



Garden City Community Church Connections February 2025

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

A Message from Pastor Bonnie McDougall Olson

Dear friends,

It is winter. The skies are a little grayer. The sun is a little sleepier. The trees look bare, their leaves long swept away. The frozen ground crunches under our feet. The bright, vivid colors of spring bulbs, flowers and trees is missing. We look at the trees and, from all appearances, their charcoal limbs and trunks look frozen solid. It is hard to imagine life hums below the surface. What we see is never a complete picture.

One of my favorite children's books is *The Carrot Seed* written by Ruth Krauss. The book features very simple drawings by Crockett Johnson. The book is about a little boy who plants a carrot seed. His mother tells him the seed won't grow. His father tells him it won't grow and his brother tells him it won't grow. But every day the little boy pulls up the weeds around the plant and sprinkles water on the soil. One day the carrot plant came up.

Sometimes our efforts and care take time to yield results. We can lose our motivation. We can doubt what we are doing. We can simply grow tired, especially if we feel we are the only ones expending any effort. The little boy could have easily given up on the carrot when his family members told him his efforts were in vain. They would have been right if the little boy had not been faithful by carefully removing the weeds that would have prevented its growth. They would have been right if the little boy didn't nurture the plant with water. They would have been right had the little boy not trusted and believed that his plant would grow.

I wonder how such a simple little story can teach us so much about living out the Gospel together as a church.

Faith, hope and love,

Pastor Bonnie McDougall Olson

A Message from Pastor John Livingston

As we approach the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 23rd I share this interesting and meaningful illustration, "The Sense of a Goose."

When you see geese flying along in "V" formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone — and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those people who are headed the same way we are.

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, whether with people or with geese flying south. Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What messages do we give when we honk from behind? Finally — and this is important — when a goose gets sick or is wounded, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly again and only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their group.

If we have the "sense of a goose," we will stand by each other like that.

The strength of The Garden City Community Church is in the people of this church. In order for the ministry and mission of the church to grow stronger we need more goose sense! When you are asked to help out in anyway, I encourage to say, "YES!" I encourage you to "HONK" your loudest! I encourage you to be part of the GCCC "V" Formation! It's the only way to fly! Let's go! Let's take off!

Peace,

Pastor John Livingston



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Worship Schedule

Sundays

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

Tuesdays

Intercessory

Prayer Service

9:30 AM In-person

Annual Corporate Meeting

In accordance with the Religious Corporation Laws of the State of New York, and the by-laws of the Garden City Community Church, notice is hereby given of the Annual Corporate Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 23, 2025 at noon following the 10:30 am Worship Service.

The purpose of the meeting will be:

- to elect successors to the trustees;
- to act on the church budget for 2025;
- to elect a slate of officers for 2025;
- to conduct any other business that may properly be presented at that time.

Business at the Annual Meeting will include voting on proposed changes to the Bylaws:

- 1) Remove 2/3 voting requirement for calling or removing ministers (change to majority), which aligns with the religious corporation laws and prior versions of the Bylaws.
- 2) Make Information Officer and Treasurer voting members of the Council of Trustees

The specific text of the proposed changes will be distributed in advance.

The meeting will be in person and via Zoom if you are unable to be there in person. To register to attend the Zoom meeting go to: <https://gccc.breezechms.com/form/61c92f148119744836>



On Sundays, February 9th and 16th you will have a chance to review/ask questions about this year's budget and about other Business of the Annual Meeting (possible by-law changes.) The meetings will be held after the 10:30 am worship service. The meeting on the 9th will be in the Kensington Room and the meeting on the 16th will be in the Sanctuary. All are invited to attend.

LICC Emergency Food Pantry

Bi-weekly Food Collections



Our next scheduled donation dates are February 5th and 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#/>



Help Requested for our Christian Ed Team

The Christian Ed Team is looking for 2 adult volunteers to host a Sunday Funday on Sunday, February 16th in lieu of Sunday School. Volunteers will have to supervise the children, but activity and materials will be provided. If you are interested, please contact Amada at adas@thegccc.org



Interested in learning more about our church & considering becoming a member? An inquirer's class will be forming. Kindly call the church office at (516) 746-1700 to sign up.

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.



MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School & Youth Groups



On Feb. 2nd the Sunday School will be going Ice Skating at the Long Beach Municipal Ice Arena. We will be going right after church! Entrance Fee is \$10 and skate rental is \$5. There are walkers available for those who need one on a first come first serve basis for \$5 each.



The Sunday School will be making Valentines for the homebound of the church if you would like to deliver some of these valentines to our homebound , please contact Amanda, adidas@thegccc.org.



