



# Garden City Community Church Connections August 2024

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

## Pastor's Message

Dear the Garden City Community Church members and friends:

Eugene Peterson wrote a book titled from an Emily Dickinson poem that says in part: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant - " *Tell It Slant: a conversation on the language of Jesus in his stories and prayers* makes a case, Peterson says, for

"a continuity of language between the words we use in Bible studies and the words we use when we're out fishing for rainbow trout. I want to cultivate a sense of continuity between the prayers we offer to God and the conversations we have with the people we speak to and who speak to us. I want to nurture an awareness of the sanctity of words, the holy gift of language, regardless of whether it is directed vertically or horizontally. Just as Jesus did." (page 4)

Friends, Peterson describes Jesus as one who, like his ancestors, moved in a culture where face to face story-telling and story-listening conveyed the stuff of life. He describes Jesus, unlike his ancestors, as one who desired to reclaim all language as God language, language that creates healing, forgives, casts out demons, and makes relationships of mutual respect and trust, where all contribute and grow. Reflecting on Genesis and one of the stories of creation, Peterson writes:

"The man and the woman started out so well. They were designed by God himself and alive with the very breath of God. They were in a good place with good work to do - poets working with words, gardeners working with soil and plants - all their needs met, open and intimate with one another, open and intimate with God. They woke each morning to a world of beauty and abundance in which they had dignity and purpose and use.

'Naked and not ashamed': completely at ease, completely at home, nothing to hide, nothing to fear, open to one another, open to the animals and weather and earth, open to God. And then, after a brief conversation with the Snake, we find them desperately sewing fig leaves together to cover up what can't be covered up. The fig leaves signpost language catastrophe. Words are no longer a means of intimacy, of revelation. They're fig-leaf words." (page 264)

Friends, lean in with me. Jesus's stories and prayers revealed the truth about God, our relationship with God, and our relationship with one another and with Empire. Jesus' stories and prayers invite us to practice being and doing without fig leaves, and we practice, first of all, using words to tell the stories of our lives.

The story of your life includes the Garden City Community Church. Your being and doing as the Garden City Community Church, Jesus argues, is your life story too. Your stories about your experience - your first-hand experience - of the GCCC, are the Garden City Community Church story. A story full of angles and perspectives. A story of words and actions sacred and profane; "fig leaf" stories and "'naked and not ashamed'" stories. All of them creating the life of the Garden City Community Church: her past and present. All of them creating your life also.

In September, on a Sunday after worship, a date soon announced, you, church, and each one of you, friends, has the honor and privilege to offer and receive your story of the GCCC: this household of faith. I invite you to prepare. Prepare by reading the annotated timeline located along the long hallway at church. Prepare by adding your story chapter headings to the time-line. Prepare by remembering that your story, your firsthand story, when shared and received in community, when described and told as "this is how it affected me..." become stories without fig leaves, creating a Garden City Community Church story "completely at ease, completely at home, nothing to hide, nothing to fear, open to one another... open to God."

Telling the story of your life with the Garden City Community Church. Telling it to one another. Telling it together. Like Jesus did. Don't feel surprised when miracles begin to happen. Healing. Forgiving and forgiveness. Casting out demons. Relationships of mutual respect and trust. All contributing. All growing. All knowing they are made very good in God's image. Amen!

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



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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)

Dear Church-

Others and I on COT often get asked the same or similar questions so we thought it would be helpful to share an FAQ about COT.

### Frequently Asked Questions about the GCCC Council of Trustees

#### **Q) What is the purpose of our Council of Trustees (COT)?**

- A) The COT, on behalf of the congregation, works in "furtherance of the Church's mission and welfare." This includes making decisions about the physical property and revenue activities of GCCC, reviewing/approving the policies and procedures of the Church and its Standing Committees. COT members are the congregation's elected leaders, nominated from among members in good standing, and voted on by the members in good standing at the annual meeting.

#### **Q) What is the congregation responsible for?**

- A) They affirm, choose (vote) and commission the persons who will lead on their behalf, as COT. They affirm, call (vote) and install settled ordained ministers to serve as Senior or Associate Pastor. They may also affirm (vote) and remove installed, settled, ordained Senior or Associate Pastors. They affirm and vote on an annual budget. They may also affirm and vote on action(s) connected to the mission and welfare of the Church at a specially called meeting, action(s) not part of the Annual Meeting. This may include a financial expenditure that exceeds total budgeted monies, or establishing, as happened recently, an ad hoc Search and Call committee.

