

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

**THE GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH
245 Stewart Ave.
Garden City, NY 11530**

Associate Pastor, Settled, Full-Time

January 1, 2021



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1. POSITION POSTING

1a. LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Garden City Community Church

Street address: 245 Stewart Ave. Garden City, NY 11530

Supplemental web links: www.theGCCC.org

Additional ecumenical affiliations

Garden City Clergy Fellowship

Conference:

United Church of Christ-NY State and NY Metro Conference

Metropolitan Association of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ

Association / UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Persons

Gary E. Ferner

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Summary Ministry Description:

The Garden City Community Church, established in 1929, is a very blessed church, 90 years strong.

The Congregation has formally committed since 2007 to maintaining an open and affirming, socially just environment for all who enter our doors, both physically and virtually! All are welcome!

We are seeking an Associate Pastor who, with the guidance and support of our Senior Pastor and existing ministry support team, can worship with and inspire us, broaden our community outreach, and provide increased guidance and education during our own spiritual journeys.



What we value about living in our area:

Zip code 11530 includes the Village of Garden City, the Incorporated Village of Stewart Manor, Garden City South and East Garden City. It is centrally located on Long Island approximately 18 miles outside of Manhattan and 20 minutes from the South Shore beaches. The area boasts a multitude of restaurants and is convenient to multiple shopping centers and grocery stores. The layout promotes an outgoing, friendly and social atmosphere that is family oriented.

Current size of Church membership:

534

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): None currently.

Position Title: Associate Pastor

Position Duration: Settled, Full Time

Compensation Level: Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes, per the UCC COMPENSATION GUIDELINES 2020

NEW YORK CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

5575 Thompson Road DeWitt, NY 13214-1639

1b. SCOPE OF WORK

The Minister called to this full-time, settled position will be involved with all aspects of the Church's ministry, as needed and determined by the Senior Pastor and Ministry team and in furtherance of the Mission Statement of the Church.

Ministry duties and leadership work will include but not be limited to:

Preaching and special services (including weddings, funerals, baptisms, as liturgist and giving Children's Messages)

Pastoral care responsibilities.

Participation and guidance in retreats and camps (including Family Camp, Men's Retreats, Vacation Bible School, Winter Retreats, Mission Trips, other youth events and Nursery School liaison).

Development of educational and service-oriented programming.

Community Outreach.

Financial development and stewardship.

Calling of Ministers - Core Competencies:

Powerful Preaching
Pastoral Care and Development
Collaborative Leadership

1c. COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis:

Base Salary (per 2020 UCC Guidelines) plus benefits including housing allowance, automobile allowance, health insurance if needed, and pension contributions.

FOUR (4) weeks paid vacation per annum.

ONE (1) week annually of paid leave for continuing education programs or personal study times related to ministries at the Church.

Professional malpractice insurance coverage in the amount recommended by the New York Conference UCC.

Compensation will be reviewed and adjusted annually in accordance with the practices and policies of the Church with respect to Clergy Compensation beginning in 2021.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

As provided by the UCC

1d. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

MINISTRY GOALS:

We hope for a person of strong spiritual and theological depth who is committed to being open and affirming. We seek a person with an ability to deliver challenging, inspiring and thought-provoking sermons and educational forums. We need someone who is seeking a long-term commitment and who has the ability and confidence to substitute for our senior pastor. We are looking for a minister who has the desire to uplift and support our existing ministry staff to develop and expand on our church's educational programs, and who has experience working with youth groups of all ages. We hope for someone with vision and creativity, with modern skills and modern ideas -- a thinker who is able to challenge us and who collaborates with and inspires multi-generations to do their best. We hope for someone warm, energetic, enthusiastic and compassionate, who is loyal, has a sense of humor and an open heart; who will participate in church fellowship activities. We need an associate pastor who has a desire to grow the existing core church membership.

Specify language requirements:

Worship services are in English. Multiple language skills would be welcome.

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice

Engaging sacred stories and traditions

Caring for all creation

Working together for justice and mercy

2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

(Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

The Garden City Community Church is an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ which Renews and Strengthens its Commitment to Advocate Justice and Equality for All People in all areas of society.

We believe that being faithful requires lifelong learning. From caring for our children, the nurturing of our youth, to expanding our understanding as adults, education is essential to our Christian identity.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

In this past year of 2020, the challenges of our community and congregation were significant. We as a committee feel the GCCCs Senior Pastor, Lynn Sullivan's November 2020 following message to the congregation sums up how we, as a congregation, have stayed together, grown as a church and helped others during this past challenging year.

