



# Garden City Community Church Connections September 2024

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

## Pastor's Message

In her collection *Devotions*, Mary Oliver writes

Another morning and I wake with thirst  
for the goodness I do not have. I walk  
out to the pond and all the way God has  
given us such beautiful lessons. Oh Lord,  
I was never a quick scholar but sulked  
and hunched over my books past the  
hour and the bell; grant me, in your  
mercy, a little more time. Love for the  
earth and love for you are having such a  
long conversation in my heart. Who  
knows what will finally happen or  
where I will be sent, yet already I have  
given a great many things away, expect-  
ing to be told to pack nothing, except the  
prayers which, with this thirst, I am  
slowly learning (from *Thirst*, *Thirst*), pg. 141

Dear Friends, with her phrase "expecting to be told to pack nothing," Mary Oliver nods to what John Dominic Crossan and the Jesus Seminar scholars referred to as the heart of the Gospel: Jesus' ministry of radical commensality. Commensality. Not an everyday word. Commensality. An everyday practice. It means eating together, bounded by familial, social and cultural norms.

Who did you eat with the last time you joined an open seating, buffet style event? In Jesus day, one would look to table fellowship with blood relations first, then with persons from the same neighborhood, who shared similar ethnic, vocational and religious practice, then with persons who were most similar to oneself. No one ate with others, unless the relationship was transactional: paying for a service - like healing disease or casting out demons, or offering refuge for one in dire need - a stranger taken ill, for instance. Even then it was out of the norm to participate in commensality with one outside, one other than those like oneself.

Jesus' radical commensality began by his eating with "tax collectors and sinners," meaning, those outside of his familiar, social, and cultural circle. He schooled the disciples in the same, by offering, at no charge, healing and forgiveness of sin; then staying with, and eating with those receiving God's gift of wellness. "Take no money...or extra clothing" Jesus instructed.

Jesus redefined commensality. In the intimate enterprise of table fellowship with the stranger and the enemy, with those "other" than like oneself - the Kin(g)dom of God - God becomes present; so too healing, casting out demons, forgiveness of sin, wellness. Stated differently, the Kin(g)dom of God - God's presence - stays hobbled and hindered when commensality focusses on, and for, principally, those who are already the community of faith.

Radical commensality was the gateway to the way of Jesus: not family, culture, ethnicity, or social and economic relationships. Josephus, the 1st century historian, observed this strange, crazy practice: a community of faith who followed the way of Jesus and Jesus' intimate table fellowship with the "other." As Paul wrote, all are one in Christ Jesus.

Mary Oliver reminds us, perhaps, "to pack nothing, except the prayers, which, with this thirst" (for goodness one does not have), "I am slowly learning." September has arrived. School, ongoing work, the effort of older age, another change of seasons, the promise of hope, the embrace of possibility and here, the invitation to tell your story about this community of faith - to this community of faith.

When all who are willing gather on September 15th, following worship, at table fellowship, anticipate radical commensality - the experience of being with, listening to, and sharing your experience and stories of the Garden City Community Church with some who are other than you and your circle. Anticipate God's presence. Anticipate healing, casting out demons, and forgiveness. Anticipate slaking your thirst with God's goodness. Anticipate being with one another as a prayer of thanks to God.

Commensality. Not an everyday word. Radical Commensality. An everyday Christian practice. It means the intimate enterprise of eating together with others unlike oneself, where God's healing and wellness and presence create persons who are "one in Christ Jesus."

Peace,



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-

On September 15<sup>th</sup> we will begin an important step in building our Congregational Profile. Led by Pastor Arlen and the Search and Call Committee we will have our first congregational conversation. It will be critically important that we all commit to seeing the situation from the perspective of others at our table. Taking counsel from the article [The Importance of Taking the Perspective of Others](#) by [David W. Johnson Ed.D.](#) there are a few guidelines to keep in mind when having the discussions with your table mates.

1. Realize that everyone involved has a unique perspective. No two people will see a situation or issue in exactly the same way.
2. All experiences are understood within our own unique perspective and therefore we each tend to see only what our perspective allows us to see.
3. People can have different perspectives at different times. When you are hungry, for example, you notice all the food in a room. When you are not hungry, the food tends not to attract your attention.
4. A person's perspective largely determines how a message will be interpreted. The same message may be interpreted as friendly teasing or as hostile insubordination depending on the perspective of the receiver.
5. Misunderstandings often occur because we assume that everyone sees things from the same perspective as we do.

As you work with the others at your table on September 15<sup>th</sup> keep the above in mind and make a conscious effort to understand the perspectives of your tablemates. Everyone feels better when they feel heard, understood, and respected.

