

Connections

May 2021

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

Pastor's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

During this season of Easter, I would like to take time to assure you that you are in good hands during my sabbatical. As you know, I postponed my 2018 sabbatical and last year a small committee applied for the Lilly Foundation Clergy Renewal Grant, which the church was granted. This grant is for both the clergy and congregation to take advantage of a time of renewal and redirection. This gives us an opportunity to re-envision our church, which was taken off course during our 90th year celebration, to regain momentum as we approach our 100th year.

I am grateful for the opportunity to take my pastoral sabbatical, which is explained in the grant as an opportunity for rest and renewal from the rigors of ministry. A colleague recently said, "All clergy need a post-pandemic sabbatical." That is true for all of us, right?

Although many of my plans have changed. The theme based on Romans 11: 16 is to find ways to connect with branches that have been broken off and look towards ways of reconnection.

My sister and I will begin our journey with cousins, college, and childhood friends. Along the way, I will be asking for examples of people being 'cut-off' and ways to reconnect.

Instead of going to England and Ireland to connect with Mark's family across the pond, we will join Mark's brothers in California and see the ship Mark's Mom came to America on as a war bride, The Queen Mary.

The rest of the trip will be a combination of travel, renewal, reengagement and reading. I will also take, as part of my continuing Education, a course entitled: Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders through the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center.

During my absence, The Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson will be the Temporary Part time Pastor. She will be on call for pastoral care, programs and preaching. Bonnie has been a guest speaker at one of our Women's Retreats and preached at my Installation Service. Her biography is attached. Rev. Dr. Ruth Schafer and Rev. Eugene Palmore will preach to follow the Grant guidelines of offering different worship styles. I know during my absence we will both be learning a great deal.

I will miss you all a great deal and look forward to sharing stories and reconnecting when I return. Until then let us hold onto the scripture, Genesis 31:49, "The Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other."

Blessings and peace,

Lynn

Senior Pastor

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Worship Schedule

Sundays

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

Tuesdays

Intercessory
Prayer Service

9:30 AM

In-Person

Wednesdays

8:00PM—Zoom only

GRATITUDE GROWS!

There are so many people to thank for your work during Lent and Easter. Please, if you notice a name left off, please let us know so we can add it to Gratitude Grows next time.

- Our outgoing and incoming officers and board members
- Tracey Lawson and her Mission Team Committee and all the people involved in making this years' mission trip possible
- Mission Trip Leaders: Susie Henriquez, Jesse Henriquez, Amber Henriquez, Laura Baymack, Eric Gisolfi, Roger Tusiani-Eng, Spenser Singer
- Everyone who donates food for the LI Council of Churches Emergency Food pantry and our drivers
- All the people who help make the snack bag project for the INN a huge success
- Mico Faella, Janet Martens, Jan Levine and Cindy Campbell for the altar flowers and everyone who donated to the Easter Flowers
- Alice Melkonian for filling over 200 Easter eggs. Karin Melkonian and Margie for hiding them.
- Melva Victorino for the wonderful GC News articles
- Everyone involved in our many services during Holy Week and Easter Sunday
- Our Confirmation Leaders: Christine Hanson, Laura Baymack, Chris Dieguez and Rev. Lynn Sullivan
- The Social Justice Committee who sponsored the Erase Racism Program, and led the Good Friday Service
- The tech team for their many hours of filming all the virtual services: Steve Short, Joe Rivera, Doug Yasso, Rainer DeLalio, Faith Short, Rebecca Melkonian, Mark Sullivan, Tim Martens and our amazing editor Andrew Ellis
- All the women who joined us for the Women's Retreat
- The IT Team of Robin Laisure, Joe Socha, Joe Rivera, Drew Hearon and Laura Sullivan
- The parents and leaders involved in the Plant Sale and Car Wash
- The COT for all their hard work for the betterment of our church
- The Men who attended the Men's Retreat
- Courtney Rhein for her donation of the beautiful Easter Eggs to be used next year.
- The staff: Frank Crosio, Margie Price, Chris Dieguez, Liz Galzerano, Kim Pryor, Gloria Malin, Rob Sipkin and Billy Gagat for all their work on the special mailings, services, programs and events.

The Church of Nosso Senhor de Bonfim in Brazil for our Serenity Room

Thank you Mico Faella for your generous gift to our church: a painting of The Church of Nosso Senhor de Bonfim in Brazil for our Serenity Room by your Aunt Barbara Xumaia. It is a perfect compliment to our prayer room. We also acknowledge Barnes Gallery who generously framed the painting for us.