Lynn Sullivan, Senior Pastor, GCCC
Pastor's Message "Why are you putting me to the test?" Matthew 22: 18

Throughout September and October, the lectionary text directed us to parables where the Jewish Leaders were trying to discredit Jesus. Jesus always answered their questions with clever responses and added parables to show them how far they are from the Kingdom of God. I have heard many people say that they thought God was testing them during these past seven months when our lives have been uprooted due to COVID-19. This will be a point to ponder for years to come. I am not sure God has used this Pandemic to test us, but I do believe we will have to answer to God what we have been doing with our time. Our church has lived our Purpose Statement: Faithfully Reaching Out, Inclusively Drawing In, as we welcomed new people into our Bible Studies, Book Discussions, Social Justice Discussions, Worship and Prayer Services. We have gone the extra mile with food distributions, clothing drives, mask making and contacting our members and friends. We have been active as we Brought the Church to the People in creative ways. This Thanksgiving Eve, our Service will be Live-Streamed. Our Theme will be: **PAUSING AND PRAYING DURING A PANDEMIC**. Donna Mongiardo and Chris Dieguez will share from their hearts what these past eight months have meant to them. Log on through the website or Facebook at 8:00 pm. Our Advent Theme will be: **PREPARE YE**. Each week we will learn how to prepare for the sacred birth by: Pondering, Praying, Praising and Proclaiming. Stay tuned for some wonderful opportunities to grow in God's grace. Let us use these final weeks of 2020 to Reconnect with God. Take advantage of the many programs we are offering to feel God's Holy Spirit and act upon it.

What is our Purpose, and how are we Going into the World?

Blessings, Lynn Senior Pastor
November, 2020

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

- a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS
- b. 11-YEAR REPORT
- c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS
- d. PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING
- e. CHURCH FINANCES
- f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3a. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

What Our Church Is About

An aspirational reflection of our Congregation
from
George Bashian, Assistant Senior Pastor

“I truly believe that the Kingdom of God is in our midst in the Garden City Community Church, in a sense of “already” and “not yet.” Our communal invitation from Jesus is to become fellow and sister sojourners, to allow ourselves to become indwelled by the person of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus “saves” us by doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves, healing and making us whole.

Then, knit together in love, we strive to live our lives in such a way that others will see Christ in what we say and do.”

Our Order of Worship each Sunday states:

“Our Purpose: Building a community where all are enriched through Christian Love, Service, and Spiritual Renewal”.

“Our Vision: Faithfully Reaching Out, Inclusively Drawing In.”

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

We work together to give to others; we send our youth on a mission trip each year, we grow a community garden that provides fresh vegetables to our local food pantry, and we gather and deliver clothing and food frequently. Our Deacons and the Men’s Saturday Breakfast Group reach out and care for members of the congregation. We thrive in a crisis; when COVID-19 hit, we learned how to conduct a fully virtual worship service and we have continued to try out ideas to make it work better. When the college-age daughter of a

family died, we hosted a funeral service with several hundred attendees. It required many people to manage the crowd beyond the usual ushers, our technical team ran cables and set up displays in our fellowship hall and chapel so that everyone could be together in the church and see the service. Our congregation cares about social justice and has several presentations and discussions through weekly Sunday morning forums.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

We have three different worship services every week to accommodate all worship styles and preferences.

Sunday 8:30am Communion service – a shorted version of our normal 10:30am worship service (fewer hymns) with weekly Communion offered.

Sunday 10:30am Worship service. This service is filled with music (organ preludes, adult, children and bell choirs, instrumentalists), includes children in the first 15 minutes of the service with a weekly children’s message (children participate as prayer liturgists at the beginning of the service until they leave for Church School), pastoral sermon, monthly Communion services and a Passing of the Peace.

Wednesday 8pm Worship – a more contemporary worship service with shared prayers, contemporary music, planned and led by our Pastoral team (senior minister and ministers in discernment).

