

Connections

January 2020

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

Psalm 33: 3 "Sing to God a new song..."

I get a daily meditation from the Executive Administrator of our UCC Metro Association. I wanted to share one of her December posts because with the New Year, we have the opportunity to create a new rhythm in our lives and to change our melodies to a New Song.

From Living in Faith Mediations by Louise Manigault:

"Everyone has a Favorite Melody. There is a line in El-Debarge's song that says, *'if you listen, there is a melody in how you live your life. You can write the song you want.'*"

Life has a rhythm. It is not just a random set of occurrences. If you observe the behavior of people, you will begin to see the rhythms or melodies that control their lives. Sometimes the melody changes, but it does not vary much from their dominant tune. Do you know your melody? Here are some observances I have noticed:

The Rappers: They must talk about everything over and over again, day in and day out. They have a story to tell. They replay the tune until you become exhausted from hearing it. If you listen close enough and long enough, their words begin to rhyme.

Smooth Operators always have a 'line.' They want to say something that will get your attention, and before you know it, they have convinced you to do what they want you to do or smooth-talk you into believing they are sincere.

Other are always singing The Blues: Life is sad. People don't treat them right. They are always singing a chorus of Heart Break Hotel. None of their relationships work out. They are constantly crying the blues about all of their situations. They sing those songs until you start to feel blue with them.

The Heavy Metal Band melody doesn't make much sense but will overpower everyone with their noise. They are determined to out-argue everyone by being the loudest and most obnoxious person in the group. They have to be heard.

The Oldies-but-Goodies melody love the past more than the present. They can sing all day long about their lives 30, 40 even 50 years ago. 'It was the best of times', even though it may have actually been the worst of times for them. Tradition rules. If you spend a few minutes with them, they will find a way to quickly take you back in time to the good 'ole days.

I'm sure you know people who sing these melodies and more. Their melodies are their stories. They may have some variation, but they are the same. You will smile as you fit the people you know into the melodies of life. What melodies are you playing that describe your life and behavior? Do they enhance your sense of peace? Think about it. *"Sing to the Lord a new song."* (Psalm 96:1)

In the New Year, let's be mindful of the Melody that controls our lives. I hope mine is a melody of Thanksgiving and Praise. I encourage you to hold me accountable for that. Blessings and Happy New Year,

Lynn

Senior Pastor

Worship Schedule

Sundays

8:30 AM
Chapel

10:30 AM
Sanctuary

Tuesdays

Intercessory
Prayer Service
9:30 AM
Chapel

Wednesdays

8:00 PM
Gardner Hall

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GRATITUDE GROWS!

Gratitude Grows has been a way to thank and highlight members of our faith community who continue to take the extra step in helping our church and volunteering their time. If you are grateful for someone, contact Lynn to be added to next month's list:

- Everyone who helped decorate the church for Advent and Christmas
- The Forum presenters bringing the book A Good Life to a place of *Everyday Joy*
- All the volunteers who were involved in the annual Tree Sale, Overnight and Bake Sale
- Our contributors to the very successful Stewardship Campaign
- The people who gave a gift to the 90th Anniversary Fund and others still prayerfully considering
- Frank Crosio and our Choirs for a meaningful Vesper Service
- Drew Hearon, and many volunteers responsible for a delicious Vesper Dinner and entertaining night
- The Hearon Family, Short Family, Schroeder Family and Christine Hanson for their extra effort!
- Kimberly Pauley for the beautiful centerpieces at the Vesper Dinner
- Laura Lanning for coordinating the Giving Tree and everyone who took a tag
- Cassidy Hayes and Cindy Campbell who coordinated the gifts for the mothers at the Bedford Correctional Facility
- Everyone who help make Christmas brighter by donating toys
- People who gave to the Mitten Tree
- Everyone who donated flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one
- Cathie McCullough and her staff for a heart-felt Nursery School Christmas Program
- Our office Angels for staying on top of our printing, collating, cleaning and serving
- The pizza donated for the guests at the INN giving the volunteers a much needed break
- The wonderful group who brought cheer caroling to our members
- Our dedicated staff
- All the participants in our Christmas Eve Family and Candlelight Communion Service
- Everyone who gave me the Christmas present of their presence at the 8:30 am service 😊

READER'S CIRCLE

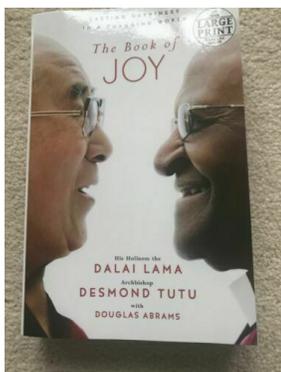
Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at noon in the Whitehall Conference Room.

