

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

October 2023 Edition

Greetings Church:

Grace, mercy and peace to you – Amen

In light of recent events, I encourage you to read the following message on Friday, October 13 from our Presiding Bishop of our Church:



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?" Psalm 22:1

Dear church,

As Lutherans, we are accustomed to holding tension between two truths. Thus the ELCA denounces the egregious acts of Hamas, acts that have led to unspeakable loss of life and hope. At the same time the ELCA denounces the indiscriminate retaliation of Israel against the Palestinian people, both Christian and Muslim.

For the past week we have borne witness to the horrors of the escalating crisis between Israel and Hamas. We also watch a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza as Israel blocks food, water, fuel and medical supplies and as airstrikes continue to cause unbearable civilian casualties ahead of a just-announced ground assault. We see Israelis and families around the world in the agonizing wait for word about the fate of loved ones killed or taken hostage by Hamas. We are in anguish, grieving and praying for all people who are living in trauma, fear and uncertainty.

Among us are Palestinian Lutherans who are fearful for their families, their communities and their homeland. In our communities

we have Jewish and Muslim neighbors, who are also facing the horrors of this crisis and its impact on their loved ones.

It is difficult to find words that suffice in the complexity of this moment, and in the web of relationships that bind us together, as church, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and our interreligious partners. Yet God has called us to be a people who stand with others amid suffering.

We must also call a thing a thing. The power exerted against all Palestinian people — through the occupation, the expansion of settlements and the escalating violence — must be called out as a root cause of what we are witnessing. We are committed to our long-standing accompaniment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

The God who liberates us calls us to be a liberating witness. May it be so.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Things you can do:

- Find updated resources and statements from the ELCA.
- Join our partner Churches for Middle East Peace for prayer every Wednesday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Eastern time.
- Call your lawmakers today through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and urge them to take action to deescalate the conflict and uphold unrestricted humanitarian aid to Gaza.
- Support Lutheran Disaster Response.



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 the world. St. James-St. Matthew's has identified a need in our community for food, and a Food Ministry was launched.

In collaboration with Stacey's Pantry, Key Food, and Stop and Shop Supermarkets, we launched this new ministry providing a monthly service —the next program is set for **Thursday, October 26th from 5PM to 6PM...and Thursday, November 16th from 3-4PM.**

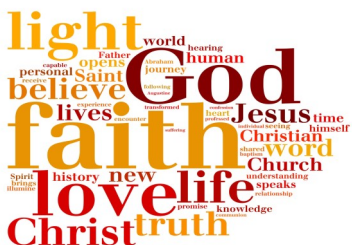


Yes, volunteers are always welcome! What this means is that there is a wonderful opportunity to enrich your lives of service to God and your neighbors. Please contact the Church office either by phone, 718-845-8770, or email stjstm@aol.com and let us know if you have any resources, be it time, talents,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



We need to restock our Food Pantry shelves and are seeking donations of non-perishable cans and packages of food items.

We share an average of 50 bags of food items impacting 150 lives every month !



Now is the time to join our Church family and immerse yourself in ministry. Anyone wishing to be baptized, baptize their child or children, or are longing to become a member of the Church are asked to contact Pastor or the Church office. Our next **New Member Sunday is October 29**—join us at 10 am and give them a warm welcome!



Annual Harvest Festival —Sunday, October 29



We are partnering with Samaritan Purse's International Relief again to spread Christmas joy and hope with children everywhere. Boxes are available in the back of Church.

Last year, we donated 50 gifts!

Please return filled boxes by Sunday, November 12 .



Sunday Worship: 10:00 am
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Contact us by Mail:
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 Office Email: stjstm@aol.com
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