We worship in or around our church building, in the Sanctuary, Chapel, our fellowship hall, or sometimes on the lawn (Easter Sunrise and Blessing of the Animals). We celebrate most baptisms with the full congregation in the Sanctuary. We had a new baptismal font built a few years ago, which can be moved, so sometimes it is in the center of the aisle. For a baptism, the font is usually placed in the center of the Chancel, and Reverend Lynn adds some water from the River Jordan to connect with Jesus’ baptism. If the child has older siblings, they are encouraged to stand with the family, and we don’t frown on them frolicking. After the child is baptized, the minister walks the baby down the aisle in their arms to show off our new sister or brother while we applaud and sing, and we offer a blessing from the congregation to the family.

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

Young people are actively engaged in leadership and mission at the GCCC. Our youth programs from K-12 provide a strong faith foundation for our children that follow them through life’s joys and challenges. Our youth serve on church boards, participate and plan church-wide activities and are involved in numerous Mission-based activities throughout the year. In December 2020, our Youth were honored by Garden City NY Media, as the 2020 “Hometown Heroes”, for their volunteer and Mission service during the pandemic.

As a congregation, we continue to grow in faith through our Bible studies, weekly community forums, intergeneration service projects and various social events. Our three weekly church services offer different styles of worship to appeal to members of all ages and worship preference.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Our Service Ministry Team, a branch of our Programming Committee is tasked with extending the church's responsibilities beyond the church and its members. This team works to coordinate our Outreach Programs within our church, community, state, country or world.

When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?

Our new church organization has cut down on the number of meetings we hold per month. Committees of our church meet either monthly or quarterly to evaluate and discuss church matters. Members to committees are nominated by our Nomination Committee and voted on by the congregation. Approximately, 15-20 hours are spent in meetings per month.

Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

Two particular events stand out regarding a time when our church came together after a disaster or crisis.

After 9/11 shook our state and community, our senior Pastor at the time, planned a service at noon three days later for those of all faiths who needed to share their shock, grief, anger and anxiety. A member of our congregation who was in the Towers that fateful day was able to share his story and his feelings of survivor guilt. It was a moving and healing service for all who attended.

After the death of one of our college-age members, the congregation was shaken. Memorial service arrangements were made. Estimating that 500 hundred people would come to celebrate her life, the church members came together to install television monitors in several rooms throughout the church for grieving friends and congregation members who could not fit in the sanctuary, the tech team worked to LiveStream the service for those who could not attend and members acted as ushers directing the overflow to different rooms throughout the church that were wired for the service. When crisis occurs in our church, our members always pull together to provide support and comfort.

Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? [Yes/No].

Yes. Please see attached.

3b. 11-YEAR REPORT

Please see attached the 2019 Mission Insite report.

3c. CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	534	Actual
Number of active non-members:	154	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	688	Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 5 years:	93%	Yes
Less than 5 years:	7%	Yes

Percentage of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
11%	10%	11%	20%	4%	8%	12%	7%	7%	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	34%	Includes 18-34 year olds recorded as single or with no marital status
Households with minors:	29%	Members, not households
Single adults age 35-65:	5%	
Joint households with no minors:	27%	Members who are married or unspecified, not households
Single adults over 65:	5%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:		We do not have a record of education level; it would be reasonable to assume that a high percentage completed high school
College:		It would be reasonable to assume that a high percentage completed college
Graduate School:		We have lawyers, doctors, accountants and others with graduate degrees and certificates; we do not collect this data

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	545	Yes
Adults who are retired:	11	
Adults who are not fully employed:		Not collected

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

We have many members in banking, finance and accounting, attorneys, teachers/professors and corporate management, some entrepreneurs and a handful in professional trades, non-profit work, law enforcement.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation

The open, affirming and diversity welcoming congregation is currently mostly of Caucasian ancestry with membership from all over the globe: European, Asian, Latino, Filipino, South American and African American.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity?

We are a united congregation in our commitment to social justice, diversity and inclusion within our church. While we have not had any formal welcoming diversity conversations, we have discussed diversity issues from the pulpit, in our weekly forums, youth programs and mission events. We openly discuss issues on social justice and address issues head-on when necessary. While our congregation is mainly of Caucasian ancestry, we have members of various ethnicities, color and sexual orientation. Additionally, our outreach speaks of our openness to diversity such as helping those in Black and Hispanic communities, attending Pride Marches and so much more.

