



# Garden City Community Church Connections May 2024

Building a community where all are enriched  
through Christian Love, Service, and Spiritual Renewal.

## Pastor's Message

Dear friends,

A generation of us played a childhood game called "telephone." It goes like this. Twelve or twenty-five (or more) persons line up front to back. The person at the back of the line whispers in the ear of the person in front of them a story, perhaps as simple as: "A dog barked at a bicycler." That person whispers the story to the person in front of them; the story passes from person to person until the one at the head of the line whispers the story to the one who started it.

The story, of course, has transformed. The dog becomes a big dog or a mean dog, or a dog happy to see its owner, or a dog that runs out of its yard. The bicycler falls or swerves or yells, or stops and pets the dog. The tale transforms because each one brings their story to the story.

The best part of the game? Everyone hears the final version and the first version, and describes how it became a new tale. What learning emerges? The truth we know becomes the truth we tell; all of us have a view of the truth, a combination of what we hear and what we already know, hence few of us have the same understanding of the facts; facts and truth meet in the process of hearing and telling the story together; together we reach agreement.

The four Gospel stories about the life, death, resurrection and presence of Jesus the Christ are an example of this learning. Like persons in a line, the Gospel of Mark speaking first and the Gospel of John last, all four stories are told to and by the church. One outcome? God still speaks; the way of Jesus shows up in particular ways; the church needs all four Gospels, (and Holy Spirit) for facts and truth to meet; together the church reaches agreement: Jesus Christ is Sovereign (Lord)!

Soon a Search and Call Committee will begin to help you, congregation, tell the truth you know about our congregation. Each of you are like one of the Gospels. The truth you know, you tell - in each other's hearing - as if around the campfire or dining table.

Facts and truth about Garden City Community Church meet in the process of hearing and telling, wondering and discerning. In congregational conversations you create your church Profile narrative. Together you reach agreement about this congregation's glad purpose. Together you describe yourselves at your best and at your worse, and what you have learned from both. Together you identify your world's need. Together you name your ministry and mission.

Together you tell all, in order for all congregation participants to name and affirm, for this season, and for the near future, Garden City Community Church's identity and purpose: "who are we - who is our neighbor - who is God calling us to become?" Together you describe the Senior Pastor who will join their glad purpose to yours. Together you reach agreement.

Then the story you hear about the Garden City Community Church becomes the story you tell - to one another and to strangers and eventually to Senior Pastor Candidates - with the confidence of these words in the *Profile Statement of Consent*: "*The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors...is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners....to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church.*"

Friends, grab a seat around the congregational conversation table. You have stories to tell and experiences to share. The Search and Call Committee, with me and COT, will organize and lead. Together, with God's help, you - Garden City Community Church - will reach agreement and say: "Yes, this is true of us. Thanks be to God for what has been, and for right now, and for what is yet to come!"

Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Arlen".

Schedule a Visit with Pastor Arlen

In person, or on Zoom, and at your place of choice.

Calendar: <https://bookme.name/WalkingAlongside/beingwith-hour>

His email address is [revarlen@thegccc.org](mailto:revarlen@thegccc.org). Mobile: 585-455-2289



### **Inside This Issue**

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### **Worship Schedule**

#### **Sundays**

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

#### **Tuesdays**

Intercessory

Prayer Service

9:30 AM In-person

## Council of Trustees News (COT)

To the GCCC Congregation-

Every day we greet people, have conversations, and attend meetings. Have you noticed how some interactions energize you and some leave you feeling depleted? You are feeling the difference between constructive communication and destructive communication. Constructive communication follows a set of guidelines that help promote understanding and collaboration. Constructive communication is:

### **Problem oriented, not person oriented**

Focuses on a problem that can be solved rather than the person who is responsible for the problem. e.g. "I would like to see the flag on the alter again" instead of "You shouldn't have moved the flag".  
Problem oriented communication focuses on avoiding or solving future problems, not blame.

