The Church-in-the-Gardens

An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Forest Hills, 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 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)

1st Sunday of Advent (Hope)

Sunday, November 29, 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 (Liturgist)

Advent Greeting & Opening Prayer

Lighting of Advent Wreath Wei Liu & Hanna Lu

Sung Response: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (PH 110 v. 1)
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Advent Proclamation
We light the candle of HOPE. We know that God is with us.
Hope is with us and all around us.

***Call to Worship**

One: Tear open the heavens and bring forth your presence.
All: We watch and we wait for the glory to come.
One: We gather in hope.
All: We watch and we wait for the coming birth.
One: Revive us and restore us, O God.
All: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

Opening Hymn| NCH 117: Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates

***Prayer of Confession and Renewal**

One: We are called
All: To lift up our souls to God.
One: We [so often] prefer to lift up only what we're proud of. But…
All: God calls us to lift up our whole selves.
One: O God, be with us in this brief time of silent reflection…

***Sung Response:**

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me. (Repeat)
Cast me not away from your presence, O Lord,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation
and renew a right spirit within me.

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Passing of the Peace of Christ**

The Peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

Responsive Reading: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

One: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before
Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might and come to save us!
All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
One: Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your People's prayers?
You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in
full measure. You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies mock us.
All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
One: But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom
You made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.
All: **Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel Reading: Mark 13:24-31

Sermon: The End of the World as we Know It

***Second Hymn | (See INSERT):** My Lord! What a Morning

***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: Restore Us, O God (Psalm 80) 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! 77:** I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Benediction

Postlude

***Individual Prayer Following Worship:**
A deacon will be available at the front of the church to pray with you.

Announcements & Upcoming Events: Please see insert
Cradle Room: Available downstairs for parents with young children.
Kids Activity Pages: Coloring & activity pages available back of the church.
Sunday School: Children 5 yrs and up excused after sermon for lessons in Parish House.
Coffee and Fellowship: Join us following the service in the lounge!
C**ontribute 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".
   Email: treasurer@thecitg.org

Please Pray For: Phylia Banks; Dawn Burrowes; Roger Chang; Richard Corson; Joe Dujmic, Sr.; Cynthia Faria; Gayla Grzegorczyk (niece of Leah Fink); Christopher Henderson; Julie Hutchinson Smith (niece of Leah Fink); Noriko Iwamoto; Ethan Paxton LaBue; David Lanegran (father of Katie); Allen Maurer; Anne Sandager; Dora Shia; Luis Vazquez, Sr.
For all who are grieving or suffering loss of any kind.
For those in residential care: Millicent Fairhurst; Constance Radut; Jackie Stuart; Nafees Watkins;

The Church-in-the-Gardens
Minister: Reverend Dr. Fred Weidmann
Pastor Nancy Kraft, Ph.D
Music Director: Dr. Sunny Knable
Liturgist: Novi Suhero

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Sunday, November 29, 2026

Wellness/Exercise group
Class will follow coffee hour, please wear appropriate footwear.

Pastoral Vacation Notice
Rev. Fred will be taking vacation time through Friday, December 4. He will return for the Greening of the Sanctuary on Saturday, December 5, and worship on Sunday, December 6. He will resume responding to emails on Monday, December 7. For pastoral emergencies during his absence, please contact the church office at admin@thecitg.org or 718-268-6704.

Greening of the Sanctuary | Saturday, Dec. 5 | 9:00 AM – 1 PM
Join us as we prepare our sanctuary for Christmas! All are welcome to help decorate with evergreen boughs, wreaths, ribbons, poinsettias, and other festive touches. Light refreshments will be provided.
Questions? Contact Cindy @ 917-403-2113.

The Weekly Word Newsletter | Connect with CITG news & events | Signup on back table
Our weekly Thursday newsletter shares church events, worship services, volunteer opportunities, Bible studies, and ways to get involved.
Contact the church office at 718-268-6704 or admin@thecitg.org.

Donations to the Food Bank
Bring non-perishables every Sunday. Add to the basket in the sanctuary entrance and please check expiration dates before donating. Thanks kindly!