3d. 2019 PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	Forum 15-30 Social Justice 15-20	Forum Committee & Senior Pastor Outreach Committee & Chris Dieguez (MID)
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	17	
Children's Groups or Classes	Church Sunday School, Vacation Bible School Family Game Night Communion Class, Movie Discussion ~50	Margie Price (MID)
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Family Christmas 250 Christmas Eve 200 Easter Sunday services 400	Senior Pastor, Ministry Committee, Margie Price (MID)
Church-wide Meals	Christmas Vespers Service and Progressive Dinners 150	Council of Trustees committee
Choirs and Music Groups	Bell 20 Carol 10 Adult 30	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	Book of Mark (Zoom) 5 Women in Bible (Zoom) 10	
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	Monthly 10:30am worship service Weekly 8:30 am worshipervice	Clergy

Community Meals	Above	
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	Confirmation 1 12 Confirmation 2 17	Senior Pastor, Chris Dieguez (MID), lay leaders
Drama or Dance Program	GCCC Community Theater and Will Sing for Food (fundraiser) ~300	Ruby and Brad Gustavson Andy Morreale
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	24	
Intergenerational Groups	50	Paula Tusiani-Eng, Drew Hearon
Outdoor Worship	-	Sunrise Services; Blessing of the Animals
Prayer or Meditation Groups	Tues Prayer Group 4	George Bashian (licensed minister) and Senior Pastor
Public Advocacy Work	All church	Paula Tusiani-Eng
Retreats	Women 60 Men 25	Senior Pastor George Bashian (licensed minister) & Chris Dieguez (MID)
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	Garden City Clergy Fellowship 30	Senior Pastor
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	4	
Worship (time slot: 10:30 am Sunday)	110	All clergy and musicians
Worship (time slot: 8:30 am Sunday)	12	All clergy and musicians
Worship (time slot: 8:00 pm Wednesday)	30	All clergy and musicians
Young Adult Groups or Classes	12	Senior Pastor & Chris Dieguez (MID)
Youth Groups or Classes	15-25	Chris Dieguez (MID) & Christine Hanson
Other – Mission Trip	40	Mission Committee
Yoga	20	Ed & Kathy Yoo
Americana Fair	>100	Cindy Campbell
Lenten/Advent book discussion	20	Clergy and Melva Victorino

Blessing of the Animals service	75	Senior Pastor
Home Communion	16	Senior Pastor/Clergy/Ministry Committee
Tree Sale/Plant Sale	>50	Parents/Clergy

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
George Bashian			Assists Senior Pastor, Visitation, Prayer Service	N
Kitt Von Braunsberg		Not serving the church		Unknown
Chris Dieguez			Preaching Sunday and Wednesday; youth programs	N
Margie Price			Preaching Sunday and Wednesday; children's programs	N
Jim Adelman			Not participating in the church	Y

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation: Not applicable.

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Lynn Sullivan, Head Pastor	Yes	Full Time	Ministry Committee & Council of Trustees	5 years
Frank Crosio	N	$\frac{3}{4}$ Time	Senior Pastor & Ministry Committee	9 years
George Bashian	N	Part Time	Senior Pastor	>15 years

3e. CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$441,616
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$ 219,402
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i>)	\$ --
Fundraising Events	\$ --
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 13,700
Grants	\$ ---
Rentals of Church Building (USAGE)	\$ 93,000
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$ 82,200
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g. Women's Group</i>)	\$ --
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ --
Other (specify):	\$ --
Other (specify):	\$ --

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 920,091

Please find attached the 2019 Annual Report.

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support.

What is the percentage? 39.2%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church? No.

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?

YES

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)

One Great Hour of Sharing

Strengthen the Church

Neighbors in Need

Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage?

The GCCC's OCWM contribution is based on 5% of congregational giving plus 2.5% of outside rental income.

What is the church's current indebtedness? NONE

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

Not Applicable.

Has the church had capital campaigns in the last ten years? No.

Does your church have an endowment? Yes.

What is the market value of the assets? As of June 2020, \$4.7 Million

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? As needed.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? No change in 4% capped goal.

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: Steady at approximately \$200,000

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Indefinitely.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): \$ 50,000

Investments (other than endowment): None.

Does your church have a parsonage? No.

Describe all buildings owned by the church: Only the Church itself.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: None.

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

All except the pulpit, Church school wing and choir rehearsal room.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

Based on the church's finances and assets, we are in an excellent position going forward to support a congregation with a Senior and Associate Pastor. We have a sound building/physical plant and plan on renovations to several spaces in the near future to accommodate different types of worship and social events. We have and continue to enhance our virtual capabilities (due to COVID-19) to reach those members who cannot attend services in person. This will allow us to continue to spread the Word of God to those in our congregation and community far into the future.

