



Garden City Community Church Connections January 2024

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

Pastor's Message

The Garden City Community Church Members and Friends,

In October of 1930 before the Great Depression turned one year old, this religious institution came into being, and became known as The Garden City Community Church, the name affirmed in July 1931. What a time to begin life! In the year 1931 Garden City modified it's "Community Agreement... to include the newly developed Western Section of the Village", (from gardencityny.net) a place experiencing geographical expansion and numerical growth amidst an economic depression and a sea change in the geo-political world.

Like Garden City itself in 1931, The Garden City Community Church understood its purpose and embodied it's deep gladness. Ninety-two years ago the spirit of this place incarnated its *Why*. It knew it's holy vocation: it's deep and glad purpose in service to the worlds need. Curiosity, wonderment, possibility, a "yes... and" posture nourished their being and doing. *Community Church*. Such a powerful expression of *purpose!* I imagine this conversation in 1930 and 1931.

Why another Christian congregation in Garden City? *To benefit all of Garden City and partner with all of Garden City.* Why a congregational congregation? *For those who desire to offer their whole selves in the whole life of church.* For what purpose? *To be and do the way of Jesus in the midst of much want, trial, and tribulation.*

No church folk are alive today who were adults ninety-two years ago, though some of you experienced The Garden City Community Church at its vocational zenith, a zenith not defined by overflowing worship attendance or cradle to grave church school participation, or wise and charismatic leadership, though these, perhaps, were the fruit. Friends, this congregation's zenith was defined by a clarity of purpose aligned with its best gifts and resources in response to Garden City and the worlds need.

In this ninety-second, going on ninety-third year of church life, as this 2024 year begins to unfurl, in what powerful ways, I wonder, will you, church, respond to God's still speaking voice? This answer finds its source in your answer to the same: in what powerful ways, I wonder, will you, dear one, respond to God's still speaking voice? I am not inviting, with my query, *what to do* or *how to do it*. Your *doing* muscles are strong and experienced. Ready and able. I am inviting you to ponder, as if for the first time, your deep gladness, the bedrock that joys you through and through. I am inviting you to prayerful pondering without agenda, or judgement, or expectation, or plan: without nostalgia nor aspiration. Your deep gladness, joined by others, gives shape and substance to The Garden City Community Churches bedrock that joys the spirit of this place - deep gladness in service to the worlds need.

2024 begins with the Season of Epiphany - growing and learning, becoming the Season of Lent - discerning and doing. Growing and learning - discerning and doing with you, with God's help!

Peace and blessings,

Arlen G. Vernava

Intentional Interim Senior Pastor



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Worship Schedule

Sundays

10:30 AM

Livestream & In-person

Tuesdays

Intercessory

Prayer Service

9:30 AM In-person



MISSION EVENTS

2024 Mission Trip

Knoxville, Tennessee

Planning is underway for the 2024 Mission Trip which will be serving in Knoxville Tennessee during the week of July 14th—July 20th. We have some wonderful leaders in place; but we are very much in need of at least one additional male leader. A leader needs to be 21 years or older. Please reflect and consider if you may feel compelled to join our team. It promises to be a very rewarding and fulfilling trip! All leaders set off thinking they are going for the youth, and come back with stories of interactions that have changed their own lives. Please consider if it may be the right time for you to step up, we cannot hold the trip if we do not have at least one male leader. If you would like to discuss the role and learn more about what it entails, please feel free to reach out to me: Tracey Lawson at traceymlawson@gmail.com or 516-984-4470 .

COMING SOON

Birthday in a Box - Service Event

Sometime this month we are planning to have a service project for an organization called 'Birthday Wishes' of Long Island.' We will create boxes with the supplies needed for a child that is experiencing homelessness to have a Birthday Party. Birthday Wishes gives the party box to children and their families that are staying in domestic violence safe shelters.



