

Connections

February 2020

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

Minister's Message

The Passion Play

One of my most memorable trips as a member of my church's high school choir, was traveling to northern Arkansas to Eureka Springs and going to the Passion Play. I don't remember singing at churches, but I remember being in awe of the passion story coming to life. (should have been a clue that seminary would be in my future). Staged in an outdoor amphitheater, the multi-level set, special lighting and sound effects, live animals, and a cast of 150 Biblically costumed actors came together to create the thrilling epic drama of Jesus Christ's last days on earth.

This August, I will be going to what is touted as the most famous Passion Play in the world since 1634. A small German village called Oberammergau, located in the Bavarian Alps just north of the Austrian border made a vow to God to spare them from 'the plague' and in return, they would hold the popular Passion Play every ten years. The citizens have kept up their end of the promise and in the August, 2020, I will be one of the expected half-million people trekking to Oberammergau. Only natives of the town can be in the cast; and of the 5000 townspeople, 2000 will be in the show. The theatre seats 5000, so this summer, the village will double in size.

Oberammergau has come to be defined by the Passion Play. In one way or another, the entire village is involved in hosting the large number of guests that will embark on their village.

This got me thinking: what defines us? I have a friend who identifies with her profession. She admits that is where she excels. Another friend has the reputation of being a fair and just judge; however, she defines herself as a loving and devoted wife and mother. Where is your passion? Furthermore, can you imagine a family, church, village, country making a promise or vow to God, and expecting the generations to come to keep it? In this case for 387 years.

People will joke and say, "If A. J. Stewart knew ... was happening in our village, he would turn over in his grave." Oh how I wish the villagers had made a promise years ago to keeping people off the playing fields on Sunday until 1:00 pm. In fact, that was an agreement made in the village, but a federal lawsuit by residents erased it. Guess there is a difference between a vow and an agreement 😊.

Lent begins Wednesday, February 26. Let us all contemplate what vow or promise we will make to God and try to keep it during the 40 days in Lent – hey, that's a start.

Blessings,

Lynn

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:

- Mico Faella and Agnes Gordon for working with our custodians and taking down all the Christmas decorations around the church
- The COT members who have been leading our Forums: Janet Martens, Paul Cohn, Robin Laisure, Rick Herbst and Drew Hearon
- The IT Team for their Forum: Martha Yasso, Joe Rivera, and Joe Socha
- Doug Yasso, Viki Rehkugler, Janet Martens and consultant Paul Cohn for agreeing to be on the Interim Minister's Search Committee
- Marcia Matzelle for working on all the Nominations for our Church's leadership
- Joe and Vickie Stanco for hosting an event in their home
- The Caring Team who went visited our members and shared Communion
- Everyone who makes Sandwich Sundays such a huge success
- Mary Dewar for hosting Reader's Circle
- Men from the Men's Breakfast who were angels to Alice and Chris Brown

READER'S CIRCLE

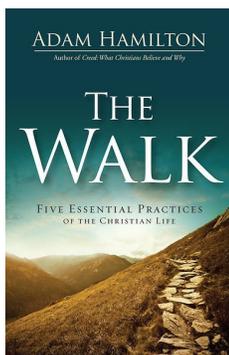
Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at noon in the Whitehall Conference Room.

We will be reading:

The Walk

by Adam Hamilton

Bring your lunch - Dessert hostess: Carole Halvorsen



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, February 1st at 8 AM.

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 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

Garden City Community Church – Service in Action Community Day

Saturday, March 14, 2020 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

GCCC Service in Action Day

Join us for our first intergenerational day of community service at the Garden City Community Church. We are organizing a half-day mission experience to learn about different needs in the community, and to volunteer as we grow in faith..

Registration will formally open in February, but space will be limited. Volunteers will be assigned to service sites based on interest, and site requirements such as age. Adults, youth and children are welcome to apply, however space is limited at some sites. Adult supervision is required for children. For more information and to be on the mailing list when registration is live, complete the form below. Preliminary Interest Form:

<https://gcccc.breezechms.com/form/aff099>

Tentative Schedule

9:00 a.m. Meet at Garden City Community Church

9:05 am. Introductions, Icebreaker, Morning Prayer

9:30 a.m. Teams Depart for Service Sites

10:00 a.m. Serve Site Experiences

11:30 a.m. Depart Sites for GCCC

12:00 p.m. Community Sharing, Lunch, Fellowship & Closing Worship

1:00 p.m. Depart

Tentative Service Sites (TENTATIVE):

1) **Anna's House** - <https://www.belmontchildcare.org/anna-house> Age requirements: 5 years old and up; childcare, beautification. Indoor/Outdoor projects.

2) **Ronald McDonald House** - New Hyde Park <https://www.rmhcny.org/> - 12 volunteers max. Cooking meals. Indoor Project.