#### **Q) Who attends COT meetings?**

- A) Members of the COT attend meetings either in person or virtually. The Senior Pastor and or other Ministers, Treasurer, and Information Officer attend but are ex-officio, meaning, they have voice and no vote. All others have voice and vote: Finance and Administration (F & A), Ministry (Worship), Membership, Programming and the Chairperson of the COT. The Programming Committee on the COT is represented by three, Connections (fellowship), Good Works (service), and Spiritual Renewal (education.) Members of the congregation who have a proposal for COT may also attend the piece of the meeting related to that business. When a vacancy on COT occurs between annual meetings, the COT is empowered to seek and choose a member of the congregation in good standing to fill that vacancy until the next Annual meeting.



## Council of Trustees News (COT)

**Q) Who can vote at COT meetings? Does the COT need to tell the congregation when it is voting on something?**

A) All except those except ex-officio: Minister(s), Treasurer, and Information Officer. They have voice and no vote. The Congregation empowers and trusts the COT to "further the mission and welfare" of the church. There is nothing in the bylaws that directs or requires the COT to disclose meeting agenda items in advance.

**Q) How often do you meet?**

A) The bylaws (therefore the congregation who must vote on edits, additions, or deletions of the bylaws) mandate no less than quarterly - four times a year. Currently COT meets twice a month.

**Q) How can I learn more about what goes on in COT meetings?**

A) All COT minutes are distributed to all persons on every standing and ad hoc committee including, Finance & Administration (F & A), Ministry, Membership, Programming, and Search and Call, along with all staff and ministers. Minutes of COT meetings are also posted on the Church website.

**Q) What is the relationship between COT and the congregation?**

A) The congregation, at its Annual Meeting, establishes "broad policies and directives." They commission, bless, and promise to pray for, honor, and support the work of the COT and its members. The COT promises the congregation to, with God's help, in the words of the bylaws, "work in furtherance of the Church's mission and welfare." The COT advances the work of the church with the support, trust and help of the congregation. The congregation advances the GCCC ministry and mission through the faithful work of COT and its leaders.

**Q) Does the COT follow the by-laws? Can the COT change the by-laws?**

A) Yes, the COT follows the bylaws. When the bylaws are not specific, COT endeavors to act in the best interests of the congregation. The COT can propose changes to the bylaws but only the congregation can approve the changes.

If you have any questions that weren't addressed here, please reach out to me, Rev. Arlen Vernava, or any of our Council members. Our Council members are Kirsten Bahlke, Cindy Campbell, Robin Laisure, Tim Martens, Karin Melkonian, Tara Noll-Socha, Viki Rehkugler and Joe Stanco.

Faithfully submitted,

Kirsten Bahlke – Council of Trustees (COT) Chair



## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES



### **Our former Pastor Rev. John Livingston will be preaching on Sunday, August 11th**

Rev. John Livingston will be preaching at the Garden City Community Church on Sunday, August 11th while Rev. Arlen Vernava is on vacation. Here is a brief bio. Rev. John Livingston was born and raised in Queens N.Y. He attended Saints Paul's school here in Garden City; and then CW Post College, Long Island University with a BA Degree in Music. This was where he met his wife, Judi. John received a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary. He served as Associate Pastor here at the Garden City Community Church, Long Island (December 1981-June 1986.) John served along with Pastors Ralph Ahlberg and Jim Adelman. John was called to be The Pastor of The United Church of Rowayton, Ct. in 1986. John served on the Fairfield West Association Committee Church and Ministry. He retired from the United Church of Rowayton in June, 2022 after faithfully serving this church for 37 years. He and his wife Judi have been married for 45 years and now live in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport Ct. They are proud of their family (four children and four grandchildren): their daughter, Kelly (Naturopathic Physician-Fairfield) daughter, Samantha (Teacher- The Children's School, Stamford) and son-in-law, Julien; their son, Michael (College Football Coach at University of Massachusetts) and daughter-in-law, Melissa. Judi and John spend as much time as possible with their four grandchildren: Luca (9); Everly (9); Vivienne (2 1/2) and Scarlett (2 months).

### **Preaching Schedule for August 18th and August 25th**

While Rev. Vernava is away on vacation our own Paula Tusiani-Eng will be preaching on Sunday, August 18th and Rev. Kitt Von Braunsberg will be preaching on Sunday, August 25th.