### **Descriptive/specific, not evaluative**

Objectively describe problems rather than speak in an evaluative manner. e.g. "Your changes to the Order of Worship are terrible." It's more descriptive and therefore more constructive to say, "Your change to put announcements first in the OOW disrupts me from getting into the right mindset for worship."

### **Validating, not invalidating**

Validating communication shows respect for the other party's thoughts and feelings, even when there's disagreement. One of the most effective ways of doing that is by finding a point of agreement. e.g. "I agree that our process has been moving slowly but we unearthed some important issues during that time that will be critical to address going forward."

### **Listening, not one-way message delivery**

Effective listening is actively absorbing the information given to you by a speaker, showing that you are listening and interested, and providing feedback to the speaker so that he or she knows the message was received. Think about how it makes you feel when someone constantly interrupts you or switches topics. Does that make you feel like they are listening to you?

### **Owned, not disowned**

By owning our communication, we take responsibility for our statements and acknowledge that we are the source of the ideas conveyed. We disown communication when we attribute our comments to third parties e.g. "Several members of the congregation asked me to ask you to communicate more frequently." You garner more respect when you are accountable for the requests you make.

We are moving forward in the journey to a new senior pastor. The Search and Call committee will be engaging us in meaty and sometimes difficult discussions as they work to collect our input for a call profile. It is important that we use constructive communication as we discuss and debate our answers to the questions in the profile. It is equally important that we do not tolerate destructive conversations. Be aware of how you feel. Do you feel this person is honoring and respecting you? If not, stop the conversation. Only partake in constructive conversations. Constructive conversations are positive, meaningful, and beneficial. Take your time seriously by making every interaction a positive and productive one.

[with thanks to BE CONSTRUCTIVE, NOT DESTRUCTIVE By Julie Fuimano and The Eight Attributes of Constructive Communication by Whetten, D. A., & Cameron, K. S.]

Faithfully submitted,

Kirsten Bahlke—Council of Trustees (COT) Chair



## Words from Our Minister of Music, Frank Crosio

Spring has arrived and the Garden City Community Church is filled with the sounds of joyful music!

Our Easter services at 9:00 am and 11:00 am were once again enhanced by the music of a professional brass quartet. It is always exciting to work with such fine musicians, and I along with the choir and congregation, are most grateful to those whose generosity to the Special Music fund makes this possible each year. I am also grateful to our Adult Choir and Section Leaders for all of their diligent work providing inspirational music for our worship services at Eastertime and throughout the year!

On the weekend of May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, both the Great Neck Choral Society and the Long Island Choral Society will present their Spring concerts here in the GCCC sanctuary. Church members and the general public are most welcome to attend.

The Great Neck Choral Society concert entitled Spring Soirée will be held on Saturday evening, May 4, at 7:00pm, and the Long Island Choral Society Concert entitled Beethoven and Broadway will be held on Sunday, May 5, at 4:00pm.

Pictured below are the members of our Easter Brass Quartet for 2024: Ariel Shores and Samantha Atlas, trumpets, and Karl Lyden and Owen Capril, trombones.



## MISSION EVENTS



### Plant Sale, Car Wash and Gourmet Food Sale!



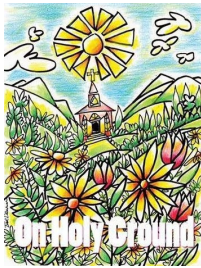
**May 11th, 8:00 am —noon**

Please mark your calendars and plan to support the Mission Trip at our annual Plant Sale and Car Wash on Saturday May 11th 8am –noon. Our plants have been absolutely beautiful recently, you will not be disappointed! In addition, Kimberly Pauley will be selling pies, cakes and quiche to support the Giving Garden. There is something for everyone! The event will be held rain or shine, we hope to see you there!