Faithfully submitted,

Kirsten Bahlke – Council of Trustees (COT) Chair



## 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).



### MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Programs will be starting up again the October. Please register your child for our Middle School Youth Group. We will be moving our meeting days from Sunday. More info coming soon. To register: <https://gccc.breezechms.com/form/MSYG24>



**Friday night, September 6th starting at 6:00 pm.** Join us for a social family gathering (at the Tusiani-Eng home—14 Osborne Road, Garden City), for our Sunday School and Middle School families to start the school year! This will be a relaxed fun opportunity to connect and for the kids to have some good old-fashioned backyard fun. Funds from the tickets will be used to purchase food for the event and to support our church programming. Please bring your own towels, goggles, and bathing suits, for those who are swimming. Parents are responsible for their children. This is not a drop off event. Middle Schoolers who want to help run lawn games or pool games should contact Amanda at [adias@thegccc.org](mailto:adias@thegccc.org). It is not necessary to bring anything—just bring yourselves! Pre-registration is required.

**The fee is \$25 per family. RSVP here by September 4th: <https://gccc.breezechms.com/form/pool24>**

## MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

News from our Sunday School & Youth Groups



Thank you to everyone who made our family Nights and Sunday Fundays a great success!



**Saturday, September 14th at 6:00 pm:** The Christian Ed team will be hosting our End-Of Summer Outdoor Movie Night! We will be watching “Homeward Bound” The Incredible Journey”. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and join us for what should be a wonderful night! In case of rain we will be in Gardner Hall! To register: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-50437774-endofsummer> .

**All are invited to attend**

Welcome Day



**Sunday, September 15th:** We have our Welcome Day! Our first day of Sunday School for the new school year! We are looking for children volunteers to participate in readings and families to help with the ushering on this Sunday! Please contact Amanda at [adiaz@thegccc.org](mailto:adiaz@thegccc.org) if you are interested. Thanks!



**Sunday School:** The start of the school year is just around the corner, which means Sunday School is starting up again! We plan on having another wonderful year of Bible stories, crafts and lots more fun! If you have any questions please contact Amanda at [adiaz@thegccc.org](mailto:adiaz@thegccc.org) Please register your child/children here for this year's classes: <https://gcc.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 September 7th and October 5th 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).



### Strategic Planning Associates Presentation

Join us on Wednesday, October 2, 2024 at 6:00 pm in the Parlor for a meeting with Strategic Planning Associates. They will be discussing general investment approaches for non-profits and will also have a big picture conversation about the Garden City Community Church investment policy and approach to our long-term holdings. Can't make it to the meeting in person? Join us at the meeting via Zoom. To register for the Zoom meeting go to: <https://gccc.breezechms.com/form/61c92f1481197448222253>.

**This is a required meeting for our F&A committee members.**



## 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!



Join us for a

# FAMILY POOL GATHERING

Friday, 6th of September

Starts at 06:00pm

The Tusiani-Eng Home:  
14 Osborne RD

Garden City, NY 11530

\$25 per family

Join us for a social family gathering for Sunday School and Middle school families to start the school year! Please bring your own towels, goggles and bathing suits, for those who are swimming. Parents are responsible for their children. This is not a drop off event. Middle Schoolers and older who want to help run lawn or pool games should contact Amanda!

RSVP by Sept 4th

<https://gcc.breezechms.com/form/pool24>



**THE GCCC SUNDAY SCHOOL PRESENTS**

END-OF-SUMMER OUTDOOR  
**MOVIE NIGHT**



SAT SEPT 14, 2024 | 6-8 PM

**HOMeward BOUND:  
THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY**

**BRING A BLANKET OR CHAIRS! SNACKS WILL  
BE AVAILABLE!**

245 STEWART AVE, GARDEN CITY NY 11530

RSVP HERE:

[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/904084BACAD2EAA8-50437774-ENDOFSUMMER](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904084BACAD2EAA8-50437774-ENDOFSUMMER)

# Welcome Day and Congregational Conversations

## September 15th



Join us on Sunday, September 15th as we welcome our students and teachers back for another year of fun and learning. After a luncheon, Amanda and her helpers will play games with our students while our members & friends will be introduced to the Search and Call Committee as they briefly outline their process.

The congregational conversations will be about who we are as a church going forward. They will cover some of the questions in the church profile. The big picture questions are “Who is the church internally & externally and where are we going?” “What are our strengths and what is our mission?”

The answers to these fundamental questions will help us find the right fit for our next minister.

Please join us as we share our thoughts in these important conversations.



**AFTER THE SUMMER BREAK  
SUNDAY FORUMS ARE BACK ON THE LAST SUNDAY OF  
THE MONTH**

**WE'LL BE HAVING GREAT SPEAKERS AND INTERESTING  
TOPICS!!!**

**We will meet at 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.  
In the church parlor with light refreshments**

**September 29: The Search & Call Committee** will give an update on their meetings since they were elected and installed last June 30<sup>th</sup>. The ten-member committee has been busy and is excited to report to the congregation what they have done to start the process.

