



Garden City Community Church Connections March 2025

Building a community where all are enriched
through Christian Love, Service, and Spiritual Renewal.

A Message from Pastor John Livingston

The other day I picked up a packet of flower seeds. The directions on the packet of seeds read: *Seeds need darkness to germinate.* During the month of March we are in the season of Lent. Lent, metaphorically speaking, is a time of darkness. It is a time of wilderness.

You won't find "Lent" in the Bible. The season of Lent was established well after biblical times. The concept is based on the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness. The people who gathered for the Council of Nicea in AD 325, felt it would be a good spiritual discipline to have a period of germination time, 40 days, to lead people to the glorious season of Easter. Lent starts with Ash Wednesday, March 5th. If you're doing the math, I remind you the Sundays are not included, they actually remain days of celebration, they are called "little Easters." Lent is intended to be a journey of spiritual discipline. This 40 day season of Lent, this spiritual journey, can help us reflect upon our lives and help us possibly become more aware of the sacred/holy moments, the sacred moments that happen every day.

One of the great minds of the early 1900's was the psychologist. Abraham Maslow. I think one of the wisest things he ever wrote is this: "The great lesson in life is that the sacred is in the ordinary. That the sacred is to be found in one's daily life, in one's neighbors, friends and family, in one's back yard."

We all, at times, take life and love and the people we care about for granted. During the month of March, during the season Lent, take the time to strengthen your spiritual life and renew the relationships in your life. Start each day with a moment of silence thanking God for the gift of life and the people in your life. I share these wonderful words shared by the late Leo Buscaglia.

Starting each day, I promise myself not to try to solve all my life problems at once, nor shall I expect you to do so. Starting each day, I shall try to learn something new about me and about you and about the world I live in, so that I may continue to experience all things as if they had been newly born. Starting each day, I shall remember to communicate my joy as well as my despair, so that we can know each other better. Starting each day, I shall remind myself to really listen to you and to try to hear your point of view and to discover the least-threatening way of giving you mine, remembering that we are both growing and changing in so many ways;

Starting each day, I shall remind myself that I am a human being and not demand perfection of you until I am perfect, so you're safe. Starting each day, I shall try to be more aware of the beautiful things in our world I'll look at the flowers, I'll look at the birds, I'll feel the cool breezes, I'll eat good food -- and I'll share these things with you. Starting each day, I shall remind myself to reach out and touch you, gently, with my words, my eyes and with my embrace, because I don't want to miss anything. Starting each day, I shall dedicate myself again to the process of being a compassionate and loving person and then see what happens. You know, I'm really convinced that if you were to define love, the only word big enough to engulf it all would be "Life." LOVE IS LIFE in all its aspects and if you miss love, you miss life!

Peace,

Pastor John

A Message from Pastor Bonnie McDougall Olson

During Lent many of us choose a particular spiritual practice in preparation for Easter. These practices include prayer, fasting and charity. – or “almsgiving.” All three are ways to focus your attention, reflection and heart towards God and the meaning of your faith. A person could use this time of Lent to donate to a new charity or intentionally reach out to those who are shut in on a weekly basis. Someone else might find meaning in finding a prayer partner and praying together or pray for a specific person they know who is in need of prayer. Perhaps instead of giving up on particular food, we might think about fasting from social media or fasting from texting loved ones in favor of calling them. Another practice is to choose a scripture for each day of Lent and quietly read it and meditate and reflect on it. While the lectionary provides all the daily readings, I thought it might be wonderful to focus on the psalm given for each Sunday and let it “carry us’ through each week until Easter. The readings start with the psalm for Ash Wednesday and follow the Sundays up to Easter. Find a time during the week when you are not running to and fro and the phone is not ringing and you are not squeezing it in.

Even though the psalm may be designated for that particular Sunday you don’t have to read it on that Sunday, you can read it any day that week. It’s not an assignment but an invitation into Lent.