3f. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

The congregation was established in 1929. Our congregation co-founded the Garden City Clergy Fellowship in the mid-1950s, meeting with pastors from the Episcopal cathedral, the local Catholic churches, the Garden City Jewish Center and other denominations, and holding educational events at each of the houses of worship.

Our congregation, under head pastor, Rev. Dr. James Gettemy, supported the establishment of the Garden City Jewish Center when they faced opposition in the village in 1957.

Rev. Dr. Gettemy also spearheaded local efforts to support the national merger of the Congregational Church with the Evangelical and Reformed denominations to form the United Church of Christ in 1957.

Since 1996, the Long Island Grace Christian Church, a Chinese congregation, has worshipped in our chapel and shared our church campus. Several families have members in both the LIGC and our congregation, and our congregations cohost Rally Day each September.

We formally became an Open and Affirming Congregation as of 2007.

Rev. Lynn Sullivan became our senior pastor in 2015.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

Our response to COVID-19 was a proactive change that enhanced our ability to maintain our congregation attendance through virtual means.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

We are a church with a conflict resolution mindset. We are not afraid to air our issues either in private or public. We feel free to discuss them openly and honestly, and jointly work towards a conclusion. In discussing our concerns, we acknowledge the need for God’s help in our lives and for faithful and thoughtful resolution to our conflicts.

Ministerial History *(include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)*

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Ian Rottenberg, Teaching Pastor	2015-2018	
Rev. James Adelman, Senior Pastor	1990-2015	
Rev. Lynn Sullivan, Associate Pastor	1997-2015	Y
Rev. Sara Fetty, Associate Pastor	1990-2000	

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

In the early 1960s, the church experimented with having three co-pastors and then returned to having one senior pastor.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

Yes. We hired a youth minister who could not connect and build relationships with our youth.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation? No.

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church? No.

4. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

4a. Community Vision

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic many of our usually outreach/mission activities have been postponed or cancelled. However, this year our church has grown hundreds of pounds of food in our Community garden to support the Interfaith Nutrition Network. Due to the economic downturn, our church has also collected food, clothing and school supplies for our neighbors-in-need.

Our church, from the oldest to the youngest member is actively engaged in programs involving care and justice. Our Church School children pack hygiene kits for disaster relief, write “Thank You” cards to our Veterans and “Get Well” cards to children in hospitals and collect shoes, canned food and other goods. Our Youth participate in a Mission Trip for a week each summer traveling around the country serving different populations and cultures. Mission activities include serving meals at soup kitchens, working in an AIDS camp, domestic violence and homeless shelters and building homes. Our Youth have attended the National Youth Event in 2016 focused on Social Justice issues. We run a Vacation Bible School every summer that is open to the community and run by church members and youth volunteers. Adults and children participate in Sandwich Sundays, a monthly ministry, making sandwiches to deliver to the Interfaith Nutrition Network. Our church collects clothing, winter coats, hats and mittens, school supplies and food donations throughout the year. We rent space in our building to outside groups that support our Mission, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Alanon, Alateen, a Chinese congregation, family counseling center and children’s activities. We host a “Will Sing For Food” Concert every year to benefit the Harry Chapin Food Bank. Our Committee on Christian Social Responsibilities hosts weekly forums to learn about and discuss current social issues. Their goal is to renew and strengthen our commitment to advocate for justice and equality for all people in all areas of society.

Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association/conference/national setting).

Our church regularly sends delegates to the wider UCC’s associations and conferences, including the General Synod. We also send representative to and host others from UCC partner churches from Germany.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations.

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Border and Immigrant Justice
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I’M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church
- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- Other UCC designations:
- Designations from other denomination
- None

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

Our church welcomes all peoples including LGBTQ, those of color and any race and religion. Our purpose is to build a community where all are enriched through Christian Love, Service, and Spiritual Renewal. We would be interested in working toward several of the above statements in the future.

