



Garden City Community Church Connections

July 2025

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

A Message from Pastor Bonnie McDougall Olson

Dear Friends

Someone once said that we don't see things as they are but from where we are. Our life experience is the filter through which we interpret the world around us. In a sense, we have difficulty in seeing beyond ourselves and how our experience has taught us things work. For the most part this is a good thing. It only becomes problematic when we fail to recognize that our vision will always be limited. This is especially true in our relationship with God. If we grew up in the church, we have, in many ways, been taught what we are to believe. Our Sunday school lessons, the hymns we sang and the sermons we heard all shaped our faith. It laid a foundation for us as we launched into the world. The safety and the assurance of God-with-us was tested. Some of us walked away, leaving Sunday School and church as a relic of childhood. But the world kept testing us. Life experiences, sometimes very difficult ones, began to chip away at the notion that we had our lives and relationships all figured out. Maybe it was losing a job, or a break in a friendship or maybe just an inner hunger for something they can't name.

A pastor told a story of a young man who came to his office. "Pastor, I feel I have to tell you something. I have been a part of this church for a long time. I even went through confirmation...but I have to say, I just don't believe anymore. I mean I love the church and all but I think all that stuff about God, well, it's good and all but I'm an adult now. I just wanted to let you know." "I see," the pastor said and took a moment to think about what the young man said before he responded. "I understand," the pastor replied. The young man's eyes filled up as he hugged the pastor goodbye.

The pastor closed his office door and sat down and smiled. He had heard similar stories before. He had heard many a story of folks whose faith had been challenged by the crises in their lives, far worse than this young man's doubts. As a pastor, it wasn't helpful to remind any one of them what they should believe about God's love and grace or even that faith has its ups and downs. They would discover these things on their own, in God's time. He knew God's faithfulness to them far exceeded any doubts they had. He knew that as far as they could try and walk away from God, God would never leave them or forsake them. That was what made the pastor smile.

Pastor Bonnie

A Message from Pastor John Livingston

On Sunday June 29th the Lectionary scripture passage was from Paul's letter to the Galatians, the chapter in which he writes about the *fruits of the Spirit*. *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*(Galatians 5:22-23)

During my message I encouraged those listening to live the "fruits of the Spirit" as they move through their everyday lives. Each one of them are important virtues, however I believe practicing "kindness" can lead to living all the others.

I love this quote from the Dalai Lama, *"Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."*

He also said, *"My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness."*

Here are five thoughts on "kindness" to help you during the summer months.

1) Kindness makes us happier, more joyful.

When we do something kind for someone else, we feel good. On a spiritual level, many people feel that this is because it is the right thing to do and so we're tapping into something deep and profound inside us that says, "This is who I am and it's good" On a biochemical level, it is believed that the good feeling we get is due to elevated levels of dopamine in the brain, so we get a natural high, often referred to as "Helper's High."

2) Kindness gives us healthier hearts.

Acts of kindness are often accompanied by emotional warmth. Emotional warmth produces the a certain hormone in the brain and throughout the body. This Oxytocin causes the release of a chemical in blood vessels, which expands the blood vessels. This reduces blood pressure.

3) Kindness can slow the aging process.

One study that used the Tibetan Buddhist Monks' lovingkindness meditation found that kindness and compassion did, in fact, reduce inflammation in the body which is good for the heart and therefore could help us live longer.

4) Kindness makes for better relationships.

This is one of the most obvious points. We all know that we like people who show us kindness. This is because kindness reduces the emotional distance between two people, so we feel more "bonded." When we are kind to each other, we feel a connection, and new relationships are established, or existing ones strengthened.

5) Kindness is contagious.

Saint Teresa said, *"Kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are truly endless."*

When we're kind, we inspire others to be kind, and it actually creates a ripple effect that spreads outwards to others and still others beyond that. Just as a pebble creates waves when it is dropped in a pond, so acts of kindness ripple outwards, touching others' lives and inspiring kindness everywhere the wave goes.

Perhaps Emerson's words say it best, *"You cannot do a kindness too soon for you never know how soon it will be too late!"*

Peace,

Pastor John



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Worship Schedule

Sundays

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

Tuesdays

Intercessory

Prayer Service

9:30 AM In-person

The GCCC **goes to a...** **DUCKS GAME**



The Ducks **VS** **The Stormers**

Saturday July 12th
06:35 PM
At: 3 Court House Drive
Central Islip, NY 11722

\$22
Per Person

RSVP by July 3rd with Amanda, adiaz@thegccc.org

Lobster Fest

Saturday, July 26, 2025

6pm

Garden City Community Church

Rain or Shine

\$50 per person

(chicken option available)

Payment due when reservation is made

Pay by check to GCCC or by QR code

RSVP: July 11, 2025



Bring your own beverage

Wine, beer, soda

(water will be provided)

Live Entertainment!!

