



Garden City Community Church Connections

April 2025

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

A Message from Pastor Bonnie McDougall Olson

I still remember my shoes: shiny liquid black patent leather with a buckled strap that was so hard to fasten. All too often, the strap would make it half way through and my mom would declare, “Don’t worry they’ll stay on! We have to leave.” It was Easter Sunday and any kid who grew up in the church knew this was a serious day. My family dressed to “the nines.” There was no thought of complaining that you didn’t want to go. You couldn’t pack any Cheerios to snack on or think for a minute that you could color in the church bulletin that day. And, of course, no squabbling in the back seat of the car with your sibling on the way there. It was Easter and such things, well, just weren’t supposed to happen on Easter Sunday! Even my parents were different on Easter Sunday. I can’t exactly say how except that they too were dressed up and seemed quieter than they seemed to be on other Sundays. Of course, the church was also dressed up, and there was special music that everybody seemed to sing with more gusto than usual. And the pews were packed shoulder to shoulder with ladies wearing big colorful hats and men in spiffy suits as if they were going to a wedding.

As a little kid, it felt like a mixture between a great seriousness mixed in with a lot of celebration at the same time. Now, years after Sunday School, elementary and high school religion classes and eventually seminary, I must say that my original perception of Easter still fits: a great seriousness mixed in with a lot of celebration! Something that should keep you from squabbling and complaining. Something that makes you want to dress “to the nines” and even struggle to put your patent leather shoes on. Something that makes the grownups sing like they are auditioning for the Met, and nobody raises an eyebrow. That’s what Easter does. Easter calls us out from our “regular, normal” everyday lives and invites us into the very heart of God’s love for us. Christ’s death and resurrection defies our human attempts to comprehend such love. Scholars write tomes trying to explain, define, prove and disprove the historical “facts” of Easter. Theologians wax long and hard on their theories of atonement, sin and redemption through the CROSS. Whether we are scholars or theologians, we, too, come with our own questions. But then there are those times when the chaos of the world is hushed and for that moment, we know deep in our soul, God’s claim on our lives.

Times when we look at the world around us and see that "the Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone but in every leaf in springtime" as Luther wrote. Times when we have felt the very bottom of our lives have dropped out, and palpable peace descends on us that we can't explain. "Times when we have shared at the Table and have known the presence of Christ." Such times are but glimmers in our journey where we can only see through a "glass darkly" (1 Cor. 13:12.) They draw us into the heart of God's love in Christ, where only love remains and questions no longer matter.

Pastor Bonnie

A Message from Pastor John Livingston

I love the line in Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* spoken by Emily, "Does anyone ever realize life while they live it...every, every minute?"

April is one of my favorite months. Why? Well, this year we celebrate Easter in April, a joyous time of rebirth, renewal and resurrection! Every April I celebrate my wife, Judi's birthday on April 15th. Also, during April is Earth Day (April 22)

April is a month to "realize life" and offer thanks to God for the gift of life.

I hope the following poem by Helen Steiner Rice will help you celebrate the month of April with a renewed appreciation for life "every, every minute!"

Springtime is a season
Of hope and joy and cheer.
There's beauty all around us
To see and touch and hear.
So, no matter how downhearted
And discouraged we may be,
New hope is born when we behold
Leaves on a budding tree,
Or when we see a timid flower
Push through the frozen sod
And open wide in glad surprise
Its petaled eyes to God,
For this is just God saying:
"Lift up your eyes to Me,
And the bleakness of your spirit,
Like the budding Springtime tree,
Will lose its wintry darkness
And your heavy heart will sing" –
For God never sends the Winter
Without the joy of Spring.

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

To the GCCC Congregation-

We have been a busy congregation so far this year! In addition to the usual services and other activities the congregation voted to approve the 2025 budget, welcomed new and returning volunteers and voted to amend some of the by-laws. The Search and Call committee successfully implemented the diversity survey and is deep in preparation of our call document. We are blessed to have two amazing ministers guiding us during this transition time. These are all excellent signs of progress!