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

We have been collecting non-perishable food items to support the Long Island Council of Churches Emergency Food Center. Your generosity has been a testament to what we can accomplish, even under the most trying of times. If you are able to make a donation, they are especially in need of soup (NOT Vegetarian and NOT low-sodium), pasta, peanut butter, and jelly. Our next few scheduled donation days are: January 10th & 24th and February 7th and 21st. 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#/>

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (UCC) CHRISTMAS FUND will be collected in January

This fund helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants, as administered by the Pension Boards. Please help support this UCC Special Mission.



Council of Trustees News (COT)

JANUARY CONNECTIONS NOMINATING REQUEST

Our Church's Membership Committee is responsible for considering candidates to serve as Trustees, Delegates, and Members of various committees. We ask for your prayers and your support as we pursue this task in preparation for our Annual Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 4, 2023.

In particular, we are looking for people with:

- Financial skills to serve on our Finance and Administration committee.
- Fundraising skills to serve on our Finance and Administration committee.
- Legal skills to serve as a liaison and update/inform Council of Trustees.
- Programming skills for social events to foster Christian love/Connections.
- Programming skills for Service ministry dedicated to good works.
- Programming skills for Christian education events
- Skills for organizing Training events and Leadership Development.
- Service Ministry for Youth Mission trip July 2024, Male leadership needed

Please know you will not be alone, there are members willing to train and guide you on how to proceed in God's service.

Members of the congregation are encouraged to submit names for nomination. Feel free to nominate yourself!! Please consider your nominees prayerfully. Attributes to bear in mind for prospective church leaders might include:

- Leadership-Your confidence in their decision making.
- Example-Their faithful participation in the life of the church.
- Love-Do they demonstrate love for God and Neighbor?
- Maturity/Understanding-in listening and communicating.
- Open-Mindedness-their willingness to learn and grow as they serve.

Please send any names you want to submit for consideration to Membership Committee Chair Celia Petersen at gpcatspawr@msn.com or to the Church Office at churchoffice@theGCCC.org . All nominations must be received no later than Sunday, January 21, 2024 for consideration prior to the Annual Meeting.

Council of Trustees News (COT)

Annual Corporate Meeting

In accordance with the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York, and the by-laws of the Garden City Community Church, notice is hereby given of the Annual Corporate Meeting to be held on Sunday, February 4, 2024 at noon following the 10:30 am Worship Service.

The purpose of the meeting will be:

- to elect successors to the trustees;
- to act on the church budget for 2024;
- to elect a slate of officers for 2024;
- to conduct any other business that may properly be presented at that time.

News About the Building

Rob Sipkin and his staff have been hard at work taking care of the building. This past month they have stripped all the floors in the Nursery School wing. They have also recently stripped all the floors in the Sanctuary. Let's give a shot out of thanks to Rob, Kristian and Blanca for all their hard work. Rob will keep you informed on projects & maintenance in future newsletters.

Americana Fair

On Sunday, January 7th there will be an Americana Fair wrap—up meeting in the Kensington room at 11:45 am. Our net amount earned this year was \$18, 004.12 . This is \$433.78 more than last year!

On Sunday, January 14th there will be a Fair luncheon at 12:30 pm at: Eric's Italian Bistro 70 E. Old Country Road, Mineola. The following food will be served 'Family Style.' Tomato Brushetta, Baby Mesclun Green Salad, Chicken marsala, Eggplant Parmigiana/Penne ala Vodka. Dessert will be Italian Biscotti and mini cannoli platters. Coffee, tea and soft drinks are included. There will be a cash bar for those who wish to order alcoholic beverages.

Total cost will be \$55 per person, including tax and tip. **Please send a check, cash or Zelle, payable to Cindy Campbell, 86 Longfellow Avenue, Westbury, NY 11590 by January 7th. 30 people must be confirmed to hold the event.**

A free Garden City municipal parking lot know as Fair Court Parking Field is located across the street off Lefferts Road on the South side of Old Country Road. Street parking is available as well.

Questions—call Cindy at (516) 524-1617.



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

Alfred J. Schrafel Jr.—Nov. 28, 2023 (Richard Schrafel’s father)

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.

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Youth Groups

A huge thank you to everyone who made this year's Christmas Pageant possible. We had 14 wonderful Sunday School actors and 4 amazing Middle School narrators. Thank you to all the teachers and Frank Crosio for making the pageant possible and thank you to all the parents and their continued dedication to the Christian Education of their kids.