Introduction of Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson

The Sabbatical and Worship Committee has secured a Temporary, Part-Time Pastor to serve the church during Lynn's absence. Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson will be leading Worship along with Chris Dieguez and Margie Price during Rev. Lynn Sullivan's upcoming sabbatical period. Please provide a warm greeting in person or by chat box on her first Sunday service May 9, 2021.

Rev. McDougall Olson comes to the Garden City Community Church with strong educational, ministerial and pastoral care experiences.

Academically, Rev. McDougall Olson's achievements include a Master of Fine Arts from Brooklyn College, Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary and Master of Science in Narrative Medicine from Columbia University. In 2002, Rev. MacDougall Olson was ordained as a Minister in the United Church of Christ.

Most recently, the Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson has served as Protestant Chaplain at Creedmoor Psychiatric Center for 10 years. In this role, she provided worship services, memorial services, pastoral care, ran spirituality and narrative groups for patients as well as supervised volunteers.

Prior to working at Creedmoor, Rev. McDougall Olson served as Associate Pastor and Part Time Pastor at the Church-in-the Gardens, Forest Hills over the course of 18 years. Previously, Rev. Olson had served as a chaplain and pastoral supervisor in training at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

As part of the wider church, Rev. McDougall Olson has served on the UCC Metro Association Ordination and Standing Committee and was a co-writer for new standards of ordination in the Association.

Rev. McDougall Olson has also published and provided webinars and presentations of her work in Narrative Medicine.

If Rev. McDougall Olson looks familiar when you meet her, it is possible you may have seen her in the past at GCCC. She has been a presenter at one of our forums, a women's day away and Rev. Lynn Sullivan's installation service.

Welcome Rev. McDougall Olson!

Thanks to Cindy Campbell, Paul Cohn, Mary Dewar, Robin Laisure, Jan Levine, Janet Martens, Paula Tusiani-Eng and Rev. Lynn Sullivan for taking the time to reach out and meet with a number of candidates over the past four months.

Submitted by Janet Martens

Letter from our COT Chair, Robin Boyle Laisure

April 28, 2021

Dear Church Members:

We have many projects on the horizon to build the health and growth of our Church! We wish Rev. Lynn Sullivan a restful, yet productive, sabbatical. Our Ministry Committee (Janet Martens, Cindy Campbell, Jan Levine, Mary Dewar) together with Personnel (Paul Cohn) and me interviewed several candidates for Temporary Pastor. We are pleased to bring into our church Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson who will have responsibility for the pastoral care and worship life of the GCCC during the Sabbatical period of the Senior Pastor and will work closely with staff and lay leaders to achieve the mission and purpose of the GCCC during that time. She will also be available for pastoral care, when needed.

We have many people to thank for their generous time and talents. Looking ahead, our Ministers and congregants have been busy planning many exciting programs and Church building improvements.

- Marjorie Price has agreed to continue in her part-time capacity as Licensed Minister until the end of 2021. As explained in my email to the congregation on April 7th, another vote will be held in the Fall. Church members will vote to accept the recommendation of the Search Committee to call Marjorie Price to serve as Associate Pastor. A team of volunteers is being assembled to set up voting mechanics.
- Membership Committee (chaired by Marcia Matzelle) and our Information Officer (Carol Schrafel) are assembling a team for reviewing the church membership rolls, as required under the Church Bylaws.
- Together with lay leaders, Margie is creating and leading Vacation Bible School Program, including preparing the curriculum, creating games, and preparing VBS-related worship. Family activities will be held under a lawn tent in summer evenings during VBS week (June 28 – July 1).
- Cindy Campbell is coordinating the chapel renovation. Cindy has sought input from a Church team of Hugh Lacy, Brad Gustavson, Steve Short, Clem Olivo, and myself, and she will be working with a general contractor and various trade entities.
- In 2020, Hugh Lacy, with the assistance of Brad Gustavson, presented to Finance & Administration Committee proposals relating to improving the airflow systems in the building. An engineering firm, HHF Design Consulting, LTD, had prepared preliminary lists of rooms with needed installations. The Church building – all of its worship space, school rooms, and leased offices – needs to be in compliance with New York State Mechanical code requiring fresh air that is a function of both maximum occupancy and area of the room. F & A supported the proposal, as did Council of Trustees. Hugh is overseeing the work being done, in phases, by Old World Quality Corp. This building improvement project is indicative of the priority our Church has put on the health and safety of the building employees (including Ministry), nursery school and Sunday school teachers and students, congregants of our Church and Grace Church, lessees, and guests.
- UVC lights were installed in the sanctuary. These lights not only kill COVID-19 virus, but will also kill other germs such as those that cause the flu.