**Please join us as we welcome all three of our guest preachers.**

## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School & Youth Groups



### MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP CO-LEADER NEEDED

This position is open to anyone in the congregation that is interested in working with the church's youth! The commitment is 2 evenings a month (beginning in October, most likely Sunday evenings). We play games, read the Bible and eat snacks. If you are interested or have any questions, please email Amanda at [adias@thegccc.org](mailto:adias@thegccc.org).



### UPCOMING FAMILY NIGHT EVENTS - ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!!



**Friday night, August 2nd at 6:30pm.** We are having Family Night 3! **We are going to play mini golf!** Join us for this fun family outing. We will be meeting at the Spring Rock Golf Center at 6:30pm. It will be about \$12 per adult and \$9 for any child under 12. We will be purchasing tickets that night at the venue. Please RSVP so we know who to expect: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-50299502-family>.



**August 6th starting at 6:30pm.** Join us for Family Night 4! **A craft night at the church!** Join us for a fun night of crafts and fellowship! We will be doing a tie dye craft. Please RSVP so that we know the supplies we need to get. You can RSVP here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-50309689-family>



### SUMMER SUNDAY FUNDAYS

Summer Sunday Fundays have been a great success so far! The remaining scheduled dates are August 4th and 11th. We are looking for adult volunteers to help out. We do fun crafts and play games with 3 year olds through 5th graders. If you are available for any of these dates or want more info please reach out to Amanda, [adias@thegccc.org](mailto:adias@thegccc.org).

## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School & Youth Groups



Thank you to everyone who made game night such a huge success! We plan to have a few more game nights throughout the year. It's a great way to get to know others in our church community. Plus, they are always lots of laughs.

We had a great time at the Duck's Game! We got to see Long Island's very own win; then many stayed after for a spectacular fireworks show. We had a nice crowd! Thank you to everyone who came out!

Welcome Day



**Sunday, September 15th:** We have a date set for **WELCOME DAY!** This is when we take a moment to welcome back our teachers and students for another church school year. Mark the date down in your calendars. Keep an eye out in the weekly e-blasts for more information and a sign-up genius.



**Church School:** As summer continues the Christian Ed team will start the next cohort of Sunday School soon. Sunday School will start on Welcome Day, Sunday September 15th. Sunday School is for children 3 years old to 5th grade. We cover Bible stories, play games and do fun crafts. If you have any question please contact Amanda at [adiaz@thegccc.org](mailto:adiaz@thegccc.org) . Please register you child/children here for this year's classes: <https://gccc.breezechms.com/form/61c92f14812713>



## 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 August 3rd and September 7th 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. 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).



### **Pastor Arlen's summer sabbath time**

Friends, following worship on August 4th, I am on holiday, upstate, the remainder of the month. I am in the pulpit the first Sunday of September.

May I ask: keep me in prayer while I move through a medical procedure on August 6th: a cataract in my right eye removed and a new lens installed. Though "routine," the health and wellness of my eyes, damaged after birth, activates a worry somewhat out of proportion.

And ... you may have learned my driver's side doors were damaged while parked at the church by a backing up vehicle. I've a rental with a Maryland tag, and I'm told as much as 3 weeks, maybe more, to repair my beloved Subaru. (I was in the office; the driver was not injured...)

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Kitt Von Braunsberg will serve as first contact for emergency pastoral care.

**For the three Sundays of August...**

John Livingstone fills the pulpit on August 11th.

Paula Tusiani-Eng on August 18th

Kitt Von Braunsberg on August 25th



## 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.

### 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'.



### 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 to 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!

# MISSION EVENTS

## Mission Trip Recap

On Saturday, July 20th, 16 youth and 6 leaders came back from a life-changing Mission Trip in Knoxville, Tennessee.

- One group built a porch from scratch for Tommy, a homeowner who with his wife was caring for his 5 grandchildren after the death of his daughter from drugs.
- Another group painted the exterior of a house and met Garnet whose sister was undergoing a 15-hour cancer operation in New Orleans and needed our prayers and support.
- The third group removed and reinstalled dry wall in a defunct church. This church, under guidance of Pastor Tim, was being renovated into a shelter for single mothers experiencing homelessness.