Pastor Bonnie

Ash Wednesday: March 5: Psalm 51: 1-17

Sunday March 9: Psalm 91:1-2 and 9-16

Sunday March 16: Psalm 27

Sunday March 23: Psalm 63:1-8

Sunday March 30: Psalm 32

Sunday April 5: Psalm 126

Sunday April 13: Psalm 118: 1-2 and 19-29



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Worship Schedule

Sundays

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

Tuesdays

Intercessory

Prayer Service

9:30 AM In-person

Wednesday—March 5th at noon

Ash Wednesday service

LICC Emergency Food Pantry Bi-weekly Food Collections

Our next scheduled donation dates are March 5th and March 19th. Please drop off your non-perishable food items on this dates before noon on the Whitehall Blvd. porch. If you want to sign up to be a driver (to deliver our donations), please sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-54023518-2025#/>

In addition to our regular donations we will have a special non-perishable donation during Lent. See the flyer in this paper for more info.



Tuesday Prayer Service

The Prayer Service welcomes anyone who wishes to join us. We are meeting in the chapel Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am. Please email the office if you have a prayer request.

All requests are kept confidential.



Interested in learning more about our church & considering becoming a member? An inquirer's class will be held on March 2nd and March 16th. You are welcome to attend either one. Kindly call the church office at (516) 746-1700 to sign up.



Ash Wednesday, March 5th at 12:00 pm—Chapel
 Palm Sunday, April 13th at 10:30 am—Sanctuary
 Maundy Thursday, April 17th at 7:00 pm—Sanctuary
 Good Friday, April 18th at 12:00 pm—3:00 pm—Chapel open for prayers & Meditation
 Easter Sunday, April 20th at 10:30 am—Sanctuary
 Easter Egg Hunt, April 20th at 11:30 am—Playscape

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School, Communion Class & Youth Groups



On Saturday, March 22nd at 5:00pm we will be having an intergenerational boardgame night. Join us for a night of SNOW MUCH FUN!



Vacation Bible School (VBS) is going to be from June 30th to July 3rd from 9:00 am—noon. The fee for the first camper is \$50 or \$100 for two or more campers in the same family. Please register at: <https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/HotlineHero25>. For more information email Amanda Dias at adias@thegccc.org



This year for Lent the Sunday Schoolers are welcome to fill out the Lenten Boardgames and return them by Easter to get a prize. The boardgame lists activities each child should try and do from Ash Wednesday up until Easter. To get the boardgame or for more information email Amanda Dias at adias@thegccc.org



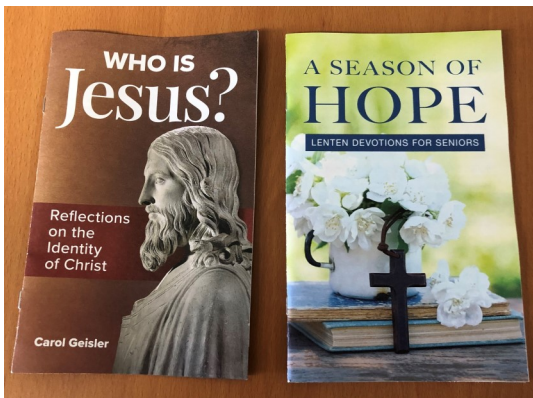
A one hour communion class will be sponsored by Rev. John Livingston on Sunday, March 9th at noon. The Class is open to children in grades 4-7. After they have finished the class they will be able to have their first communion on Sunday April 6th. If you have not yet signed your child up and want to, please contact Amanda Dias at adias@thegccc.org

Men's Breakfast

All men of the church and their visitors are welcome; it is an opportunity to enjoy relaxed fellowship and conversation over a shared meal. **Next meetings are on March 1st and April 5th at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**



Lenten Brochures



We have a limited supply of Lenten brochures that can be found in the church hallway. Please take one if interested.

Sunday Forum

Join us on Sunday, March 30th at 11:45 am in the Parlor to hear church member, Kristian Rhein speak about his faith journey. All are invited to attend.



Worship Ushers or Liturgists Opportunity



Perhaps you love to serve as an usher or liturgist on Sunday morning?

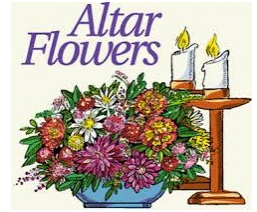
Please call the church office at (516) 746-1700 or email us at churchoffice@thegccc.org.