- F & A approved the construction of a new ladder for safer access to the attic in the sanctuary. Work is underway and is being overseen by Hugh.
- Thanks to the leadership of Paula Tusiani-Eng, the Program Committee continues to provide service. A special thank you to Tina Palmer and Confirmation parents for their leadership of INN Sandwich Bag Ministry, Tracey Lawson for her leadership of the Mission Trip travelling to Boston with Next Step Ministries Aug. 2021, Kimberly Pauley for her leadership of the Spring garden, Allison Forelli for coordinating a food pick-up drive from home, and our dedicated drivers and donors to the Wednesday Food Deliveries for the Long Island Council of Churches in Freeport. Souperbowl Sunday was a success.
- Thanks to Marilyn Yasus, Peg Mainush, Melva Victorino, Dorothy Gist, Mary Dewar and Susan Cushman for their leadership for ongoing educational programs for Ad-Hoc Committee on Racism, which included a special presentation from Erase Racism, a discussion of King in the Wilderness, and planning the Good Friday Service.
- Paul Cohn is spearheading efforts to update existing church policies and to draft new ones.
- Men's Retreat was held this Spring and was reportedly successful.
- The IT team of Drew Hearon, Laura Sullivan, Joe Socha, and Joe Rivera continue to meet monthly. They will provide guidance to Paul regarding social media policies, along with Andrew Schrafel.
- For Sunday Worship - thank you to our liturgists and our ministers, including Frank Crosio for music. Livestreaming has gone extremely well thanks to our worship tech team: youth interns (Ranier DeLalio, Corey Laisure, Rebecca Melkonian, Faith Short) and our adults (Andrew Ellis, Tim Martens, Joe Rivera, Steve Short, Mark Sullivan, Doug Yasso).
- For Wednesday Services, thank you to our ministers and to Paul Cohn and George Bashian for leading us in scripture reflection and to Jillian Yoo for music.
- Our services during Holy Week – leading up to and including Easter Sunday – were outstanding. Thank you to our ministers, liturgists, musicians and vocalists, and tech team, for bringing us together in prayer and worship. With multiple services on Easter Sunday, each unique, we were provided more than one worship opportunity – and to add to the celebration - Jillian's music at sunrise, brass music mid-morning, and an egg hunt.
- Cindy Campbell is leading the efforts with the Americana Fair, scheduled for Saturday, November 6th. She received many positive responses from last year's Fair volunteers. If you have items to donate, please let her know.

In peace,

Robin Boyle Laisure
Council of Trustees, Chair

Sermons and Services

We can mail a copy of our Sermons and Service to people that are NOT able to go on live stream to see our Sunday service. Please tell the church office if you know of someone that can't see our Live stream service that would like to receive a copy of the Sermon and Service.

Welcome our New Members

On April 18th, the following people joined our Church. Please welcome:

Susan Cushman, Stephanie Marchan, Steven Marchan, Amanda Riego, Allison Stone, Roger Stone, Jessica Dowd-Wilde and Daniel Wilde.

YOUTH GROUP AND MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP

Hey teens!

We may be entering May, but what we have in store for the year has just begun. The mission trip to Boston is on, and we're holding our annual plant sale and car wash on May 8th from 8AM to 12PM. Come to support the trip, stay for the fun. If you aren't attending the mission trip, this is a great way to stay connected and show the boys and girls club of Boston that Garden City cares.

Middle school group will meet again on May 16th and will then dismiss for the summer. Youth group is here this summer to give you a break from that summer job. We'll be meeting on the following dates to reconnect and recharge our faiths over recreation and fun. Weather and circumstances permitting, look forward to meeting up outdoors and in person!