However, 2025 is not without challenges. GCCC, like many churches, has fewer people pledging financial support but expenses continue to grow. And while the posting for our new minister should go up soon, we don't know how long it will take to find the right candidate. Despite the uncertainty I remain optimistic and grateful. I am seeing new faces in the pews on Sundays and the return of familiar faces. We have volunteers who have stepped away from their roles but are NOT stepping away from the church. We have new people joining as volunteers bringing fresh perspectives and renewed energy. Last weekend we set our clocks forward one hour or in other words we "spring forward" so from here, it's lighter and warmer every day. I would like to think the same applies for GCCC, that we too are lighter and more warmhearted every day.

Let's step forward together. Peace.

Kirsten Bahlke

Council of Trustees Chairperson



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**

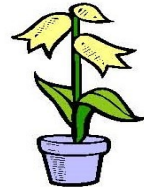
I would like to have an Easter plant in the church this year...

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>





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)

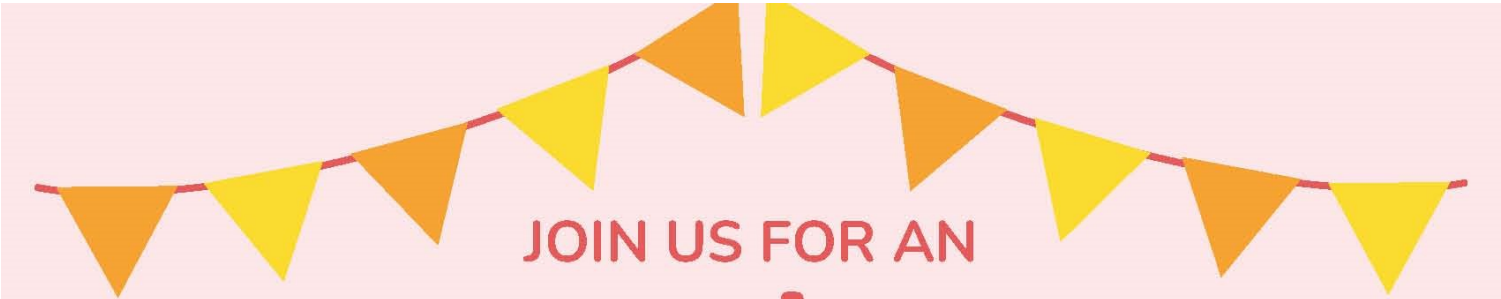
April 13th – Palm Sunday – all sizes of diapers, baby supplies (wipes, lotions), formula, baby food

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.



JOIN US FOR AN
**Easter
Egg Hunt**



April 20th, 2025
after the 10:30 a.m.
service

Bring your own basket
and be ready to hunt!



LICC Emergency Food Pantry Bi-weekly Food Collections

Our next scheduled donation dates are April 2nd, 16th and 30th. 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.



Junior Leaders still needed for this year's Mission Trip

The trip will be from July 13th —19th and they will be going to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. If interested or if you need more information please contact Jill Frain at jillfrain@gmail.com



Palm Sunday, April 13th at 10:30 am—Sanctuary
 Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service (extinguishing of the lights) on 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 Sunrise Service at 6:30 am—church lawn
 Easter Sunday, April 20th at 10:30 am—Sanctuary (prelude starts 15 minutes prior to service time)
 Easter Egg Hunt, April 20th at 11:30 am (after the service) —Playscape

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School, Communion Class & Youth Groups



This month the Sunday School will be continuing their journey towards Easter learning about the importance of Lent for the church. They will be singing for the congregation on Palm Sunday. Come join us as we celebrate Jesus coming into Jerusalem.

We will also be having our annual Easter egg hunt in the church playscape after our 10:30 am Easter Sunday service. Bring your own baskets and be ready to hunt! For more information email Amanda Dias at adias@thegccc.org



Our communion class will be having their first communion on Sunday, April 6th at 10:30 am. Please come support our kids as they join the rest of the congregation in this blessed sacrament.



We just had our Confirmation Retreat! We have 9 wonderful students on their journey to Confirmation. We ask for your continued prayers as we come to an end of the class and the kids start their lives as members of the church. Confirmation Sunday will be on May 4th so please make sure to mark your calendar.

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School, Communion Class & Youth Groups



This month's Middle School Youth Group meetings are on April 13th and April 27th. The Middle School Youth Group will be learning about Kaitlin Curtice and how we relate to the world around us! Kaitlin Curtice is a proud Native American woman and an accomplished author and poet. She is known for talking about how spirituality helped her make peace with her identity. We hope to see you our middle schoolers there!