### **Strengthen the Church Offering**

For the month of May we will be collecting a special offering for the UCC Strengthen the Church campaign. Through this campaign, people across the UCC support the formation of new congregations and the renewal of existing ones, fund new programs for youth and young adults and sponsor leadership development for the whole church. Please donate to this worthy cause if you are able.



### **Bi-weekly Food Collections for the Long Island Council of Churches Food Pantry**

We have recently spoken with the Director of the LICC Food Pantry, Anthony Achong. He said they are looking at two possible sites for the pantry, so let's say a prayer and keep our fingers crossed for them. Our next few scheduled donation days are: May 1st, 15th and 29th. Donations should be left on the Whitehall porch before noon on the dates mentioned above. Any donations you can make will be greatly appreciated.

Time to volunteer? [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-46044897-2024#/#/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-46044897-2024#/)



## News About the Building

Rob Sipkin and Kristian Rhein are continuing to repair and paint the walls outside of the boiler room. They will also be fixing the outside shed. They have to replace the old wood and then paint the shed.



## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

### News from our Sunday School, Youth Groups & Confirmation Class

Thank you to Kimberly Pauley and the Middle School Youth Group for planting lettuce in the garden to donate to the INN. We had a great time working outside in the garden!

May 4<sup>th</sup>: MSYG is hosting an intergenerational Board Game Night from 5:00-pm — 8:00pm. Come enjoy spending time with fellow parishioners while playing some fun board games! For more information please email Amanda, [adidas@thegccc.org](mailto:adidas@thegccc.org).

May 5<sup>th</sup>:The Last Confirmation Meeting!

May 11<sup>th</sup>: Mission Trip Car Wash and Plant Sale from 8:00 am—noon! Come and support our Mission Trippers and get some delightful goodies. Just in time for Mother's Day! There will also be some Gourmet food for sale and proceeds will go to the Giving Garden.

May 12<sup>th</sup>: Come to enjoy a special Mother's Day performance from the Sunday School!

May 19<sup>th</sup>: Last meeting of the High School Youth Group! Come have some fun with your friends!

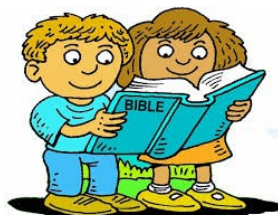
June 2<sup>nd</sup>: CHURCH SCHOOL SUNDAY! Join us as we celebrate all the wonderful youth of our church from the smallest Sunday Schooler to our graduating seniors! We will also be commissioning our Mission Trip volunteers.

The Sunday School team is looking for someone who has experience using or has a Cricut machine! If you can help, please email Amanda, [adidas@thegccc.org](mailto:adidas@thegccc.org).



### Third Grade Bible Class

We will be offering our 3rd Grade Bible class again this year. The class will meet in the Parlor on Sunday, May 5th at 11:45 am and Monday, May 6th at 4:30 pm. The class will learn about the basics of the Bible and they will receive a Bible on June 2nd (Church School Sunday.) Letters have been sent out to the parents of our third graders. If you have any questions, or did not receive a letter email Amanda Dias at [adidas@thegccc.org](mailto:adidas@thegccc.org).



## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

### Board Game Night

The Middle School Youth Group is hosting an intergenerational board game night on Saturday, May 4th. Join us in Gardner Hall from 5:00pm—8:00 pm for a fun time with our church community. There will be snacks and tons of board games for everyone to enjoy. This event is open to all ages, so come and join us for an evening of fun!



### Worship Altar Flower Donations

A \$50.00 dollar donation provides a gift of love! Use this link:

<https://www.gardencitycommunitychurch.org/give> and go to the online giving 'quick give' and choose the dropdown line: 'Give to 2024 Flowers' - or - hand deliver or mail to The Garden City Community Church.

Sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-46046622-2024> Include the wording you wish us to include in the Order of Worship.



### 2024 Fellowship Hour Sign Up

**Hosting Refreshment and Friendship after worship conversation** - Perhaps hospitality and hosting are your passion. Schedule two ways: notebook in the Parlor or:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-46048741-2024> Questions?