Youth Group meetings:

June 13

July 11

Aug 15

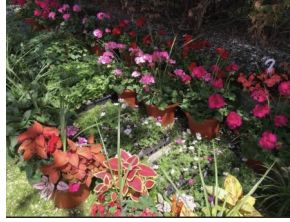
Sep 19

Chris

Annual Car Wash and Plant Sale

Saturday, May 8th

8:00 am to 12:00 Noon



The Garden City Community Church will be hosting its Annual Car Wash and Plant Sale on Saturday, May 8th from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. Please come by and support our youth and their upcoming mission trip to Boston, MA as you have your car washed and shop for some Mother's Day plants. We have an assortment of perennials and annuals, hanging baskets, flats and planters including petunias, begonias, geraniums, marigolds, new guinea impatiens and so much more! Come early so you don't miss your favorites!

Altar Flower Sign-Up

Now that we have returned back to church, we are able to put flowers on the Altar to remember a special loved one or a special event. We won't have fresh flowers on the Altar at all times; but we will, if you want to sponsor a certain day for a \$50 donation. To sign up, call the office for more information.



TUESDAY PRAYER SERVICE RESUMES

IN PERSON

The Prayer Service is now meeting in the Parlor Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am. Please email the church office or George Bashian if you have a prayer request. All requests are kept confidential.

INN BIN REQUEST

Please hold off on dropping clothes off at the church until further notice as the INN is not accepting clothing donations in the usual capacity at this time.

VBS is Coming Back to the GCCC!!



Planning is well under way for this year's Vacation Bible School program. We're expanding our VBS this year, it will be an inter-generational program held in the evenings on the church lawn. This program is for all of our church family and extended family (community members are invited to participate as well), no matter your age. We are very excited to bring this program to you.

Camp Out
Get S'more of Jesus
June 28, 2021-July 1, 2021
6:30PM-8:30PM

Throughout this Camp Out, under a tent on the church lawn, we will share in the light of Jesus in the many forms it takes (firelight, sparks, flashlights, and lantern lights). We will be getting s'more of Jesus through:

Drumming and music
Dance
Story-telling
Games
Science activities and crafts
Worshipping together

There are activities for all ages. Come for the whole night or just an hour. Our Camp Out is sure to be the light of God's love to us all.

Registration information:
Fee: \$20/individual
\$35/2 people
\$50/3 or more people

To register contact the church office or go to: <https://gcc.c.breezechms.com/form/a1a46860>

Early Registration: May 16, 2021 To be guaranteed a t-shirt for the event

Registration Deadline: June 9, 2021

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Margie Price or the Church Office.

Blessings,

The VBS Planning Team

CONFIRMATION I VOLUNTEER LEADERS NEEDED September 2021– MAY 2022

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give God the glory."

Matthew 5: 16

Please contact the church office at churchoffice@thegccc.org if you are interested in learning more about volunteering as a Confirmation I Leader. The programs amazing success is because of the wonderful leader team. Be part of a team that changes lives.

"Do for other people what you want them to do for you." Luke 6:31

SCAM ALERT

During these times of social distancing we are becoming more exposed to 'cyber' attempts of scamming people. Please know that none of our clergy, or church staff would send you emails asking you to do us a favor and send cash, gift cards or any other currency through the internet. There are a number of scams going on that have been relying on the good nature of church members to send money stating that it will be used to help others. Unfortunately this is now an ongoing occurrence with many churches. Please do not open emails of this type - check the email addresses carefully.

Adventure Bible School

The children in our ABS program have been a true joy to work with this year. I have seen them grow so much during a very difficult year and I look forward to celebrating that on Church School Sunday, June 13, 2021.

During this last school year our ABS program remained fully remote. Sharing Bible Adventures never stopped, though! The year was broken down into sessions and, after putting together a session's worth of lesson, crafts, and other activities with Katie Masters, we sent ABS Activity Kits home to the children to ensure they had the supplies needed for each week.

Our biggest excitement this season was celebrating Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday through multiple worship services (one of which everyone was surprised with butterflies flying out of their hymnals) and an Easter Egg Hunt following the service. We got to share the joy of the Risen Christ together and make some new friends from the community, too.

And, while I am sharing with our young ones the joys of Christian life, and how to follow Jesus in all that we do, I learn the same by watching them.

Our last ABS class will be on Sunday, June 6th, 2021, but we're not totally stopping over the summer. As the weather turns nicer, I'm looking forward to some church-lawn activities so we can share in some in-person, intergenerational fellowship together. So keep your eyes on the Friday E-Blasts throughout the summer for more information.

I look forward to all the coming season brings and all the new ways we can find to experience God's Love.