The youth also spent time with Pastor Tim and some local children playing games and learning about Jesus. When they weren't working, they were singing, worshiping and learning about their faith. Our youth were clearly Disciples of Jesus this week proudly wearing their Mission Trip t-shirts through the airport, unashamed and unafraid of spreading the news of Jesus and His teachings through their service and daily devotions.

If you couldn't be at service on July 21st please go to the website and listen to the reflections of our youth. You may be inspired to volunteer next year and experience Jesus' love through the eyes of our teens.

Please keep your eyes out for upcoming fundraisers by the Mission Trippers. Funds raised will be used to support Pastor Tim in renovating two churches, one for the women's shelter and another as a transitional home for males transitioning out of foster care. Be sure to join our youth throughout the year, as we continue to serve those in need in Knoxville.



## MISSION EVENTS

### Bi-weekly Food Collections will be given to the INN during the summer

The LICC Emergency Food Pantry is still looking for a new home so while they are looking, we will give our food donations to the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN.) The INN is located at 100 Madison Avenue in Hempstead.

Once the LICC Emergency Food Pantry finds a new home we will return to giving them our donations.

Our next scheduled donation dates are August 7th and 21st. Please drop off your non-perishable food items on these dates before noon on the Whitehall Blvd. porch. If you want to sign up to be a driver (to deliver our donations), please sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-46044897-2024>



### Lions Club International

We are still collecting usable eyeglasses and hearing aids for the Lions Club International. The donation box is located in the church building hallway.



### Thanks for a successful Mission Trip

The Ministry Committee would like to thank all the Mission Trip leaders, planning team, students and parents that made the Mission Trip to Knoxville, Tennessee such a success. They would like to give an especially big thank you to Tracey Lawson for overseeing this event!



### News About the Building

Rob Sipkin and Kristian Rhein have finished sheet rocking, repairing and painting the boiler room.





## 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.

### Americana Fair Planning Meeting

Each year our Americana Fair (on November 9th) is a huge success but it can't be done without help. Interested in finding out how you can participate in this fun and worthwhile event. Please come to our pre-fair planning meeting on Sunday, August 25th at 11:45 am in the Kensington Room. All are welcome to attend!



### 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.

Online  
Giving



## Musical Ensembles September through June

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



**Youth Choir** – Open to grades 3-5. 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)



# Summer Sunday Funday!

## DATES:

- ★ June 9th
- ★ June 16th
- ★ July 14th
- ★ July 21st
- ★ August 4th
- ★ August 11th

During the 10:30am service!

**COME HAVE FUN WITH US THIS  
SUMMER!**

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



## AMERICANA FAIR

**Saturday, November 9, 2024**

**10 am – 3 pm**

**GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH**

*245 Stewart Avenue at Whitehall Blvd.*

*Garden City, NY 11530*

*(516) 746-1700*

**Free Admission**

**Contact:**

Chair: Cindy Campbell [cindala86@gmail.com](mailto:cindala86@gmail.com)

Sorting: **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!!**

Youth Coordinator: Robin Laisure [rblaisure421@gmail.com](mailto:rblaisure421@gmail.com)

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**SILENT AUCTION--Antiques, Collectibles**

**SHABBY/CHIC**

**ACCESSORIES**

**ATTIC TREASURES**

**HOLIDAY & GIFT BOUTIQUES**

**LINENS, LAMPS, CHINA, SILVER,**

**JEWELRY**

**TOYS, PICTURES, FRAMES,**

**GOURMET SHOP**

**BISTRO LUNCHEON or Hot Dog Tent**





# August



# 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	2 Mini Golf 6:30 pm Spring Rock Golf Center	3 Men's Breakfast 8 am Carle Place Diner Nancy Fardelmann Mem. Service 10:30 am
4 Sunday Service 10:30 am Church School Summer Funday 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am	5	6 Prayer Service 9:30 am Tie Dye Craft Night 6:30 pm	7 Food Donation drop-off for INN before noon	8	9	10
11 Sunday Service 10:30 am Church School Summer Funday 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am	12 Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	13 Prayer Service 9:30 am	14	15	16	17
18 Sunday Service 10:30 am <b>Sunday School Not scheduled</b> Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Ministry Meeting 12:00 pm	19	20 Prayer Service 9:30 am	21 Food Donation drop-off for INN before noon	22	23	24
25 Sunday Service 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am <b>Sunday School Not scheduled</b> Pre-fair meeting 11:45 am	26 Trustees (COT) Meeting 7:30 pm	27 Prayer Service 9:30 am	28	29	30	31