Door Prizes!!

For more information please contact:

Jan Levine

(516) 965-4559

Or

Alice Melkonian

(516) 741-6675

alicemelkonian24@gmail.com

Please return form below with payment

Name: _____

of Guests: _____

Please check one:

Lobster _____

Chicken _____



Upcoming Americana Fair Meeting

There will be an Americana Fair meeting on Sunday, July 13, 2025 at 11:45 am in the Kensington Room for all chairs/volunteers and anyone who may be curious to find out what we do and how they can help. All are invited to attend.



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.



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 July 5th and August 2nd at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**



LICC Emergency Food Pantry Bi-weekly Food Collections

Our next scheduled donation dates are **July 9th and 23rd**. Please drop off your non-perishable food items on this dates before noon on the Whitehall Blvd. porch. **School is out and breakfast items for kids are especially needed as they aren't getting breakfast at school.**

- They are in need of: dry cereal (cold), Hot cereal (grits, oatmeal),
- canned vegetables,
- plastic bottles of jelly,
- any kind of soup, pasta, pasta sauce,
- 1 or 2 pound bags of rice,
- shelf stable milk,
- canned meats (chicken, spam, Vienna sausage)
- toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, feminine products, razors, shampoo, Conditioner)
- all sizes of baby diapers.



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#/>

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School & Group Activities



The whole church is welcome to attend our next family event! July 12th. We will be going to a Duck's baseball game. **Please RSVP by July 3rd**. It is sure to be a great time. The Duck's will be playing the Stormers. There will be fireworks after the game! Tickets will be \$22 a person. Please RSVP with Amanda, adidas@thegccc.org



Thank you to everyone who volunteered and is helping out with Vacation Bible School there are still a few more days left so please feel free to stop by if you have time to volunteer!



Save the Date: Sept. 13th we will be having our annual Outdoor movie night thanks to the Piotrowski family again!

Save the Date: Sept. 14th will be Welcome Day! Come celebrate the start of Sunday School with us!



The Christian Ed team is looking for youth group co leaders! We had some amazing co-leaders this past year! We need volunteers to help run Middle School and High School Youth Group. It is a truly rewarding experience! For more information about the programs please contact Amanda Dias, adidas@thegccc.org. GCCC has had a long standing tradition of running a beautiful two-year Confirmation program. We would love to continue this wonderful tradition, but we are in need of YOUR HELP! We are looking for Confirmation Leaders to help guide our youth through the program. We meet once a week starting in October. For more information, please contact Amanda Dias, adidas@thegccc.org

The GCCC is excited at the prospect of bringing back a major youth program to the church. Our Whole Lives, OWL, is a program that teaches our youth to adapt to an ever-changing landscape of relationships, social media, and society. We are looking for excited volunteers to help run this program. If you would like to be part of this program, please contact Amanda Dias, adidas@thegccc.org.

Sunday Forums for Fall of 2025
will meet in the Parlor after the 10:30 a.m. Services



The 2025 - 2026 forums will offer programs for Spiritual Enhancement, through Faith Journeys and educational materials

Watch for relevant topics and book discussion to be led by guests who are experts in their field

Dates will be announced during the Summer

“Planned Giving,” by an Elder Law and Estate Planning Attorney in Queens NY

Book Discussion

“Taken No More: Protecting Your Children Against Traffickers and Cults”

The New Book by Robin Boyle-Laisure, JD

Release date on November 13, Pre-order available

Early Spring Forum: European Trip in search of Pagan Roman Temples going back to 300 AD
 in the emergence of Christianity

If you are interested in leading a forum, please contact the churchoffice@thegccc.org

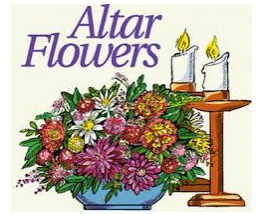
Cornhole Tournament—RECAP

10 teams competed in our first Church Cornhole Tournament. All ages were represented - from our youngest congregants up to our valued senior members. A beautiful lunch was donated from three Garden City businesses: Smok-Haus, Guac Shop, and Biledo's Key Food. The Meehan family donated drinks and the Melkonian family provided dessert. Max Hill came in first place, the Melkonian team was a close 2nd, and the Meehan team came in 3rd place. Prizes were donated by The Burger Spot, Tony's Tacos, and Matty's Toy Stop. It was a joyous afternoon spent outside in fellowship. Thank you to all who came and joined in on the fun!