Here is the link to sign up to be a liturgist:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-54020501-2025>

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

Worship Altar Flower Donations



A \$50.00 dollar donation provides a gift of love! Use this link: <https://www.gardencitycommunitychurch.org/give> and go to the online giving 'quick give' and choose the dropdown line: 'Give to 2025 Flowers' - or - hand deliver or mail to The Garden City Community Church.

Sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-54023564-2025>

Include the wording you wish us to include in the Order of Worship.

2025 Fellowship Hour Sign Up



Hosting Refreshment and Friendship after worship conversation

Perhaps hospitality and hosting are your passion. Schedule two ways: notebook in the Parlor or:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-54023569-2025>

Questions? Call the office at (516) 746-1700 or email churchoffice@thegccc.org

Fund a Refreshment and Friendship conversation time:

<https://www.gardencitycommunitychurch.org/give> and go to the online giving 'quick give' and choose the dropdown line: 'Give to 2025 Fellowship'.

The Chosen—Series Viewing and Discussion

Join us as we watch/discuss Season 2 of 'The Chosen' on Wednesdays, starting at 7:00 pm. At 7:00 pm we will watch the episode together and then at 7:45 pm we will have our group discussion. See the flyer later in this newsletter for more information. All are invited to attend.



EASTER MUSIC 2025

If you would like to donate to enhance the Music Program of our Church, you are invited to contribute to the Music Fund. Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office no later than **Sunday, April 6th**

In memory of: _____

OR

In honor of: _____

Given by: _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____



EASTER PLANTS 2025

We invite you to have Easter plants placed in the Sanctuary in memory of or in honor of loved ones. Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office no later than **Sunday, April 6th**

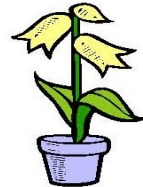
I would like to have an Easter plant in the church this year...

In memory of: _____

OR

In honor of: _____

Given by: _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____



Easter Music and Easter Plants

If you are interested in having Easter Plants in the Sanctuary on Easter in honor or in memory of someone or if you would like to donate to enhance the Music Program of the church, you can either fill out the forms above and submit them to the church office or you can donate online. Deadline for donation requests is Sunday, April 6th.

Easter Music: <https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/8e7d24455>

Easter Plants: <https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/8e7d24884515>



Ash Wednesday Service

Includes the imposition of ashes

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

noon in the Chapel



After the service

you are welcome to join us
for a soup and bread luncheon



Food insecurity is growing on Long Island. According to LI Cares there are 221,000 food insecure Long Islanders, including 69,000 children. This is a significant increase compared to 2023. The surge is due to a multitude of factors including high unemployment rates and the inflation of food prices.

Food pantries now try to give the recipients a choice in the food they receive. Imagine the anxiety a mother may experience if she goes to a food pantry to get food and half the items she is given cannot be eaten by her child due to a peanut allergy. When people are given a choice to select their food, they can feel less anxiety as they know they are picking food their families can and want to eat.

During Lent, we are asked to give up something or to help someone. We can do both by donating food during this Lenten Season. We are asking that each week during this Lenten season you donate non-perishable food items for the pantry if you are able.

Any donation is welcome and appreciated but during each week of Lent we have suggested items.

March 9th - plastic bottles of nut butter (peanut butter, almond butter, etc.) and jelly

March 16th – any kind of pasta and pasta sauce, 1-2 pound bags/boxes of rice

March 23rd – canned items (fruit, soup, vegetables), shelf stable milk

March 30th – toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, feminine products, razors, shampoo, conditioner)

April 6th – canned meats/fish (chicken, spam, Vienna sausage, tuna, salmon)

April 13th – Palm Sunday – all sizes of diapers, baby supplies (wipes, lotions), formula, baby food

April 20th – Easter Sunday – dry cereal (cold), hot cereal (grits, oatmeal)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT. IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED.

Please leave your donated items in any of our food donation boxes located throughout the building on the first floor.

Donation bags are located in the church hallway if you choose to take one.

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE



HAVE YOU CHANGED ANY OF YOUR CORRESPONDENCE INFORMATION LATELY?

Moving or preparing to move?

Do you have a new address, a new phone number or a new e-mail address?

