be it time, talents, and treasures to grow this new ministry.



We would like to 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>



...Still Wanted !

When we resume in-person worship services in March, we will need **Ushers, Lectors, and Assistant Ministers**.

Please contact Pastor Dabee or the Church Office to indicate your willingness to help make worship a welcoming and meaningful experience for everyone in attendance.

Thanks in advance!

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

+ + +

Contact us by Mail:

St. James—St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

119-15 135th Avenue

South Ozone Park, NY 11420

Office Telephone: 718-845-8770

Office Email: stjstm@aol.com

Website: SouthOzoneParkChurch.org

+ + +

Pastor Romeo Dabee

718-749-4953 (Pastoral Emergencies)

Email: PastorDabee@gmail.com