3) **Plattduetsche Home Society** -

Franklin Square, NY <http://www.plattduetschehome.com/> Recreation with seniors. Indoor Project.

4) **Garden City Bird Sanctuary** - 12 years old and up. Outdoor Project yard clean-up.

<https://gcbirdsanctuary.com/>

WALK, DON'T RUN

The Season of Lent is coming so fast, that we haven't put away our Christmas decorations yet and here we are planning and anticipating for the sacredness of Lent. Should we run and rush into our preparations or should we walk? I don't know about you but I have been rushing through life so much that I missed the darkening of the sky as it waits for the promise of dawn. I missed the changing of the Seasons, the beauty of the falling leaves, the freshness of the newly accumulated snow, the slowness of time as I grow older.

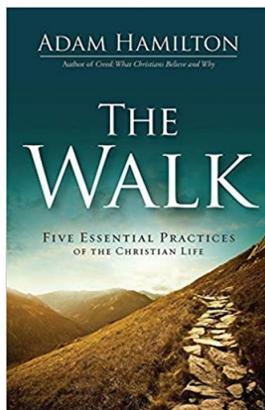
Turn back the hands of time! Oh, if I could only do that. I'll recapture the glimpses of grace I missed. I'll appreciate more the noise of children playing outside my window, the airline delays, the microwave rotating warming my meal, the coffee brewing, the slow Internet connection...

Let me appreciate more!

"Slow down you move too fast, you got to make the morning last", humming Simon and Garfunkel in my head still can't slow down. "Just kicking down the cobblestones, looking for fun and feelin' groovy...Slow down, just what's your hurry? Go too fast and life gets blurry. Take more time to have some fun. Life is good when feeling' groovy".

I'm still not slowing down. But you can help me savor the moment and Walk Not Run through Lent and make Easter a more JOYOUS season. Walk me through, as our study leaders guide as in a six-part study of the book by Adam Hamilton, **THE WALK: FIVE ESSENTIAL PRACTICES OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE**

BOOKS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE STARTING FEB 2nd AT THE SUNDAY FORUMS OR CHURCH OFFICE for \$20.



LENTEN SUNDAY FORUMS STARTING ON

FEBRUARY 23,

MARCH 1, 8, 16, 22 & 29

How do we walk with Christ - daily follow him, grow in him, and faithfully serve him? In the Gospels, Jesus modeled for us the Christian spiritual life. The apostles taught it in their writings. And the Church has, through the last 2,000 years, sought to pursue this Christian spiritual life.

In *The Walk*, Adam Hamilton focuses on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God and taught throughout the New Testament. Each of these practices is intended as part of our daily walk with Christ while also being an essential part of growing together in the church.

In each chapter, Hamilton explores one of these practices, its New Testament foundation, and what it looks like to pursue this practice daily in our personal life and together in the life of the church. Deepen your walk with Christ as we explore the five essential practices of worship, study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith.

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 !

Nursery School 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.

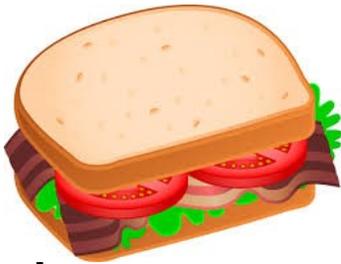
Each session meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:15 - 12:15 - July 7 through July 30.

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.



SANDWICH SUNDAYS

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

Sunday, February 2, 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-sandwich5>

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

December 2019 - Pizza Luncheon for the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN)

This past December the Garden City Community Church asked for \$10 donations to cover the cost of a pizza which would be donated to the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN) in place of our monthly Sandwich Sunday donation of bagged lunches for their guests.

We were able to donate enough pizzas so that 257 guests from the INN and an additional 20 guests from the Donald Axen INN (Men's Shelter) each received 2 slices of pizza.

A grand total of 277 guests were fed. One of the INN's associates told us, "It's not every day that our guests are treated to pizza for the day." This is a great testimonial to the gift that the GCCC gave guests at the INN this Christmas – and volunteers a day off from cooking after the holiday 😊

'Souper Bowl' Sunday

From Sunday, January 12, 2020 to Super Bowl Sunday (February 2, 2020) we are asking for people to donate canned soup (or other canned food items) if they are able to help support the Long Island Council of Churches Emergency Food Center.

We are looking to collect 500 cans of food! Each week the Church School children will update a 'football field' poster showing how many cans are collected and they will update the church of this number each Sunday.

Help us score a 'touchdown' and reach our 'goal' of 500 cans!

Birth Announcement:

Congratulations to the Gustavson family
Brittany & Henry Gustavson celebrate the
birth of their daughter Natalie Beatrice

7 lbs. 6oz.

