

Order of Worship – 10 a.m.

Sunday, January 18, 2026

“Beneath the Lofty Palms” Presentation & Martin Luther King, Jr. 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 and Prayer Requests- see final page

Opening Prayer

***Call to Worship** (adapted from Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*)

One: Was not Jesus an extremist for love?

All: “Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, pray for those that persecute you.”

One: Was not the prophet Amos an extremist for justice?

All: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”

One: Was not St. Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel?

All: “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.”

One: Was not Martin Luther an extremist?

All: “Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God.”

One: So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. In the name of Jesus Christ...

We will be extremists for Justice.

All: We will be extremists for love. Amen.

***Opening Hymn NCH 394** In Christ There Is No East or West

***Prayer of Confession and Renewal**

One: When we lose touch with our own need to flourish,

All: Holy One, forgive us. Reconnect us.

One: When we lose touch with the celebrations and struggles of our neighbors,

All: Holy One, forgive us. Reconnect us.

One: When we lose touch with our common humanity and need to experience freedom, love and justice.

All: Holy One, forgive us. Reconnect us.

One: Be with us now in this brief time of silent reflection...

***Sung Response: SING! 103 v. 2**

Come, O Prince of Peace. Come, O Prince of Peace. Come, O Prince of peace; Come, and be born in our hearts.

***Passing of the Peace of Christ**

The Peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

Beneath the Lofty Palms:

The Words of God presented through Readings, Music, and Liturgical Dance

"The Inescapable God" (Psalm 139)

Sunny Knable

CITG Choir

"Happy Are Those" (Psalm 1)

Sunny Knable

CITG Praise Band & Jen McDonald, Soloist

Dance Accompaniment—CITG Dancers, Christine Lawson, Choreographer

Concept and Direction— Ernie Searle

Thanks to all the above and to all Readers, Performers, Tech Team, etc., etc.

***Hymn NCH 593** Lift Every Voice and Sing vv.1-2

***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 *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* (NCH 472)

Randall Keith Horton, Soloist

***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 of Dedication Ira Apsel

***Closing Hymn** We Shall Overcome (NCH 570)

***Benediction**

Postlude

**All who are able, please rise.*

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.

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

Announcements & Upcoming Events

****Today- The Wellness/Exercise group** will take place in the lounge following coffee hour.

****The Church, facility and school will be closed** on Monday, January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

****Together We Can: Forest Hills Interfaith Community Day of Service**

MLK Day, Monday January 19, 2026, 10 – Noon at 1st Presbyterian Church, Forest Hills.

****New Church Membership Directory-** We're putting together a new church membership directory so it's easier to stay in touch, reach out, and recognize familiar faces (and names!). If you're part of our church family, we'd love to include you. Just swing by the info table after service to check your details, or send us your info and a photo (if you'd like; see also the note below re: photos) to admin@thecitg.org

Please Pray: Marcellina Astonitas (Carlos Pesantes' mom); Dawn Burrowes; Karin Del Greco; Dylan Dujmic; Jessica Faas; Cynthia Faria; Christopher Henderson; Yang Oke Hwang; Noriko Iwamoto; Ethan Paxton LaBue; the Mains family; Allen Maurer; Constance Radut; Anne Sandager; Dora Shia; Zorica Tortoroli; F.S. Wang; Yuying Zhai (mother of Wendy Wang)

For all who are grieving or suffering loss of any kind including the Hyslop and DeRege family and all mourning the loss of Alisons' Dad; Leah Fink and her family and all mourning the loss of her brother, J.T. Skadden; the Lanegran and Brooks family and all mourning the loss of Katie's mom, Karen.

Prayers for those in residential care: Millicent Fairhurst; Nafees Watkins; Jackie Stuart

"BENEATH THE LOFTY PSALMS"



The Words of God presented through Readings, Music, and Liturgical Dance

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
Minister: Reverend Dr. Frederick Weidmann
Music Director: Dr. Sunny Knable
Liturgist: Ira Apsel