Reach out to *Ministry Committee* or email [churchoffice@thegccc.org](mailto:churchoffice@thegccc.org)

**Fund a Refreshment and Friendship conversation time:**

<https://www.gardencitycommunitychurch.org/give> and go to the online giving 'quick give' and choose the dropdown line: 'Give to 2024 Fellowship'.





## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

### Men's Breakfast

All men of the church and their visitors are welcome; it is an opportunity to enjoy relaxed fellowship and conversation over a shared meal. **Next meetings are on May 4th and June 1st at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**

### Tuesday Prayer Service

The Prayer Service welcomes anyone who wishes to join us. We are meeting in the Chapel Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am. Please email the office, George Bashian or Rev. Arlen G. Vernava if you have a prayer request. **All requests are kept confidential.**

### Worship Ushers or Liturgists Opportunity

Perhaps you love to greet and welcome and lead, and work best as part of a team? Reach out to the *Ministry Committee* or *Pastor Arlen*, or email [churchoffice@thegccc.org](mailto:churchoffice@thegccc.org).



### GC Community Church Tech Team



We are looking for youth (and the otherwise young-at-heart) to contribute to bringing our weekly services, special services, and other content to our homebound and our away-from-home members. This is also our chance to reach out for those seeking a new church home. But we cannot do this alone, we need your help, or your children's help in making this happen. Absolutely no experience required, and while we will guide newcomers, we will also gladly take advice from the old-sages.

Contact Steve Short, Tim Martens, or William Stone

Or Just join us some Sunday, in the balcony!

## NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

### HAVE YOU CHANGED ANY OF YOUR CORRESPONDENCE INFORMATION LATELY?

#### Moving or preparing to move?

Do you have a new address, a new phone number or a new e-mail address?

Do you want to receive our weekly e-blasts about all the activities going on in the church?

Are you getting the mailings from the church?

Please let the church office know if any of your information has changed so that we can stay in touch with you! We are updating our files and want to make sure we have the correct information.



### Deaths

Patricia Sullivan — March 31, 2024

Catherine Tusiani—April 3, 2024 - (Paula Tusiani-Eng's sister-in-law)

Kristine Harder—April 8, 2024

Karen Zalewski—April 18, 2024

### ON-LINE GIVING UPDATE

Garden City Community Church has partnered with Breeze Church Management Systems to support our *On-line Giving Initiative*. If you would like to set up "Recurring Contributions" or make a "Onetime Contribution" to support our many Ministries, please click on the link below. Our online giving platform allows us to align our congregational giving with our member data base, resulting in greater efficiency and clarity for Church Members.

<https://gcc.breezechms.com/login/create>

Giving can also be accessed through GCCC website via the "GIVE" button

<https://gardencitycommunitychurch.org>

We appreciate your support in our efforts. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Liz or Kim in the office (516)746-1700.

## Musical Ensembles

**Adult Choir** – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm. Performs Sundays & Holidays September through June.



**Youth Choir** – Open to grades 3-8. Rehearsal are Sundays from noon to 12:30pm. Performs 1 Sunday a month at the 10:30 am service before Sunday School dismissal.



**Handbell Choir** – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 6:45 pm – 7:45 pm in modules. Performs 4 times a year.



**Youth Band** – Open to H.S. students through adults. Rehearsals are 1-2 Saturday mornings per month. Performs 1 Sunday or Special Occasion per month.



For more information contact Frank Crosio, Minister of Music at [music@thegccc.org](mailto:music@thegccc.org)



# BOARD GAME AND BINGO NIGHT!!

*all members of GCCC family!*

**Sat- May 4**

**FAMILY GAMES FUN**

Door Open At 5 PM ★





The  
Great Neck  
Choral  
Society  
*Presents*

# SPRING SOIRÉE

Featuring  
Fauré's "Requiem" and  
"Cantique de Jean Racine"  
César Franck's "Psalm 150"

Morten Lauridsen's "Dirait-on" and  
Rodgers & Hammerstein II's  
"You'll Never Walk Alone"  
with "Climb Ev'ry Mountain"

...  
Conductor: Benjamin Arendsen  
Accompanist: Guy Brewer  
with Chorus and Soloists  
...