20 inches

Born: January 6, 2019

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, February 26th

12:00 Noon

4:30 pm – Family Service

8:00 pm

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

Feb 3rd & Feb 24th -Meeting

Feb 10th - Dinner/Meeting

Feb 17th – No meeting

Confirmation II (9th Grade): Meets Tuesdays

Feb 4th - Dinner/Meeting

Feb 11th & Feb 25th – Meeting

Feb 18th – No meeting

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

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

ANNUAL CORPORATE MEETING

In accordance with the Religious Corporation Law of the State of New York, and the by-laws of the Garden City Community Church, notice is hereby given of the Annual Corporate Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 9, 2020 immediately following the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service.

The purpose of the meeting will be:

- To elect successors to the trustees;
- To act on the church budget for 2020;
- To elect a slate of officers for 2020;
- To conduct any other business that may properly be presented at that time.

Light refreshments and coffee/tea will be served prior to the meeting at 11:45 a.m. Child care will be provided.

Church Membership News

Deaths:

Robert Van Meter – January 13, 2020

Baptisms:

Robert Angelo Gabriele III – January 12, 2020

Youth Ministries

The Youth Are On the Go!!

It's winter and you normally think of things slowing down and notice a lull of activities between the holiday and when we get outside in the Spring. But not for our youth. They just keep going.

All of our youth programs are in full swing: Sunday Morning Youth Group, Confirmation I, Confirmation II, and Mission Trip Planning. Retreats and fundraisers are being planned and we're all getting excited for the possibilities. Keep your eyes open on the weekly e-blasts so you don't miss what's coming next.

One such activity is the last day of our Souper Bowl of Caring on Super Bowl Sunday, February 2, 2020. Wear your favorite football jersey to church that Sunday (or any other sport you would like to represent, if you don't have a football shirt) and bring any non-perishable goods to help us make our goal of 500 items to donate to Long Island Cares. It is a way we can help others as we celebrate with fun and food.

Also, if you are in grades 4-12 and you would like to participate in the youth liturgist program, please go to our Sign-Up Genius page <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080a4aeea828a1fa7-liturgist> and choose a week or two you would like to help lead worship. Our worship is always enriched when our youth participate in it.

We look forward to seeing you at all the activities we having going on.

Blessings,

Youth Leaders

ABS UPDATE

HAPPY LENT!... Or maybe not so happy.

The season of Lent starts this month; another season of contemplation and atonement in the life of the church. Throughout this season in ABS we will have the chance to learn some more about Jesus' life and all that he came to teach us. And we will be taking some time to think of others as we use our Lenten Giving Calendar to think of all the things we are blessed with that others may not be. But don't worry, we won't be too solemn for too long. There are still fun activities coming your way!

One of those activities is on Super Bowl Sunday, February 2, 2020. It is the final day of our Souper Bowl of Caring collection. Wear your favorite football jersey to church on 02/02/2020 (you're welcome to show off another sport if you don't have a football shirt) and bring in any last non-perishable goods to help us make our goal of 500 items for Long Island Cares. As we celebrate with food and game, let us also help those in need this winter.

Calling our Youth Liturgists!! If you haven't signed up for some dates this winter and spring, now is your chance. The new dates have been added to the Sign Up Genius. All those in grades 4-12 are welcome to participate. It is so fantastic to have our youth open worship each week.

We could also use some more hands in ABS. If you would like to teach for 45 minutes or just lend an extra set of hands, we would love to have you. Winter and spring dates have been added to the Sign-Up Genius so, please, find some time, and come join us. It's the best job in the church!

I look forward to seeing what the Spirit has in store for us this month!

Blessings,

Margie

Adam and Eve—the first people to not read the Apple terms and conditions

FEBRUARY FORUMS

Sundays at 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. in the Church Parlor

Join us for a cup of coffee and interesting topics by fantastic guests and church presenters!!!

February 2: Marilyn Heath Yasus , “Awaken Your Senses and Spirituality at the Rubin Museum” and a special guest

February 9: NO FORUM – Congregational Meeting at Gardner Hall after the 10:30 a.m. Service

February 16: TBA

February 23: TBA

**ALL SUNDAYS IN MARCH WILL BE DEVOTED TO
A CHURCH WIDE LENTEN BOOK STUDY – DON'T MISS IT!!!**

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Melva Victorino is the Communications Coordinator of the Garden City Community Church (GCCC). She has been a member of GCCC since 1987. For many years now, Melva has been responsible for most of the weekly news articles, pictures and paid Ads highlighting church events published in our newsletter and in the Garden City News. Her role is to help coordinate with boards, committees and team leaders timely publication of church programs and important events both within and outside the church.

To effectively communicate the church's news, please submit all drafted articles, pictures with captions, materials with valid information, answering the questions: *What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?* All submissions must be sent to Melva at melva130@optonline.net. They should be received no later than two weeks before intended publication date to allow ample time for the communication team to set up, rewrite and proofread articles before publication.

For more information, please contact the church office at churchoffice@thegccc.org or melva130@optonline.net.

TWEET OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TWEETED