The Mission Trip students are planning a Bingo/Game Night Fundraiser to be held on Saturday, April 26th at 5:00 pm. More info to come soon.



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

Adult and High School youth volunteers are needed to help out during Vacation Bible School. If you are able to help please email Amanda at adias@thegccc.org. High school youth can also register at:

<https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/VBSvol25>

Ash Wednesday Soup & Bread Luncheon

On Ash Wednesday after Rev. Bonnie McDougall's service a number of people stayed to enjoy a soup & bread luncheon. An enjoyable time was had by all that attended.



Americana Fair Drop Off Information

This year, the fair will be held on November 8, 2025.

As the weather turns warmer, our minds turn to Spring cleaning and decluttering our homes. As you go through your belongings, don't forget about the Americana Fair. We need your treasures (clothes, jewelry, toys, linens, china and other items). The funds raised by the Fair, go to support the mission, staff and service of the Garden City Community Church.

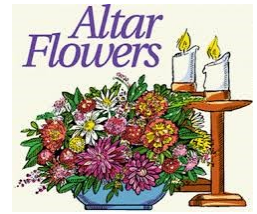
The church has a space dedicated to storing your treasures until November 8th. You may call the Church office to arrange a drop off day and time starting Tuesday, April 22nd.

Volunteers are always welcome – it takes a village to run the Fair and the church. We need you and your treasures to help our church grow and prosper!



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



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>

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 April 5th & May 3rd at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**



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 Narthex and office hallway. They have also repaired the Community Room. Blanca Cruz, our housekeeper for over 20 years has retired. Kristian & Joe have assumed her responsibilities. We wish Blanca a happy and healthy retirement.



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

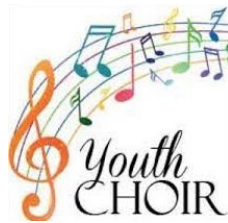


Musical Ensembles September through June

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

Garden City Community Church

2025 Plant Sale & Car Wash

Saturday, May 10th

8am – 12pm



Please come support our Mission Trip to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma this summer by getting your car washed, purchasing beautiful plants and bake sale items

All proceeds of the Plant Sale and Car Wash goes toward the 2025 Mission Trip to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Rain or Shine

