

Living Message and Laity Sunday
October 18, 2026

Welcome to the Church-in-the-Gardens...Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

*Visitor Card: Please fill out and place in the offering plate or give it to a Greeter.

*Parking pass: Do get one from a Greeter if you're parked outside the church.

*Please silence your cell phone

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

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Opening Prayer

***Call to Worship** (Based on Psalm 96)

One: O sing to the LORD a new song;

All: Sing to the LORD, all the earth

One: Say among the nations, The LORD is king. and

**All: God will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with truth.**

Opening Hymn| SING 37: For the Music of Creation

Prayer of Confession and Renewal

One: O God of Justice, O God of Truth, Forgive us...

All: For being timid when you empower us to be bold,

One: For being complicit when you have called us to be transformative

All: For being resigned, when you have created us to be resolute.

One: Help us walk in your way;

All: Make us strong in You.

One: Be with us in the time of silent reflection...

And be with us as we sing...

Sung Response: SING! 58

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. (Repeat)

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Assurance of Pardon (Minister)

***Passing of the Peace of Christ**

The Peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

First Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-7, 9

Gospel Reading: Matthew 22:15-22

Sermon: "A Living and True God"

***Second Hymn | NCH 582:** O God of Earth and Altar

***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:

Sunny Knable

***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 (Liturgist)

***Closing Hymn| SING! 43** Lord, Be Glorified

***Benediction**

Postlude

**All who are able, please rise.*

Announcements & Upcoming Events: Please see insert

Cradle Room: Available downstairs for parents and young children.

Kids Activity Pages: Coloring and activity pages are available at the back of the church.

Sunday School: Children ages 5 and up are excused before the sermon for lessons in the Parish House

Coffee and Fellowship: Please join us following the service in the lounge.

Contribute to The Church-in-the-Gardens (in addition to the offering plate):

- 1. Mail check to the church: 50 Ascan Avenue, Forest Hills, NY 11375
- 2. Bill Payment: Set up with your bank to have checks mailed to the church.
- 3. Zelle Payment: Our name is listed as, “Church in the Gardens, Forest Hills, NY”; use email: treasurer@thecitg.org

Please Pray For:

Phylia Banks; Gayla Burkitt (niece of Leah Fink); Dawn Burrowes; Richard Corson; Joe Dujmic, Sr.; Jessica Faas; Cynthia Faria; Gayla Grzegorzcyk (niece of Leah Fink); Christopher Henderson; Noriko Iwamoto; Ethan Paxton LaBue; David Lanegran (father of Katie); Allen Maurer; Constance Radut; Anne Sandager; Dora Shia; Luis Vazquez, Sr.

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

For Carla De Ycaza Montero and family, our church family and all grieving the loss of Jeanne De Ycaza.

For all grieving the loss of Yuying Zhai (Mother of Wendy Wang). And for all grieving the loss of Peter Steiner.

For those in residential care:

Millicent Fairhurst; Nafees Watkins; Jackie Stuart

The Church-in-the-Gardens
A Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ
Minister: Reverend Dr. Fred Weidmann
Music Director: Dr. Sunny Knable
Liturgist: Andrea Berta

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)