

**Order of Worship – 10 a.m.**  
**Sunday, January 26, 2025**  
**Third Sunday After Epiphany, Jesus' First Sermon**

***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 and Prayer Requests- see final page**

**Opening Prayer**

**\*Call to Worship**

One: The Spirit of God has called us to this place and time.

We meet in the holiness of now.

**All: We gather to hear God's liberating word of love.**

One: May the Spirit of God at work in Jesus be at work in and among us.

**All: To experience and to share God's love and justice. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn SING! 263 Open Our Eyes**

**Prayer of Confession and Renewal**

One: Holy God, you have expressed your hope for us

**All: And your vision for life abundant.**

One: Yet too often we settle for avoidance over real peace.

**All: We avoid the engagement and accountability that lead to justice.**

One: We do not pursue your will

**All: When confronted by the cost of discipleship.**

One: Forgive us, O God, we pray.

Be with us in the brief time of silent reflection...

**\*Sung Response SING! 58**

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.

**\*Passing of the Peace of Christ**

The Peace of Christ be with you!

**And also with you!**

**Choir Anthem**

**Gospel Lesson** Luke 4:14-21 black bible, pg. 74

**Second Lesson**

**Sermon** " The Homecoming" Reverend Rayford Howell

**\*Hymn NCH 273 Praise with Joy the World's Creator vv. 1-3**

**\*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** You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore" Cesareo Gabarain

**Offertory**

**Doxology** (with Alleluias)

**\*Prayer of Dedication Novi Suhero**

**\*Closing Hymn SING! 268 Here I am, Lord**

**\*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 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 in the 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 at the back of the sanctuary

## Announcements and Prayer Requests

**\*\*THANKS TO OUR GUEST MINISTER, REV. RAYFORD HOWELL.**

**\*\*Rev. Fred will be on vacation Monday January 20 thru Tuesday January 28.** In the event of a pastoral emergency, please contact the church office.

**\*\*Today- Garden Players Winter Concert-** at **3pm** and **5pm** in the Community House join The Scooches and Garden Players as they share original songs and improv. This concert aims to raise money for the Garden Players May musical, and to celebrate the end of our Fall semester. Front row tickets are \$25, main row tickets are \$15 (kids 3 years old and under may sit on your lap for free). Get your tickets online at gardenplayerstheater.com.

**\*\*RISE AGAINST HUNGER—Volunteer Opportunity Sunday February 2, 1-3 p.m. in the Community House.** There will be a brief video presentation during announcements.

**\*\*VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN THE CHURCH OFFICE Mon-Wed, 8:30-4**

Volunteers are needed in the Church office on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays thru early March to be at the main desk. Jacqui is working remotely and is handling emails and most phone calls. The main responsibility is to monitor the door (via camera) –buzz in package deliveries and help welcome visitors. Please email Jacqui (admin@thecitg.org) or Rev. Fred (revfred@thecitg.org). Thanks.

**\*\*A NEW MEMBERS CLASS IS FORMING** Please reach out to Rev. Fred (revfred@thecitg.org) if you are interested or know someone who is.

**\*\*GIFTS OF FOOD are urgently needed for distribution through our central Queens partners.** Please bring canned goods and non-perishables on Sundays to the basket at the sanctuary entrance. Thank you

**Please pray for:** Marcellina Astonitas (Carlos Pesantes' mom); Dawn Burrowes; Patricia Faas; Karin Del Greco; Jessica Faas; Cynthia Faria; Noriko Iwamoto; Melissa Kaganovich (Mercy's daughter); Karen Lanegran (Katie's mom); Allen Maurer; Constance Radut; Sharon Roth; Nancy Russo; Jacqui Russell; Anne Sandager; Dora Shia; Jackie Stuart; F.J. Wang

**For all who are grieving or suffering loss of any kind:** Family and friends and all grieving the loss of Nancy Russo

**Prayers for those in residential care:** Hannah Bassous; Millicent Fairhurst; Nafees Watkins

**The Church-in-the-Gardens**  
**Forest Hills, New York**  
**An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ**



**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 1913)*

**Our Open & Affirming Covenant Statement**

*We affirm the worth and dignity of each individual. We welcome everyone into the full life and ministry of the church including persons of all sexual orientations, gender identity and expression, mental and physical ability, marital status, family structure, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, and any other way that people self-identify. As our clear expression of Christian love, we are open and affirming of all people. (Adopted 2024)*

***The Church-in-the-Gardens***

*A Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ*  
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(718) 268-6704    [www.thecitg.org](http://www.thecitg.org)  
[admin@thecitg.org](mailto:admin@thecitg.org)

Guest Minister: Reverend Rayford Howell  
Music Director: Dr. Sunny Knable  
Liturgist: Novi Suhero