Date/Time: Saturday, May 4 at 7pm

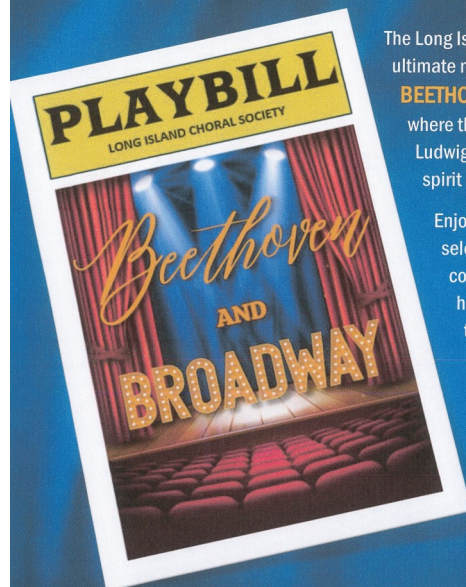
Venue: The Garden City Community Church  
245 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, NY

Tickets: General Admission \$25,  
Senior Citizens & Students \$20

Long Island Choral Society



Michael C. Haigler  
Music Director



The Long Island Choral Society presents the ultimate musical extravaganza:  
**BEETHOVEN AND BROADWAY**  
where the timeless, classical sounds of Ludwig van Beethoven meet the vibrant spirit of musical theatre.

Enjoy the brilliance of Beethoven with a selection of his most exquisite compositions. Act Two will have you humming along with the toe-tapping tunes of "Guys and Dolls" and the heartwarming melodies of "Carousel" and "The Music Man".

We hope you'll join us for an afternoon filled with beautiful, uplifting, and fun music.

May 5, 2024 at 4pm

Garden City Community Church  
245 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, NY

General admission: \$20 / Youth: \$10 - Call to order: (516) 652-6878 or purchase at door.

[www.LICS.org](http://www.LICS.org)

# GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

## ANNUAL PLANT SALE, CAR WASH AND GOURMET MARKET! SAT MAY 11, 8AM-12PM



Hanging baskets, flats, decorative pots, trees, climbing vines,  
we've got it all!

Proceeds of the Plant Sale and Car wash benefit our **2024 Youth Mission Trip to Knoxville, TN** where we will repair homes and build wheelchair ramps for the underprivileged.

This year we will also be selling homemade pies, cakes and quiche to support the **Giving Garden**.

Please come support these wonderful causes and pick up a special treat for yourself or a wonderful gift for **Mother's Day!**

**GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH  
245 STEWART, GARDEN CITY  
CORNER OF STEWART AND WHITEHALL**



**JULY 8TH-11TH**

# Vacation Bible School

245 STEWART AVE,  
GARDEN CITY

6:00-8:00PM

FAMILY ACTIVITIES,  
SPORTS, MUSIC,  
CRAFTS FOR KIDS

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT AMANDA  
(ADIAS@THEGCC.ORG)



## On Tuesdays, The Sun Comes Out

By Jennifer Schell Podoll

**W**e're in that time of year: graduations and concerts and ceremonies and recitals. There's a lot of parental pride that comes with this season of culmination, commendation and celebration. I'm as guilty as anyone of posting to the socials all the sunshine my heart is bursting with – and maybe that creates a lopsided view of my life from the outside looking in. But I think it's important to acknowledge two things.

**First:** that sunshine feels so good because we — each of us, in our own way — have walked through the storms of parenthood. Middle school with my oldest was freaking hard. It was a physical, emotional, hormonal metamorphosis. (And I mean that in the Kafka-esque way: Did a giant cockroach just come out of my eldest child's room? Nope. A teenager.)