Middle School youth group ended with a bang! We had a Christmas party where we had some snacks and played some games. Thank you to the amazing Kristine Newell for co-leading the MS youth group. At the next Middle School youth group we will be continuing our journey through some well-known Bible stories, plus we will be discussing this year's big service project.

A great big thank you to Steve Short for co-leading the November and December meetings of the High School youth group and for his open and honest discussion about gratitude. If you are interested in co-leading in the coming new year please email Amanda Dias at: adias@thegccc.org. At the next High School youth group meeting we will be discussing a new topic. We will also be planning our events which will be scheduled from now through the end of May.

On January 7th the Sunday School will be starting up again for the New Year. Thank you for the continued dedication of our teachers and parents. We will be continuing to work our way through the Spark House curriculum. Looking ahead we are going to do a board game night for Sunday school and middle school families in January. Come ready to play fun games like UNO, Apples to Apples, etc. Then in February we are looking to do a family ice skating outing. Watch our e-blasts for the upcoming dates. If you are interested in becoming a Sunday school teacher please contact Amanda at adias@thegccc.org.

Confirmation had their last meeting for the year on December 17th where the kids and leaders were able to get into the Christmas spirit. We are excited to start again in the coming new year. A special thanks to our wonderful leaders, Amber Henriquez, Amy McCoy, and Doug Yasso for their open and honest spirit with the kids. Keep our group of leaders and students in your prayers as we get rolling again in the new year.

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

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.



Sunday Forum

Join us on Sunday, January 28th at 11:45 am in the Parlor for our monthly Sunday Forum. Amanda Dias will tell us about herself and her work here as our Youth Ministry and Outreach Coordinator.



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

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 Jan. 6th and Feb. 3rd at 8:00 am at the Carle Place Diner—151 Old Country Road in Carle Place. Reservations are not needed.**

Schedule a Visit with Pastor Arlen

In person, or on Zoom, and at your place of choice. Calendar: His email address is revarlen@thegccc.org. Mobile: 585-455-2289

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.**

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!

Nursery School Registration

Community Adventures – A Super-FUN Summer Program

The holidays are behind us and It's frosty and cold outside - Time to start making summer plans!!

Registration will begin for the Nursery School's summer program – Community Adventures on Monday, February 1, 2024.

Community Adventures is a program designed to keep bodies busy and minds moving while providing a safe, loving environment where children feel free to explore, learn and most importantly, PLAY.

Community Adventures meets for 4 sessions beginning in July. Each session meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:15 - 12:15 - July 9 through August 1.

Tuition: \$160.00 per session - MINIMUM enrollment - 2 (1 week) sessions. Children who are entering a 3 or 4 year old program or kindergarten in the fall are eligible to attend.

Registration is open to all. Visit our website to download the registration form and for more information about Community Adventures & the Community Church Nursery School: www.GCCCNURSERY SCHOOL.com or call the school office – 516-746-1756.



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

GCCCC



January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Building closed	2 Prayer Service 9:30am Chapel	3 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	4 Adult Choir Practice	5 Men's Breakfast 8am Carle Place Diner	6
7 Church Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Americana Fair wrap-up meeting 11:45am F&A Meeting 5:00pm Confirmation I class 6:45 pm	8 Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30pm	9 Prayer Service 9:30am Chapel	10 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	11 Adult Choir Practice	12	13
14 Church Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Confirmation I class 7pm Fair Luncheon 12:30pm	15 Building closed	16 Prayer Service 9:30am Chapel	17 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	18 Adult Choir Practice	19	20
21 Church Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Ministry Meeting 12pm H.S. Youth Group 6pm Confirmation I class 7pm	22	23 Prayer Service 9:30am Chapel	24 Adult Choir Practice 8pm	25 Adult Choir Practice	26	27
28 Church Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30am Sunday Forum 11:45 am M.S Youth Group 6pm Confirmation I class 7pm	29	30 Prayer Service 9:30am Chapel	31			