**October 27: TBA**

**November 24: Max Hill** – Meet one of our new members, who didn't hesitate to hit the ground running. Max is a delightful young man to talk to and he can't wait to share with you why he chose to come to GCCC!

**THERE WILL BE NO FORUM IN DECEMBER**

**December 1 is Advent Sunday:** Watch for announcements on how we will be celebrating the season of Advent.

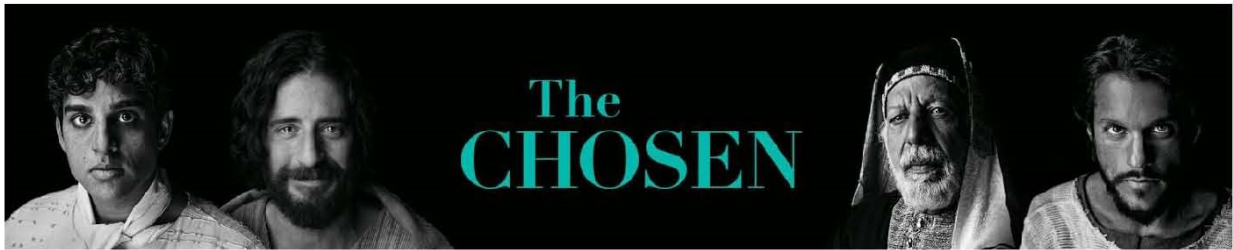
Church fellowship will start in the parlor immediately following the Sunday service. Once the forum is about to begin, if anyone wants to continue a fellowship conversation and does not want to stay for the forum discussion, they are requested to move into the Kensington room.

**Coming: late September!!!**

**Join us on Wednesday evenings for Bible study in  
a different way!!!**

## **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CHOSEN?**

**To answer that question, we're going to Old school –  
Testament that is – which leads us back to the New.  
Which always leads us directly to Jesus**



**The groundbreaking television series about the  
life of Jesus**

**Join us in watching and discussing each episode to  
connect with Jesus and lives of His followers  
(including us) in a whole new way!**

**Start date to be announced!**

## MISSION EVENTS

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

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 September 4th and September 18th. 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.



### News About the Building

After over 21 years of service, our building manager Rob Sipkin has left us for another job opportunity. We were blessed to have him and he will be sorely missed. We wish him well in his future endeavors.



### News About the Building

The main project at this time is patching, repairing and waterproofing the back porch (between the Kensington Room & the Nursery School), the old Parlor porch and the downstairs men's bathroom



## 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

Hello everyone,

This is your fearless leader of 12 yrs! These are the areas we need your help with:

1. Sorting starts Saturday, November 2 from 10am—4pm. We also need someone to assist with sorting during the week either morning or afternoon. You can select your own hours. It's very busy this week and I can't physically do this myself. I need your help.
2. Chairpersons for Bistro, gourmet, new gifts, lamps & luggage & Security

**Drop off dates:** Sat. Nov. 2—10am-4pm, Sun. Nov. 3—11:30am—4pm, Mon. Nov. 4—8am—4pm, Tues. Nov. 5 (Election Day) 10am-4pm, Wed. Nov. 6—8am—4pm, Thurs. Nov. 7 - 8am—4pm,

**Fri. Nov. 8—We will not accept merchandise**

**Americana Fair hours: Sat. Nov. 9 from 10am-3pm (doors open for volunteers—8am)**

Any ideas are greatly appreciated. Please contact Cindy Campbell at [cindala86@gmail.com](mailto:cindala86@gmail.com) or 516-524-1617.

Thank you. Cindy Campbell



## 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>

Online  
Giving



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 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)



# 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



# September



# 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Sunday Service 10:30 am <b>Sunday School Not scheduled</b> Fellowship Hour 11:30 am</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Labor Day <b>Church office closed</b></p>	<p>3</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Food Donation drop-off for INN before noon</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Sunday School &amp; Middle School Family Gathering 6 pm</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Men's Breakfast 8 am Carle Place Diner</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Sunday Service 10:30 am <b>Sunday School Not scheduled</b> Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Search &amp; Call Meeting 12:00 pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p>F&amp;A Meeting 6:30 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Council of Trustees (COT) 7:30 pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Movie Night (Playscape) (Gardner Hall if it rains) 6:00 pm</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Welcome Day Sunday Service 10:30 am Church School 10:30 am Congregational Conversation/Luncheon 11:30 am</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Food Donation drop-off for INN before noon</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Sunday Service 10:30 am Church School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Ministry Meeting 12:00 pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Council of Trustees (COT) 7:30 pm</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Giocondi Memorial service 1 pm</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Sunday Service 10:30 am Church School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:30 am Sunday Forum 11:45 am</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Prayer Service 9:30 am</p>					