There was one week – now this is high school, mind you, *after* the metamorphosis – that my oldest had a temper tantrum on Monday so massive that it made me question all the parenting decisions we did and didn't make. The same day, #2 had the blues and the youngest, who is neurodiverse and challenged in all the ways, just had a stupid, hard day. Were we creating humans who couldn't function IRL? Could we do this at all?

And then Tuesday dawned: the oldest was an angel ready to run the world, #2 had an awesome band concert *and* the youngest managed to sit through that concert without melting down. That day, the literal and figurative rain held off. So, I posted that Tuesday sunshine to all the socials. Days like that feel like hard-won victories and when I post, I'm sharing my boundless pride but also telling you: We made it to Tuesday – *there is* a Tuesday.

Social media gets all the sunshine moments, and most of those stormy days never make it to the permanent record. But I think that's OK. I want to share in your sunshine, too. I love your beautiful children, your happy anniversaries, your funny cats and your spring gardens. Keep sharing your sunshine. The world needs it. We need to see you making it to Tuesday.

**Here's the second thing:** I hope my sunshine never seeds your storm. I get it. I have a kid who we held back (and will do so again this year). A kid who didn't talk until he was five years old and still needs help wiping his mouth. He will likely not win varsity letters or be lauded for leadership. (Just typing those words is so painful.) For our youngest, just getting to the finish line is a victory — even if he comes in last. For all you moms and dads of kids with special needs, kids who look different, who think different, who act different: your sunshine is just as bright. You earned it. I see it.

Parenthood — life — is not a competition. Together, our collective sunshine can warm up this cold, Kafka-esque world. Let's be there for each other to celebrate our wins, our mediocrity and our I-barely-survived-but-I'm-still-here moments.

Life is hard ... but when the sun comes out, even for a minute, it sure feels good ... so let's celebrate together.

*This month's Guest Contributor is Jennifer Schell Podoll, a heart-bursting-with-sunshine-on-Tuesdays mom of four kids: three on earth, one in heaven. She has spent her career in the nonprofit sector raising lots of funds for important causes. Jennifer lives in Westchester County, where she tends her shady gardens, sings in the VLC choir and is beyond grateful for her husband and partner of 24 years. Call the Lutheran Counseling Center at 516-741-0994 or 1-800-317-1173 or e-mail us at [Center@lccny.org](mailto:Center@lccny.org) for more information or to set an appointment.*



Jennifer, far right, enjoying a foggy day with her family



# May



# 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
				1 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	2 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	3 Men's Breakfast 8 am Carle Place Diner Intergenerational Game Night 5:00 pm	4 Men's Breakfast 8 am Carle Place Diner Intergenerational Game Night 5:00 pm
5 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Class 11:45 am M.S. Youth Group 6:00 pm Confirmation I class/dinner 6:45 pm	6 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible Class 4:30 pm Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	7 Prayer Service 9:30 am	8 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	9 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	10 Car Wash/Plant Sale/Gourmet Food Sale 8:00 am - noon	11 Car Wash/Plant Sale/Gourmet Food Sale 8:00 am - noon	
12 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am <b>Conf. I class Not scheduled</b>	13 Prayer Service 9:30 am	14 Prayer Service 9:30 am	15 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	16 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	17 H.S. Youth Group Meeting 6:00 pm	18 H.S. Youth Group Meeting 6:00 pm	
19 Sunday Service/Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Ministry meeting 12:00 pm M.S. Youth Group 6:00 pm Confirmation I Dinner 7:00 pm	20 Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	21 Prayer Service 9:30 am	22 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	23 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	24	25	
26 Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am <b>Sunday School &amp; Conf. I class Not scheduled</b>	27 Office Closed Memorial Day	28 Prayer Service 9:30 am	29	30 Adult Choir Practice 8:00 pm	31		