Do you want to receive our weekly e-blasts about all the activities going on in the church?

Are you getting the mailings from the church?

Please let the church office know if any of your information has changed so that we can stay in touch with you! We are updating our files and want to make sure we have the correct information.

News About the Building

Kristian and Joe have painted the stairwell down to Gardner Hall, part of the Sanctuary, Kensington room and part of the Narthex. Lots of snow removal! They speed buffed the floors, repaired the heaters after they repaired the broken circulator pump. They also repaired damage in the Community Room. Wow—what a busy month!!



GC Community Church Tech Team

We are looking for youth (and the otherwise young-at-heart) to contribute to bringing our weekly services, special services, and other content to our homebound and our away-from-home members. This is also our chance to reach out to those seeking a new church home. But we cannot do this alone, we need your help, or your children's help in making this happen. Absolutely no experience required, and while we will guide newcomers, we will also gladly take advice from the old sages.

Contact Steve Short, Tim Martens, or William Stone

Or Just join us some Sunday, in the balcony



Musical Ensembles September through June

Adult Choir – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm.



Youth Choir – Open to grades 3-5. Rehearsal are Sundays from noon to 12:30pm. Performs 1 Sunday a month at the 10:30 am service before Sunday School dismissal.



Handbell Choir – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 6:45 pm – 7:45 pm in modules. Performs 4 times a year.



Youth Band – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are 1-2 Saturday mornings per month. Performs 1 Sunday or Special Occasion per month.



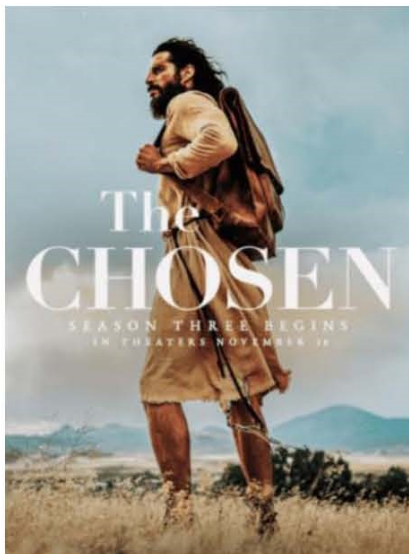
For more information contact Frank Crosio, Minister of Music at music@thegccc.org

Season 2: The Chosen

Wednesdays at 7pm

Please join our dedicated and faithful “Chosen” group to expand your knowledge about Jesus’ teachings, explore your faith and enjoy fellowship with other church and community members.

All are Welcome!!



Season 1: Jesus met his Disciples

Season 2: Disciples learn to work as a community and follow Jesus focusing on the struggles they encounter working together

7:00pm: watch episode together

7:45pm: group discussion

If you cannot join us at 7:00 pm, we encourage you to watch the series at home (free on Prime Video or <https://watch.thechosen.tv/page/seasons%201-3>) and join us at 7:45 pm for a group discussion. Questions: contact Karin Melkonian (karinmelkonian@gmail.com)

March



2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Men's Breakfast 8am Carle Place Diner
2 Service/Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Inquirers Meeting 11:30am Middle School Youth Group 6pm Confirmation II class 7pm	3	4 Prayer Service 9:30am	5 Ash Wednesday Ash Wednesday Service/Lunch 12pm The Chosen 7pm	6 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	7	8
9 Daylight Saving Time Starts Service/Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Communion Class 12pm Confirmation II class 7pm	10 Prayer Service 9:30am	11 The Chosen 7pm	12 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	13	14	15
16 Service/Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Inquirers Meeting 11:30am Ministry Meeting 12:00pm Middle School Youth Group 6pm Confirmation II class 7pm	17 F&A Meeting 7pm	18 Prayer Service 9:30am	19 The Chosen 7pm	20 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	21 Confirmation II Retreat 6pm	22 Confirmation II Retreat Intergenerational Game Night 5pm
23 Service/Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am High School Youth Group 6pm Confirmation II class 7pm	24 Prayer Service 9:30am	25 The Chosen 7pm	26 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	27	28	29
30 Service/Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Sunday Forum 11:45am Middle School Youth Group 6pm Confirmation II class 7pm	31					