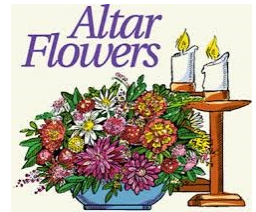
The Christian Ed team is planning on having an INTERGENERATIONAL BOARD GAME NIGHT in March so please keep an eye out for more information to come within the month!

This month the Sunday School will continue going through the SparkHouse curriculum. We will learn more about the teaching of Jesus. We will continue with the story of Mary and Martha.

The Middle School youth group will be covering the teachings of Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, while we work through the Holy Troublemakers curriculum.

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

We will begin watching/discussing Season 2 of 'The Chosen' on Wed. Feb. 5th 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.



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 February 1st and March 1st at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**



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>



Tuesday morning intercessory prayer service

has new facilitator—GCCC member Rev. Kitt Von Braunsberg

Reverend Kitt Von Braunsberg, who has twenty years of service as a certified clinical chaplain and pastoral counselor, has agreed to serve as the new facilitator of the weekly intercessory prayer service. This prayer service is held in the chapel every Tuesday morning at 9:30 am. Those attending the service pray out loud the prayer requests which are submitted on the yellow cards found in the pews, and those mentioned directly to a pastor. All prayer concerns are kept strictly confidential.

Rev. Kitt offers an “extravagant welcome to all to come and see and give it a try.” Continuing, she adds, “Invoking the healing power of Jesus, we pray and are witness to his Holy working with us and through us. We become the ‘Pray-ers’ awakened in awareness and compassion to effectuate healing in our daily lives. With God’s grace, we come closer to living authentically as the body of Christ in support of all its members.”

Come join us in prayer and discussion of the weekly scripture readings. And as Kitt encourages us, “Grow with us in your love of Jesus – it will be an hour well spent!”



Please join the Mineola Choral Society as they perform
their Winter Concert - For The Beauty . . . The Music of John Rutter.

This concert is honoring our beloved Karen Zalewski
who was the president of the Mineola Choral Society for many years.

Mineola Choral Society

Dr. Meg Messina, Conductor

Join us for our Winter Concert

For the Beauty...The Music of John Rutter

Featuring his beautiful *Requiem* and beloved classics including
For the Beauty of the Earth and *Down By the Riverside*

Sunday, February 2, 2025, 3 PM

Corpus Christi Church, 155 Garfield Avenue, Mineola

Tickets: \$25

To order, scan the QR Code or visit
www.mineolachoralsociety.org



Let There Be Peace on Earth

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 pews and the area by the elevator in basement. They have also replaced missing ceiling tiles, insulated walls and windows that were allowing cold air in and finished the repair and painting of the ceiling in the men's bathroom.



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

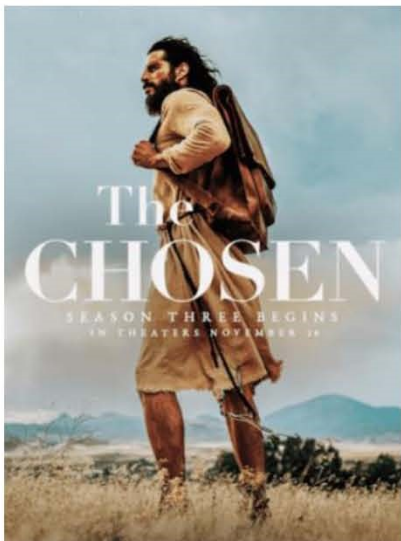


Season 2: The Chosen

Beginning Wednesday Feb. 5, 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 make join us, we encourage you to watch the series at home (free on Prime Video or <https://watch.thechosen.tv/page/seasons%201-3>). Questions: contact Karin Melkonian (karinmelkonian@gmail.com)

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



Sat Feb 1 Queens Theatre

7 pm cocktails, 8 pm showtime

Tix & more info at willsingforfood.org

a charity concert to benefit:



Community Adventures – A Super-FUN Summer Program

The holidays are behind us and It's frosty and cold outside - Time to start making summer plans!!

Registration will begin for the Nursery School's summer program – Community Adventures on Monday, February 3, 2025.

Community Adventures is a program designed to keep bodies busy and minds moving while providing a safe, loving environment where children feel free to explore, learn and most importantly, PLAY.

Community Adventures meets for 4 sessions beginning in July.

Each session meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:15 - 12:15 - July 8 through July 31.

Tuition: \$160.00 per session - MINIMUM enrollment - 2 (1 week) sessions.

Children who are entering a 3 or 4 year old program or kindergarten in the fall are eligible to attend.

Registration is open to all. Visit our website to download the registration form and for more information about Community Adventures & the Community Church Nursery School:
www.GCCCNURSERY SCHOOL.com or call the school office – 516-746-1756.