Blessings,

Margie Price

Church School Sunday

Church School Sunday is coming on June 13th, 2021!! This is just one opportunity for us to celebrate with the youngest members of our church community. As with everything during pandemic, the service will look a little different than it has in past years, but the important things will still happen.

We will have the opportunity to celebrate our seniors and wish them well on their future journeys.

Our 3rd Graders will receive their Bibles.

We will spend time honoring those youth who have dedicated so much of their time and talents to this community of faith.

And of course we will celebrate all of our church school community.

We look forward to these celebrations and the milestones they mark for our church. We'll see you on June 13!!

Blessings,

Margie Price

3rd Grade Bible Class

We have just finished out 2021 3rd Grade Bible Class. During this class I have had the joy of getting to know Daniel Socha and Everly Forelli better and sharing with them just a fraction of what the Bible has to offer. Over 3 weeks we learned about where the Bible came from, what makes up the Old and New Testaments, and how to find things in the Bible.

I pray this is just the beginning of a lifelong journey with this Word of God.

Our third graders will be receiving their Bibles during Church School Sunday Worship Service on June 13th, 2021.

Blessings,

Margie Price

Summer Activities

Just because school is out and some of the school-year groups are on hiatus for the summer, doesn't mean nothing is happening. Our church will continue to be active over the summer. Along with Vacation Bible School in June, we will be offering several intergenerational game nights on the church lawn throughout the summer.

Game nights are a great way for us to fellowship with each other, basking in that bond of the Holy Spirit that keeps us together. We look forward to seeing many friends and family on the lawn as we enjoy the wonderful summer evenings New York State has to offer.

If you would like to help with planning or leading games on any of these evenings, please contact Margie Price.

Blessings,

Margie Price

ON-LINE GIVING UPDATE

Garden City Community Church has recently partnered with Breeze Church Management Systems to support our *On-line Giving Initiative*. If you would like to set up “Recurring Contributions” or make a “Onetime Contribution” to support our many Ministries, please click on the link below. Our new online giving platform allows us to align our congregational giving with our member data base, resulting in greater efficiency and clarity for Church Members.

<https://qccc.breezechms.com/login/create>

Giving can also be accessed through GCCC website via the “GIVE” button

<https://gardencitycommunitychurch.org>

We appreciate your support in our efforts. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Liz or Kim in the office (516)746-1700.

Monthly Men’s Breakfast Resumes

The Men’s Group will be resuming there in–person, 1st Saturday of the month breakfasts. Starting on Saturday, June 5th at 8:00 AM, the men will meet at the Park City Diner. The diner is located at 101 Herricks Road New Hyde Park, NY 11040.

All men are welcome to attend. For questions or more information, please contact George Bashian at george@bashianrug.com

Deaths

Jerome Keenan February 11, 2021 (Kathy Yoo’s father)

Lynn Kotula February 24, 2021 (Francie & Paul Cohn’s sister-in-law)

Frank K. Harder Jr. April 8, 2021

Peter Negri April 13, 2021 (Liz Hux’s father)

Wednesday Services

Wednesday zoom services will continue in May & June. June 23 we will be having in person & zoom service under the tent. Their will be no Wednesday services in July. We will resume members faith journey’s in August.

Mission Trip

We are pleased to announce that we have a team of 26 youth and 7 adult leaders going on our 2021 Mission Trip to Boston, MA from August 1-7th, 2021. We are excited to be partnering with Next Step again this summer. Next Step has partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of America in Boston. The group will be doing construction projects to help improve the Boys and Girls Club facility and enable them to provide even more services to the community. We are so thrilled that we have been able to find a way in these challenging times to continue this wonderful tradition and "Go Ye Into All the World" and serve.

Metropolitan Association Spring Meeting:

“Healed and Made Whole—Revolutionary Love: Resilience and Healing After the Storm”

On Saturday, April 24, 2021, approximately 100 delegates to the Metropolitan Association, New York Conference, United Church of Christ, attended the association’s second virtual Spring Meeting. Mary Dewar presided as outgoing Moderator and Peg Mainusch and Melva Victorino attended as delegates from GCCC.

In this age of virtual meetings, we bemoan the loss of the opportunity to chat, hug those friends we have not seen since the past meeting, and share breakfast and lunch together. We miss the chance to learn more about one another and create a loving community. Temporarily, though, a virtual event is safer and takes half the time.