We will be reading:

The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World

by The Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu.

Bring your lunch - Dessert hostess: Mary Dewar



LITURGISTS AND COMMUNION SERVERS WELCOMED

If you are interested in becoming a Liturgist assisting in the worship service, or helping set up and serve Communion, please contact Worship Committee Chair, Janet Martens. Liturgists can read scripture, lead prayers, and assist with offering.

YOUTH LITURGISTS RETURNING

Anyone in grades 4th and up that would like to be a youth liturgist, please contact Margie@thegccc.org

Men's Breakfast

All men are invited for food and fellowship at the Park City Diner Saturday, January 4th at 8 AM.

Will Sing For Food -Saturday, January 18th 8:00 PM

Join us for our 7th Annual Will Sing For Food charity concert event. All proceeds help support local food pantries. No ticket reservations necessary, general admission and make a donation at the door.

90 in '19

January, 2019

Hello Fellow Church Members!

I hope you are all enjoying the Holiday Season as we are. Thank you all who made Christmas Vespers Candlelight Music Service and Dinner such an extraordinary event.

In January we have a lot of Congregational work to address. Most importantly we'll be advancing forward plans to hire a Full Time Minister, as per the PRAISE Committees recommendation. Given that we need to balance the desire to proceed thoughtfully and inclusively, alongside our need for immediate Ministry assistance, we'll proceed as follows:

Interim Full Time Pastor (12-18 Months): We would like to immediately hire an Interim Full Time Pastor with the target of beginning no later than April 1, and serving our Church between 12-18 months. We'll be nominating a 3 person team from our Congregation to Interview Candidates and offer Recommendation for hire. With Reverend Lynn Sullivan's anticipated Sabbatical this summer, it's crucial we advance this part of our plan.

Form a Search Committee to Hire a **Permanent Full Time Pastor:** Additionally, we will be moving forward with assembling a Formal Congregational Search Committee to Interview, Recommend and potentially Hire a Full Time Permanent Associate Pastor.

By hiring an Interim Pastor, it affords us the time to move forward at a thoughtful pace, while also enabling maximum congregational inclusion when making this long term decision with such a long term impact on our Budget and Fiscal position. Please see the following letter by Paul Cohn which lays out the process a Congregation must embark when moving forward with a Formal Associate Pastor Search Committee.

IMPORTANT DATES:

January 5th: COT Update: Ministry Staffing Plan: Pre-Service meeting

January 6th: Final COT meeting of the 2019 Counsel

January 12th: F&A Budget Hearing Pre-Service

January 26th: COT Update: GCCC IT and Technology Use Overview ****HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

February 9th: Congregations Annual Meeting Post-Service

Regards,

Drew Hearon

Chairman, Council of Trustees

GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

Process for Searching and Calling

an Associate Minister

The Garden City Community Church is about to begin the process of searching for, and calling, an Associate Minister. Unlike the engagement of an interim position, the calling of an Associate Minister is a long-term covenant commitment of both the Church and the Minister for which the search and call process is provided in the Church's By-Laws. The greater United Church of Christ, as a denomination, also has a process to allow local churches to have access to the national resources to identify all United Church of Christ ordained ministers who could be eligible candidates.

The Church's By-Laws provide that the Church, at a church meeting, elect a Search Committee of not less than seven or more than ten members of the Church (one of whom is between the ages of 16 and 19) to canvas of possible candidates using resources reasonably available (including any search and call resources available from the United Church of Christ), consider the particular needs of the Church and the unique gifts of candidates, and recommend its selection from among the candidates to the Church. The Church would then vote (a 2/3 vote is needed) on the recommendation.

The United Church of Christ has a long established and effective search and call process that it offers to local churches (the Church has used this several times in searching for UCC clergy). In order to offer a better fit between potential candidates and local churches, the first step in the UCC's search and call process is for the Church to fill out a church profile. The profile gives potential candidates a feel for the size, resources and primary style and priorities in the Church's worship and ministries. The Church completed a profile many years ago, and there have been a lot of significant changes from the portrait of the Church in the old church profile. Accordingly, the first step of a Search Committee would be to update our Church Profile, which will require congregational input on some matters. Following this, the Search Committee would work through the UCC Search and Call process to identify potential candidates and follow the criteria set forth in the By-Laws to make a recommendation to the Church for the calling of an Associate Minister.