February



2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Men's Breakfast Carle Place Diner 8:00 am
2 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	3	4 Prayer Service 9:30 am Council of Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	5 Food Donation drop off - noon The Chosen - series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	6 Adult Choir 8:00 pm	7	8
9 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Annual Budget/By-law Presentation 11:30 am Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	10	11 Prayer Service 9:30 am	12 The Chosen - series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	13 Adult Choir 8:00 pm	14	15
16 Sunday Service 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am NOT SCHEDULED Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Annual Budget/By-law Presentation 11:30 am Ministry Meeting 12:00 pm Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm NOT SCHEDULED	17 Church Office closed for President's Day	18 Prayer Service 9:30 am	19 Food Donation drop off - noon The Chosen - series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	20 Adult Choir 8:00 pm	21	22
23 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Annual Meeting 12:00 pm Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	24	25 Prayer Service 9:30 am	26 The Chosen - series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	27 Adult Choir 8:00 pm	28	



FEBRUARY 2025

NOW WITH SECURE, VIRTUAL COUNSELING SESSIONS
AVAILABLE FOR ANY NEW YORK RESIDENT

Prepared especially for LCC Congregations & Schools

Do You Value Yourself Enough?

Rev. Dr. Ronald Lehenbauer, D.Min, LMFT, LCC Staff Psychotherapist

I'm guessing that many of us don't value ourselves enough. Someone may be thinking, "I doubt that! I know lots of people with big egos who seem to value themselves too much." Or someone else may be thinking, "God doesn't want us to self-righteously overvalue ourselves. God wants us to be humble and confess our faults and sins." But I'm thinking that God wants most of us to value ourselves more.

There's no doubt about how much God values each one of us! The whole Bible and countless verses in it testify to that foundational truth. God, our Creator, who created us in God's own image, says, "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands." (Isaiah 40:15-16) Jesus, of course, is the ultimate proof of how much we are valued by God. Before his suffering and death for us Jesus said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love" (St. John 15:9).

It's possible to train our minds to automatically go to our personal "Core Value" that takes us to a place of healing and compassion.

This is the core value that every human being is born with. You are precious, unique, of infinite and eternal and unchanging value, good, beautiful, lovable, and full of potential. And nothing and no one can take your core value from you, or diminish it the least little bit (see Romans 8:35-39). But we can get out-of-touch with our core value – lose sight of it – who we are as a child of God. And that can get us into a lot of trouble.

When we lose our temper or have a burst of anger ... or when we strike out at our spouse in the midst of a highly emotional argument ... or when we lose control of an addiction of one kind or another ... or when we are feeling depressed or feeling over-anxious about something ... or when we're feeling very resentful toward someone whom we feel has mistreated us ... those are all signs that WE ARE NOT VALUING OURSELVES ENOUGH.

Anger, anxiety, and other out-of-control negative emotions and thoughts are often automatic coping defenses our human minds use to help us cope with core hurts we are experiencing. Those core hurts (like feeling powerless or not-good-enough or unlovable or shame or worthless, etc.) are too painful for us to feel very long. Believing these core hurts obviously means that we are devaluing ourselves. They separate us from our core value. So our minds – to help us handle our core hurts – automatically protect us with those negative thoughts, emotions and behaviors – often called a "fight or flight" response. And too often those responses are not in our best interest or helpful in our relationships.

The solution is to learn how to self-regulate our emotions. Easier said than done! But it is possible to train our minds to automatically go to our personal core value when our core hurts are triggered. And that automatically takes us to a place of healing and compassion – for ourselves and toward others.

I've learned about what I'm sharing here from Dr. Steven Stosny, a well-known psychologist who has treated over 6,000 people with anger, resentment, and other relationship problems. He has developed a therapeutic process which can train our brain to self-regulate our emotions in this way. I use it myself and help others to learn it. Many have found it beneficial. It includes creating a personal Core Value bank for yourself. As you make withdrawals from time to time, the marvelous thing is that the balance never goes down from this bank. (You may want to pick up one of Dr. Stosny's many books, like "Soar Above: How to Use the Most Profound Part of Your Brain Under Any Kind of Stress".)

Most of us don't want our lives centered around our core hurts and negative thinking and emotions – a weak mode-of-self. We want our lives centered in our God-given core value – a power mode-of-self. One of our goals at the Lutheran Counseling Center is to assist individuals, couples and families, learn to do just that.

[Ronald Lehenbauer](#), DMin, MDiv, LMFT, is a NY state licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, providing counseling for adults and couples. For an appointment or for more information, call the Lutheran Counseling Center at 516-741-0994 or 1-800-317-1173 or e-mail us at Center@lccny.org.