245 Stewart Ave, Garden City, NY 11530



**BIBLE STORIES,
GAMES, CRAFTS,
AND MORE!**



**JUN 30TH- JULY
3RD**

Vacation Bible School

**245 STEWART AVE,
GARDEN CITY**

9:00AM-12:00PM

**FEE: \$50 (FIRST CAMPER)
OR \$100 (2 OR MORE
CAMPERS)**

**FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT AMANDA
(ADIAS@THEGCC.ORG)**

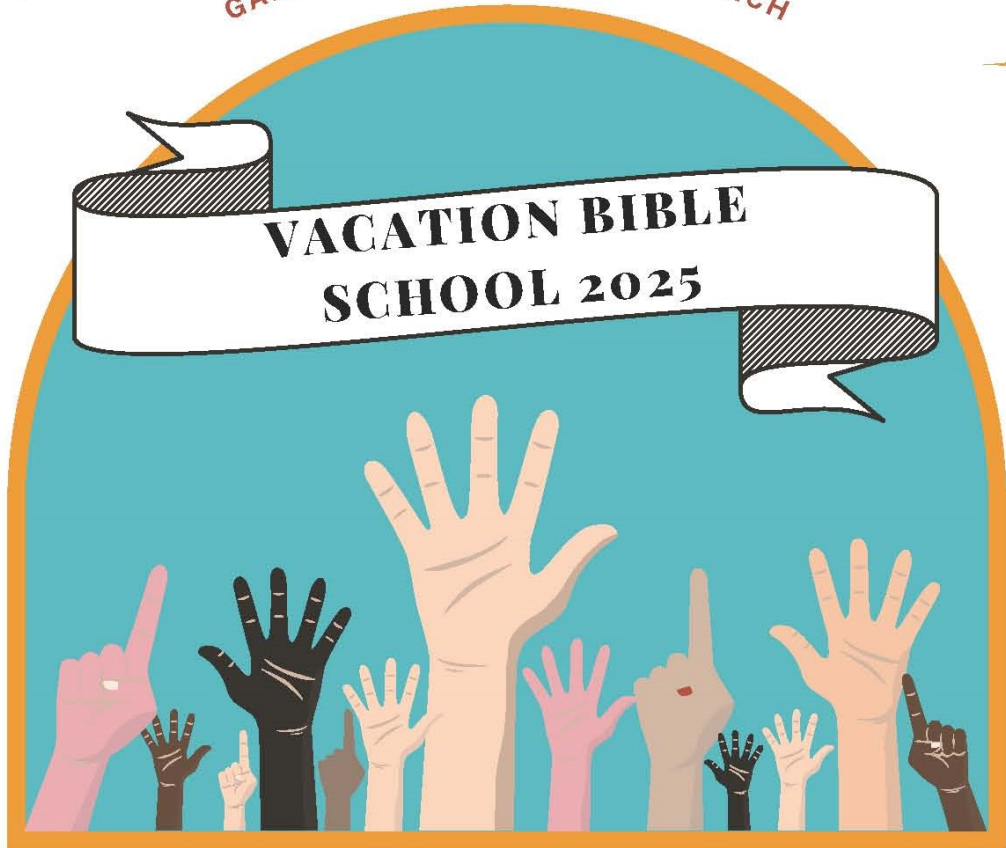
REGISTER HERE:

[HTTPS://GCC.BREEZECHMS.COM/FORM/HOTLINEHERO25](https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/hotlinehero25)



GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

DATES: JUN 30 - JUL 3

VOLUNTEERS WILL BE NEEDED FROM 8:00AM-1:00PM

We are looking for volunteers to aid with lessons, crafts, and lawn games. Volunteers will earn service credit hours.

We will be having a planning meeting, date TBD.

REGISTER HERE:



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE EMAIL AMANDA DIAS (ADIAS@THEGCC.ORG)

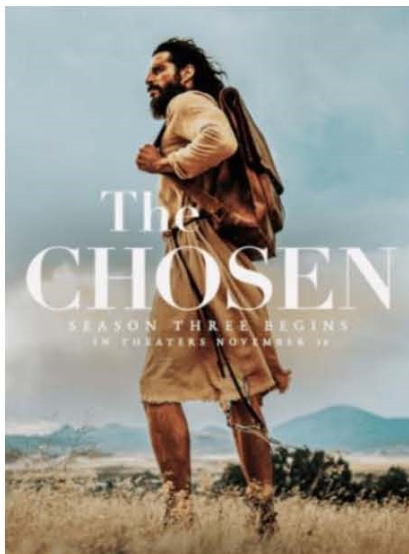
GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH 245 STEWART AVE, GARDEN CITY 516-746-1700

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)

April



2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Prayer Service 9:30 am	2 Food Donation drop off – noon The Chosen – series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	3 Adult Choir 7 pm		4 Men's Breakfast Carle Place Diner 8:00 am
6 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am High School Youth Group 6pm Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	7	8 Prayer Service 9:30 am	9 The Chosen – series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	10 Adult Choir 7 pm	11 Palm Stripping 3 pm	12
13 Palm Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Ministry Meeting 12 pm Middle School Youth Group 6 pm Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	14 F&A Meeting 6 pm	15 Prayer Service 9:30 am	16 Food Donation drop off - noon The Chosen – series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	17 Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service 7 pm	18 Good Friday Prayer & Meditation 12 – 3 pm	19
20 Easter Sunrise Service 6:30 am Easter Sunday Service 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am NOT SCHEDULED Easter Egg Hunt 11:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm NOT SCHEDULED	21 Office closed Easter Monday	22 Prayer Service 9:30 am Americana Fair drop-off donations starts today	23 The Chosen – series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm	24 Adult Choir 7 pm	25	26 Mission Trip Bingo/Game Night Fundraiser 5 pm
27 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Middle School Youth Group 6 pm Confirmation II Meeting 7 pm	28	29 Prayer Service 9:30 am	30 Food Donation drop off - noon The Chosen – series 2 viewing/discussion 7 pm			