The entering into a long-term covenant with an Associate Minister is a pivotal decision of the Church, and the process is not quick. The Church should expect that several months will be needed to complete our Church Profile, identify candidates that fit our need and resources, interview those candidates that could be a good fit and, possibly, invite one or more candidates to the Church to meet personally with the Search Committee and, where appropriate, participate in a worship service or other ministry at the Church.

Paul Cohn
Garden City Community Church
Counsel of Trustees, Personnel

The Garden City Community Theatre

~ Church Play ~

Friday, March 27th

Saturday, March 28th

Sunday, March 29th

Plans for the 23rd season of The Garden City Community Theatre are gearing up - - - this year's production will blend the usual attributes of musical comedy while incorporating some special features that will highlight our 90th Anniversary Celebration. Church members, Brad and Ruby Gustavson, managed a vibrant audition turnout last month. Rehearsals begin mid-to-late January.

THE ANNUAL PLAY IS A CHURCH FUNDRAISER.

Proceeds from the play benefit the Church's programs in a variety of ways.

Musical productions require a lot of time and energy from a host of people. Our Church play is a great vehicle for fellowship while sharing your skills and talents in so many ways. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities - - set design & painting, stocking & manning the snack bar, ticket sales, to name just a few. Watch for further announcements as play season unfolds. Please

direct any questions by emailing Ruby Gustavson at: rbygustavson@gmail.com.

WE HOPE TO HAVE STRONG CHURCH MEMBER PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE AT

THIS YEAR'S PLAY.

Please mark your calendars.

Join Us !

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, 2020.

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 in July.

Each session meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:15 - 12:15 - July 7 through July 30.

Tuition: \$150.00 per session - MINIMUM enrollment - 2 (1 week) sessions.

Discount of \$75.00 for students enrolled for all 4 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.

JANUARY 2020 FORUM SCHEDULES

A brand new year is starting!

Twelve brand new months!

52 brand new weeks!

A BRAND NEW DECADE!

According to experts, there are twelve reasons why the year 2020 will be an awesome year.

Japan will build a robotic moon base.

China will connect Beijing to London via high-speed rail.

Cars will drive themselves.

Biofuels will cost-competitive with fossil fuels.

Flying cars will be airborne.

Devices via microchips will be implanted in our brain.

All new screens will be ultra-thin OLEDs.

Commercial space will take us to the moon and asteroids (and we'll be mining them).

A \$1,000. Computer will have the processing power of the human brain.

Universal translation will be commonplace in mobile devices.

We'll finally see some decent AR glasses.

We'll create synthetic brain that functions like the real deal.

Exciting Stuff! We might have most of these innovations for our forums, but meanwhile, here are our schedules for the beginning of the year. Don't miss out to see what is waiting for us in 2020.

January 5: Call/Search Committee

Ministry Staff Additions:

Interim Position and Full Time

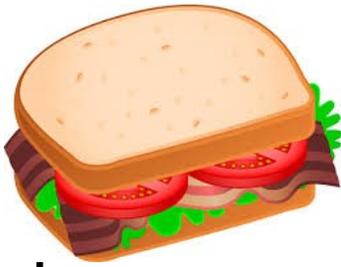
January 12: Annual Budget Forum

(formally called a 'hearing')

January 19: Tracy Cleary - Be Your Own Best Doctor – Forum will address bone health, osteoporosis, medication and much more. She will be sharing tips on health, diet, supplements and how to prevent bone fractures, increase balance, strength and energy.

January 26: GCCC Organization Comprehensive IT Usage

overview, future investment and recommendations



SANDWICH SUNDAYS

Looking for a new way to serve God and the community this year?

Sunday, January 12, 2020 Gardner Hall 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Sandwich Sundays is a monthly ministry in which members of the Garden City Community Church make sandwiches after worship and deliver them to the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN) in Hempstead, where they are served to those in need with the Monday lunch.

There are many ways to get involved! We need shoppers to purchase the cold cuts from local vendors who support our efforts (with funds donated) and givers to provide lunch items such as sandwich bags, fruit, water, brown bags and chips. We need donors to help us offset the cost of the cold cuts with monetary donations to support this program. We need many church hands to assemble the sandwiches after church, and we need a driver to deliver the sandwiches. Each month Sandwich Sunday involves in the range of 30 church members and feeds almost 200 people in our community. Will you help grow this vibrant service ministry?