The worship service at Metro meetings is always inspirational. This year, we started by remembering those lost during the past year, including the Rev. Dr. Bob Gunn, who had served several Metro churches, including GCCC, Rockville Centre, and Syosset.

Winners of the recent Metro Bible Reading Contest read the scripture for the service, guaranteeing that it had a special impact.

The Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, pastor of Middle Collegiate Church (RCA/UCC) in Manhattan, was the preacher/keynote speaker. Rev. Lewis knows a bit about resilience, having seen her church building burn down in December. She reminded us that we must hurt before we can heal. Her most recent book is - *Fierce Love: A Bold Path to a Better Life and a Better World*.

In what turned out to be a special treat, Rev. Lewis participated in a “chat-back,” a Q&A session at the end of the service, facilitated by the Rev. Dr. J. Terry Todd. Those in attendance had the opportunity to submit questions in addition to those posed by Rev. Todd.

As usual, the business meeting was less inspirational, but encompassed some important work. As outgoing Moderator, Mary Dewar called the meeting to order. It was announced that the interim Executive Administrator Rev. Dr. Kris Watson had been hired as the association’s new Executive Director. New York Conference and National staff gave updates, and a new group of officers were elected. (Among those newly elected to the Board of Directors was Rev. James Adelman, a name you might recognize.).

When the association is able to meet in person once again, please consider attending a meeting or even being a delegate. The experience is worth it – for you and for your church.

Peg Mainusch

Mary Dewar

BI-WEEKLY FOOD COLLECTIONS FOR THE LICC EMERGENCY FOOD CENTER



We have been collecting non-perishable food items the past few months to support the Long Island Council of Churches Emergency Food Center. Your generosity has been a testament to what we can accomplish, even under the most trying of times. We are also in need of drivers to take the food to the food pantry. Our next few scheduled donation days are: May 5th & 19th, June 2nd, 16th, & 30th, July 14th & 28th, August 11th & 25th. Donations should be left on the Whitehall porch before noon on the dates mentioned above.

If you want to sign up to be a driver to deliver the food to the pantry on one of our donation days, please go to: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-2021>



AMERICANA FAIR

We are planning to hold the Americana Fair again this year on
Saturday, November 6, 2021

In order for the 2021 Americana Fair to be a success, we need to have garage space to hold items. Please contact the church office or Cindy Campbell at cindala86@gmail.com or 516-524-1617.

Chapel Pews Available for Donation

We are renovating our church chapel and we have pews which we are offering free to anyone that wants one. They are made of birch wood. Here are the sizes & number available:

2 99 3/4" l x 18 3/4"w x 34" h

14 112" l x 18 3/4"w x 34"h

Contact Cindy Campbell for more information: (516) 524-1617 or cindala86@gmail.com



From time to time, it is a good thing to remember who we are as a church and what we stand for.

Below are documents that we hope will be reminders of our church's call to ministry.

Vision Statement Faithfully Reaching Out
Inclusively Drawing In

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

Our Mission Statement - Adopted February 4, 1996

We, the members and friends of the Garden City Community Church, believe it is our mission to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed to all the world.

Relying on the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we seek to fulfill our mission by being a community of spiritual growth that welcomes all people, teaches Christian faith, cares for its members, and reaches out in service to those beyond the church walls. Celebrating our diversity, we are working to build a loving fellowship where:

- * People are supported and families are strengthened;
- * Friends are made and hurts are healed;
- * Justice is sought and the world is served;
- * God is worshipped, and above all,
- * Jesus Christ is Lord

Covenant

We do now in the presence of God most solemnly and faithfully covenant with God and with one another to walk in all God's ways, made known, or to be made known to us, whatsoever the cost, the Lord assisting us.

We engage, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to promote the peace and welfare of this Church of Christ, and to sustain its worship and sacraments.

We also engage to maintain personal devotion, to be just in our dealings, to refrain from everything that may reasonably ring reproach upon the Christian name, and to live in the world in joyful gratitude to God.

We further engage to give ourselves and our substance to the ministry of healing among the nations, that all may know the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ.

Our Welcome/Open & Affirming Statement

We, the members of the Garden City Community Church, affirm our faith in Jesus Christ and in the church that He called into being which, by His grace, welcomes all people.