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>

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'.

Worship Ushers or Liturgists Opportunity

Perhaps you would 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>



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 balcony staircases, power washed the outside staircase and the back of the church. They stripped/waxed 3 rooms and painted the choir pews & the outside front church entryway.



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

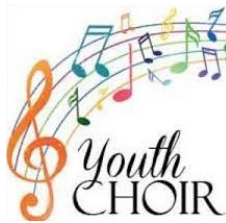


Musical Ensembles September through June

Adult Choir – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm.



Youth/Church School Choir – Open to grades 3-5. Rehearses during Church School. Performs at the 10:30 am service before Church School dismissal.



Handbell Choir – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are planned in modules before each performance. Performs 4 times a year.



Youth Band – Open to grades 8-12 and college students. Performs on special occasions.



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



JULY 2025

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

Prepared especially for LCC Congregations & Schools

Fostering Hope and Resilience in a Post-Covid World

By Elizabeth Geiling, LMHC, Ph.D., LCC Executive Director

*The following are highlights of Dr. Geiling's May 21st presentation
as part of the The Merlin Rehm Lecture Series, Village Lutheran Church, Bronxville, NY.*

1. Connection

Humans are social creatures and our desire to connect is hardwired. It is as important as food, water and medical care.

Brain imaging can show us the difference between the socially engaged brain as well as when we are not engaged. Evidently, when we finish doing something non-social, our social network turns back on immediately. Our brains default mode is set to social.

2. Mistakenly Seeking Solitude – What gets in our way?

Researcher Nick Epley and Julianna Schroeder conducted a study that investigated social connection on the morning commute. We hope for a seat by ourselves and if we can't get one, please God, let me sit with a person who does not chat.

The research suggests that people avoid social connection with strangers because we believe it will be awkward or uncomfortable, when in fact, both commuters (initiator and participant) reported a more positive experience in their morning commute when they engaged in conversation.

Are you Mistakenly Seeking Solitude?

Resilience Tip: Sit with folks and engage, it will make everyone happier.

3. Relationships, Relationships, Relationships – The Harvard Study of Happiness

A study that began in 1938 that focused on leading healthy and happy lives. In the 80 years of data, people who were most satisfied with their relationships at 50 were the healthiest at age 80! Loneliness kills. It is as powerful an impact as smoking or alcoholism. Taking care of your body is important, but taking care of your relationships is just as important. And, long held grudges are damaging to your health and well-being. Holding a grudge is the equivalent of drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

Fixing your relationships is critical. You might be absolutely correct, but all alone. Is it worth your energy and health to police the truth? Will it change the outcome?

4. Benefits of Close Relationships

- Increased happiness
- Provide Support in day to day living
- Increased longevity
- Serve as a protective factor helping to delay physical and cognitive decline.

Elizabeth Geiling PhD, LMHC, LPC. – is LCC's Executive Director. Betty's work experience includes counseling for college, community and school related concerns for individuals or groups. Her counseling practice includes early childhood, adolescents, early, middle and late adulthood, and couples. Call the Lutheran Counseling Center at 516-741-0994 or 1-800-317-1173 or e-mail us at Center@lccny.org for more information or to set an appointment.

July



2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Vacation Bible School 9am Prayer Service 9:30 am	2 Vacation Bible School 9am	3 Vacation Bible School 9am	4 Office closed	5 Men's Breakfast Carle Place Diner 8:00 am
6 Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am	7 Prayer Service 9:30 am	8 Food Donation drop off - noon	9 Food Donation drop off - noon	10	11 Duck Game 6:35 pm	12
13 Mission Trip Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Americana Fair Meeting 11:45 am	14 Mission Trip Prayer Service 9:30 am	15 Mission Trip	16 Mission Trip	17 Mission Trip	18 Mission Trip	19 Mission Trip
20 Mission Trip Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Ministry Meeting – 12pm	21 Prayer Service 9:30 am	22 Food Donation drop off - noon	23 Food Donation drop off - noon	24	25 Lobster Fest 6 pm	26
27 Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am	28 Prayer Service 9:30 am	29	30	31		