To participate or donate items, sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-sandwich4>

To donate funds, sign up here:

www.osvonlinegiving.com/1454/DirectDonate/62698

To join our Sandwich Sunday mailing list for regular emails about Sandwich Sunday, email churchoffice@thegccc.org

To join our leadership team to help set-up and coordinate our Sandwich Sunday efforts email Jennifer Gisolfi at jgisolfi@optonline.net

Is our Church 5 for 5?

A 5 for 5 church fully supports Our Church's Wider Mission. They give to Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) and all four special mission offerings.

OCWM Basic Support – Provides funding from congregations for Conferences and the national ministries of the UCC (Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries and Pension Boards.)

UCC Special Mission Offerings – Part of the OCWM, these four offerings sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in the U.S. and around the world.

- One Great Hour of Sharing**
- Neighbors in Need**
- Strengthen the Church**
- The Christmas Fund**

Please help us be a 5 for 5 church by giving to the UCC-The Christmas Fund Offering Collection

UCC - The Christmas Fund

Helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants, as administered by the Pension Boards.

WE ARE NOW COLLECTING FOR THIS UCC SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING

Please help with this worthwhile offering if you are able

Volunteer Americana Fair Luncheon

Sunday, January 19, 2020 at 12:00 Noon

Capo Ristorante Panino e Vino

49 Covert Avenue, Floral Park, NY 11530

We will be having family style appetizers, chicken and salmon.

Coffee & tea are included. Alcoholic drinks and soda will be extra.

Please R.S.V.P. Cindy Campbell at cindala86@gmail.com. The cost will be \$42 per person.

Please make the check payable to Cindy Campbell.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Throughout the years, our members and friends have grown in many ways through our small group ministries, such as: the Men's Breakfast, the Reader's Circle, the Prayer Service, the Garden Group, the Theatre Group, and our various choirs and music groups. If you would like to join a group, or start a new group, contact the church office.

Caring Ministry Volunteers Needed:

Looking for ways to help minister to those in our own GCCC community? When a member of our congregation is experiencing a difficult time or unexpected circumstance, sometimes volunteers are needed to help them with rides or meals. Meals can be homecooked, or simple donations of gift cards to restaurants. If you are interested in being on a list of caring ministry volunteers to support our community members, contact Paula at ptusianieng@aol.com, or Cindy Campbell at cindala86@gmail.com



HOME COMMUNION

Home Communion is available to anyone not able to attend church. Please contact the church office at churchoffice@theGCCC.org or (516) 746-1700 to arrange a time for a visit.

Intercessory Prayer Service

At the Intercessory Prayer Service, we faithfully pray for your loved ones each Tuesday morning at 9:30 AM in the Chapel. If you have a request for prayer, please fill out the yellow "Prayer Request" card in the back of the pew and place it in the offering plate or give it to an usher or minister.

All matters of prayer are strictly confidential. All are invited to join us in the work of prayer each Tuesday morning.

ATTENTION 8TH AND 9TH GRADERS

CONFIRMATION CLASS DATES

Confirmation I (8th Grade): Meets Mondays

Jan. 6th -Meeting

Jan 13th – Dinner/Meeting

Jan 20th & 27th – No meeting

Confirmation II (9th Grade): Meets Tuesdays

Jan. 7th – Dinner/Meeting

Jan 14th & Jan 21st –Meeting

Jan 28th – No meeting

Please contact Rev. Lynn Sullivan (lsullivan@thegccc.org) or

Chris Dieguez (chris@thegccc.org) for any questions.

ARE YOU CONNECTED?

Do you want to stay on top of what is happening at the GCCC in real time?

Sign up for one or more of our email blasts:

Monthly Newsletter

Weekly e-Blast

Pastoral Concerns

Weekly Church School News

Wednesday Eve Worship

You can sign up on our website

(<http://www.theGCCC.org/contact/>)

Or email us at churchoffice@thegccc.org

Church Membership News

Deaths:

Barbara Nothel November 18, 2019

Baptisms:

Vivienne Maeve Schrafel - November 10, 2019

Charley Gwyneth McKenna – November 17, 2019

Sebastian Daniel Buhrke – December 8, 2019

Alexandra Noa Riego – December 8, 2019

Youth Ministries

It's a new year!!

Another calendar year has ended and a new one has just begun. As we look back to see what our accomplishments and struggles were in the past year, we look forward to all that can be in the coming year: how we can see God at work in our lives and the ways we can serve God and God's creation.

