

**The Church-in-the-Gardens
A Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ
Forest Hills Gardens, New York**



Our Church Covenant

“We covenant and agree with each other to unite as a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, for Christian fellowship, for public worship and for the advancement of God’s kingdom in the world. We agree to maintain the institutions of the gospel, to promote the peace and prosperity of the Church, to walk together in brotherly love.”

Adopted by this congregation in 1913

**Order of Worship – 10 A.M.
Sunday September 17, 2023 Holy Cross Sunday and Food Insecurity Sunday**

Welcome to the Church-in-the-Gardens...

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

**We invite you to place your name and contact information on a Visitor Card in the pew rack. Please place it in the offering plate or give it to a greeter.*

Please be sure to get a **parking pass from a greeter if you have parked a car that does not already have a decal or parking pass displayed.*

**Please silence your cell phone*

God bless you as together we experience God’s life-giving word.

Prelude

Announcements

- The Bible Study Series, **What the Bible Does and Doesn’t Say about Open and Affirming**, which took place on June 3, 10 & 17, facilitated by Rev. Fred, has finished. Recordings of the three sessions are available. Please contact Rev. Fred or the church office for the links to the recordings.
- Gifts of food are urgently needed for MONKWORX, our Ridgewood neighbor. Families are hungry, and food stamps, now called “SNAP,” have just been cut. Bring canned goods and non-perishable donations every Sunday to the basket at the sanctuary entrance Thank you.

Mark your calendars:

- Today** from 1:30-3:30 p.m. in the Community House—
Serving the Least Among Us: Responding to Food Insecurity in Queens
- Sunday September 24, following worship—
*What the Bible Does and Doesn’t Say about Open & Affirming – Summary & Discussion AND
Next Steps in the Process of Becoming Open and Affirming*
- Wednesdays September 27, October 4, 11, 18, 5 p.m. zoom-
The Biblical Creation Stories, God, and Us
- Sunday, October 1*—We will be recognizing our Office Administrator, Jacqui-Maria Russell, for her 15 years of service to our church and celebrating her in a special “super coffee hour” following worship.
- Saturday October 7 at 11 a.m. -*Blessing of the Animals*

Please Pray: For healing: Marcelina Astonitas (mother of Carlos Pesantes); Phylia Banks; Christopher Craig; Karin Del Greco; Cindy Herendeen; Noriko Iwamoto; Patrick Lazar; Kevin McGrath (friend of Jacqui Russell); Dan Olson; Jeanne Martin; Constance Radut; Anne Sandager; Dora Shia

For all who are grieving or suffering loss of any kind.

Prayers for those in residential care: Hanna Bassous; Millicent Fairhurst

Opening Prayer

***Call to Worship (adap. Psalm 114)**

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul. And let all my being...

All: Bless God's holy name.

One: God works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

All: And crowns us with steadfast love and mercy.

One: Let all that is in heaven and on earth, and all that is within me...

All: Bless God's holy name.

*** Opening Hymn** PH 195 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name vv. 1,4,5

***Prayer of Confession**

One: O God of grace, we need your strength in our weakness.

All: We confess that we can be judgmental and hyper-critical

One: Of others, and even of our own selves.

All: We confess that we can project our own shortcomings onto others

One: In order to deflect attention from ourselves.

All: Forgive us. Renew us.

One: Be with us in the brief time of silent reflections...

***Sung Response: SING! 58 Children from Your Vast Creation**

Children from your vast creation, gather here for guidance, Lord;

We of every tongue and nation yearn to see your earth restored.

You have shown that your intention wills a world kept free from strife.

Open us to love's dimension, filled with true abundant life.

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Passing of the Peace of Christ**

The Peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

First Lesson Psalm 98 (adapted)

One: O sing to the LORD a new song,

All: For God has done marvelous things.

One: All the earth has witnessed God's victory—

All: Steadfast love and faithfulness

One: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

All: Break into joyous songs of praise:

SING! 1 Sing a New Song refrain

Sing a new song unto the Lord; let your song be sung from mountain high.

Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing, "Alleluia

One: Sing praise to the LORD with the stringed instruments.

All: With trumpets and the sound of the horn

One: Make a joyful noise to the LORD.

All: Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

One: The world and those who live in it.

All: Let the rivers clap their hands;

One: Let the hills sing. Let everything and everyone

All: Break into joyous songs of praise:

SING! 1 Sing a New Song refrain

Sing a new song unto the Lord; let your song be sung from mountain high.

Sing a new song unto the Lord, singing, "Alleluia

Gospel Lesson John 3:13-21 pg. 93, red bible, pg. 114, black bible

Sermon Let's Be Clear Reverend Frederick Weidmann

***Hymn** PH 157 In the Cross of Christ I Glory vv. 1-4

***Pastoral Prayer**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sung Response: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Amen. (2x)

Offering

Offertory

***Doxology** "with Alleluias"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God the source of all our gifts,

Praise Jesus Christ whose pow'r uplifts,

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer and Dedication Cindy Knauer

***Closing Hymn** SING 157 Lord, I Lift Your Name on High

***Benediction**

Postlude

**All who are able, please rise*

Children (and parents) are welcome to go downstairs to **Sunday School** for fun, learning, and activities—we leave worship following the Scripture Readings and before the Sermon.

There is a Cradle Room available downstairs for parents and children, and coloring books and activities available at the back of the church.

Please join us for a time of **Coffee and Fellowship** following the service, at the CITG Sanctuary Steps (weather permitting) or Lounge.

There are 4 ways you can **make a contribution to The Church-in-the-Gardens**:

1. Send a check to the church (50 Ascan Avenue Forest Hills, NY 11375)
2. Set up a "bill payment" through your bank to have checks mailed to the church.
3. Through Zelle. Our name is listed as Church in the Gardens, Forest Hills, NY; use email treasurer@thecitg.org
4. Collection plate

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50 Ascan Avenue, Forest Hills, NY 11375

(718) 268-6704 www.thecitg.org

Minister: Reverend Dr. Frederick Weidmann

Music Director: Dr. Sunny Knable

Liturgist: Cindy Knauer