We affirm that all persons are children of God. Therefore, all who demonstrate their desire to follow Christ and be a part of Christ's community by giving public consent to the covenant of our church are welcome to participate fully in the life and ministry of our congregation regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, physical and mental ability, social and economic status, and other differences that might otherwise distinguish us one from another.

The Garden City Community Church is an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ which renews and strengthens its commitment to advocate justice and equality for all people in all areas of society.

- Adopted 2007

12 Truths for Living Faithfully Through Conflict

By Michael W. Caine, Former Regional Conference Minister

1. Conflict is not only inevitable - lived through faithfully, it can be a source of great healing power. Denied or pushed underground, conflict is the devil's play.
2. Real growth always hurts. If the church is afraid of pain, we will never grow.
3. We are not called to be the same. God created each of us peculiar or unique and then called us to live together faithfully.
4. God gathers you here not to do anything you please, but so that you might be a support and blessing to another and together accomplish more than you could apart.
5. Church is about transformation - of individuals, communities and the world.
6. Church doesn't work when church people try to make themselves better than others:
It's not about defending yourself;
It's not about converting others.
7. To be a great church member, be your best self in humility:
None of us is all-knowing, always right or ever on top.
This means "NO PUT-DOWNS" of yourself or others.
8. Turn the other cheek, walk the 2nd mile - respond faithfully, rather than react blindly.
9. Speak the truth directly to one another, using the names by which we were baptized and which presumably God uses when we hear someone calling us by name.
10. Speak only for yourself - "I statements".
11. Finally, it's never about who's right/wrong, but about how we love one another.
12. That which you do to one another, you've done to Jesus - our witness.



Caring for Kids During the Pandemic

By Bettina Bove, LCSW-R, LCC Counselor



We are living during very trying times. It can be challenging to maintain self-care and overwhelming to provide additional care for our children and families. Do your best to create more balance during this time at home.

Communication is a key to help maintain good relationships. Don't avoid talking. Kids need to know they aren't to blame for the tension that might be present in our lives. We all get frustrated and are coping as well as possible, sometimes in very close quarters. Let this be a time of bonding and giving

grace. Be comforting by speaking words of reassurance to relay the message that "this will pass and we will get through this together". When we verbalize reassurance to others, we also reassure ourselves. Remember to validate accomplishments, even the small ones. Take time every day to express how we are loved by God and each other, how we can always be secure in that love and in His presence. Physical touch and hugs are very important right now, even from our furry friends!

Take this opportunity to teach kids how to build their skills and contribute more to their home, family and communities. Assist them in learning how to make a budget, prepare a shopping list, clip coupons, clean and do laundry. Perhaps even teach them how to care for that new pet they have been asking for. Reach out to others safely, on the phone, through facetime or have a group chat on Zoom. Go "old-school" by writing letters and sending cards via snail mail. Seek more fun in addition to work and school schedules. We need something to look forward to!

Create a fun and entertainment calendar. Place it where everyone can see it and contribute ideas. Plan a game night, watch a sunrise or sunset, go for a walk or a hike, have a picnic in the park or even in the living room. Have a "travel night": pick a place you would like to visit; then have a meal or food from that region, dress like the natives would and utilize words from their language. Have everyone draw a picture of something famous from the chosen location; then together watch a show or video filmed there. Let this be practice until you can take a real trip there. It can be as simple as eating french fries, wearing a beret, and having everyone draw a picture of their rendition of the Eiffel Tower, while speaking with a French accent! Silly, but fun!

Create crafts, Leave a jigsaw puzzle out for everyone to take a turn with, it's meditative! Print out pictures and color together! Read a book or Bible stories to each other. Sit down to meals together and ask each family member to share a challenge and a joy from their day! Play music and have a dance party in the kitchen. Pray and sing songs together. Have ice cream sundaes on Sundays! Share something you are grateful for at bedtime and make every day a thanksgiving!

Teach kids to care for their community. Collect rocks and write an inspiring word or message on them, like "Hope, Love or Faith". Leave them around your town or on someone's doorstep to encourage them. Get together, cook or bake a treat, plant seeds and grow flowers; then deliver them to a friend or neighbor and make their day! Do a drive by visit for someone who needs to feel cared for and less alone. Get creative. Be silly. Have fun and thank God!

Bettine Bove, LCSW-R, has a specialty in meditation, relaxation and guided imagery. She counsels children, teens, adults, couples and families. For an appointment with a counselor or for more information, call LCC at 1-800-317-1173. All sessions are virtual.