The high school and middle school groups have been very active this past advent season. They held a Christmas Tree sale that sold out in record time, raised money and held a pizza luncheon for the folks at the INN, caroled for our Homebound members, concluded OWL (Our Whole Lives) Program, and helped make props for the Family Christmas Eve Service pageant. They have been very generous with their time and energy.

As the new year begins there will be still more opportunities to learn and serve. Youth groups will meet on Sunday mornings and confirmation classes will meet during the week. There will also be opportunities for our youth to serve in different ways as they continue to grow and learn.

We look forward to see all they do and being a part of their journey.

Blessings,

The Youth Leaders

ABS UPDATE

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

We have finished one year and a new one is about to begin. And, while we have just come out of our season of anticipation, it feels like anticipation is still in the air. We're looking ahead to what the next year will bring and how we can shape it to make the most of it. My prayer is that you all can make the most of the coming year.

We had a great wrap up to the Advent Season: making ornaments for the advent season, sharing them with the congregation, and using them to decorate the trees in the front of church. We also had a fun, spirit-filled pageant celebrating the birth of Christ during our Family Christmas Eve Service.

As we continue to celebrate the Christmas Season we will be learning more about Jesus, his ministry here on earth, and what that means for us today. We're looking forward to more interactive lessons and opportunities to share with the congregations all that we've learned and experienced.

As always, we will be looking for Youth Liturgists for the coming year as well as volunteers to help with some of our lessons and activities. You can go to the Sign Up Genius and choose the weeks you or your child would like to participate.

I look forward to all that the new year brings for us.

Blessings,

Margie

NEED AN ARK? I Noah guy.



UPDATE FOR JANUARY 2020

WITH COUNSELING SITES

LOCATED IN:

NASSAU SUFFOLK

MANHATTAN QUEENS

WESTCHESTER BROOKLYN

Prepared especially for LCC

Association Congregations & Schools

Practical Neuroscience and Contemplative Wisdom

By Rev. Kirk Bingaman, PhD, LCC Pastoral Counselor

In recent years, I have been focusing on neuroscientific findings, which reveal that far from being fixed and unchanging, the human brain has a remarkable capacity for growth and change across one's *entire* lifespan. Neuroscientists have only scratched the surface in terms of what is known about the human brain, which leads me back to the words of the psalmist: we humans are wonderfully and fearfully made (Psalm 139:14). The research holds great promise for helping us find ways to live abundantly and less anxiously, even in these challenging and uncertain times.

In a landmark study, the American neuroscientist, Andrew Newberg, focused on particular regions of the brain as he studied a group of Franciscan nuns doing the Christian Centering Prayer every day for fifteen years. What he found by way of periodic brain-imaging scans, which has been corroborated by subsequent research, was that having a regular spiritual practice (e.g., contemplative prayer) significantly lowers activity in the stress region of the brain while increasing activity in other regions that support health and well-being.

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, encourages us not to be anxious or "stressed" about tomorrow, to remain centered in the present moment of today (Matthew 6:34). And while we would all agree that his teaching is foundational for the spiritual life, there is not always clarity about *how* to put it into practice. We "get it" intellectually; in other words, we know full well it would do us good to be less anxious, but beyond an intellectual grasp of Jesus' teaching there is less understanding of how to make it a practical reality.

Sometimes I will hear congregants say that they feel guilty for not having enough faith in God to "overcome" their anxiety. Unfortunately, this "self-talk" and mental chatter becomes something of a "double whammy:" along with feeling anxious, they now feel anxious and guilty about feeling anxious. I am coming to see that it is not a matter of ignoring Jesus' teaching, but rather a lack of clarity about *how* to put his words into practice.

The recent findings of contemplative neuroscience reveal that a regular spiritual practice of contemplative prayer/meditation, even for ten or fifteen minutes a day, can make a difference in how we manage our stress, regulate our anxious feelings about the future, and ultimately live more joyfully and abundantly in the gift of today. In the words of the psalmist, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46).

Rev. Bingaman, PhD, LMHC, is Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling in the Graduate School of Religion & Religious Education at Fordham University. An ordained Presbyterian minister, he is a Fellow with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. Dr. Bingaman holds a PhD in Psychology and Theology from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary. His latest book is Pastoral and Spiritual Care in a Digital Age: The Future is Now. Dr. Bingaman counsels teens, adults and couples at our Mineola, Long Island site.

Call us at 1-800-317-1173 for more information or to set an appointment at any of our nine sites over the metropolitan New York area.