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

Our clergy are active in the Garden City Clergy Fellowship to foster interfaith dialogue, education and other topics including current social and political concerns. We actively communicate and work with other churches and places of worship in our area, sharing ideas and participating in joint programs.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

We are guided by Our **PURPOSE**: "Building a community where all are enriched through Christian Love, Service, and Spiritual Renewal" and our **VISION**: "Faithfully Reaching Out, Inclusively Drawing In"

The time spent gathering during formal worship, governance and strategy meetings is always geared towards developing our outreach action plans and activities.

Reflect on the scope of the work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

4b. MISSION InSite

The ethnic and demographic profile of Garden City and surrounding communities is changing in many ways typical of suburban New York City locations. Diversity is increasing in terms of age, ethnic heritage, race, marital and other family structure, sexual orientation and religious affiliation (if any). The financial profile of the community is also expected to change and experience some volatility as well and could result in a less homogeneous community in terms of the gap between those most financially secure and others with more challenging financial situations. The financial resources of Garden City and Nassau County are expected to be uncertain for the foreseeable future (particularly due to the COVID-19 pandemic) giving rise to uncertainty over taxes, support for our schools, uses of public lands and buildings, programs for seniors, library facilities and programs and other functions and programs historically provided or supported by local communities.

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

Garden City itself is a fairly insular community of primarily white families that are generally financially comfortable. There is a high emphasis on academic achievement and family centered programs as well as a focus on sports. The demographics are also fairly stable, but more of the older population appears to be moving to different locations for financial, family, job and other reasons.

Areas surrounding (including Garden City) within a 10-mile radius, display a moderately diverse racial ethnic mix (42% white, 20% black/African American, 19% Asian, 16% Hispanic or Latino and 4% Pacific Islander/American Indian and others). The majority of the population is above the poverty level (92.5%). While the population is predicted to remain stable over the next eight years, the percentage of individuals 65 and over is anticipated to increase by over 5%, suggesting an aging population.

How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

In the 10 mile radius surrounding Garden City, activity in religious congregations or communities has declined 8.4%. Reasons for this decline has been corelated to individual's personal life, having less time available; their personal faith, unsure about their beliefs or don't believe in God; and the church itself, services boring, not current, too strict and not being invited.

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

Our church is known for its participation in a myriad of outreach programs and our strong youth programs.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?

Most new people join our church because of our strong family and youth programs and ministries.

5. REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Rabbi Stephen Goodman, GC Jewish Center
Garden City Jewish Center
168 Nassau Blvd
Garden City, NY. 11530
Telephone: 516-248-9180
Email: shmishtov@aol.com; info@gardencityjewishcenter.org
Relationship to the congregation:

REFERENCE 2

Rev. Dr. Tom Goodhue, Retired LICC Director
Telephone: 631-598-0177
Email: twgoodhue@gmail.com
Relationship to the congregation:

6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

Contributed by the Members of the Search Committee:

Isaiah 6:8

“After this, I heard God ask, “will someone speak for us?” “I’ll go” I answered, “send me.”

Favorite hymn: “Here I am, Lord”

“The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord”

“O happy ones and holy, Lord give us grace that we,
like them the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.”

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.

“Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race”

4th Stanza:

God, let us be a table spread with gifts of love and broken bread, where all find welcome grace attends, and enemies arise as friends.”

1 Corinthians 13:14

Be on your guard; stand firm in faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.

A favorite hymn:

Thou hast work for me to do; O Lord show it to me; Thou hast a place for me to fill; Give me the grace to fill it to Thy glory.

“Thou Hast a Work for Me to Do, Words by the Very Reverend W.R. Matthews, DD, Dean of St. Pauls, 1936

6a. CLOSING PRAYERS

Prayer for a Search

Contributed by Margaret Mainusch

All-knowing God,

Help us to find a teacher who is able to learn with us; a leader who knows when to follow; someone who can push us when we need pushing, laugh with us when we are full of joy, and cry with us when we need to grieve.

You know what this church needs better than we ourselves.

Help us make that blessed connection.

Amen

6b. STATEMENT OF CONSENT

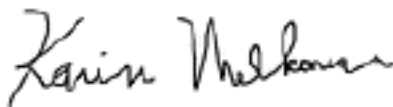
The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable new Associate Minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

The following individuals from the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile:

Karin Melkonian, Chair, Search Committee
Michaela Faella, Secretary, Search Committee
Peter Clarke
Erin Lanning
Melanie Ross
Melva Victorino
Doug Yasso
Lynn Sullivan, GCCC Senior Pastor
George Bashian, GCCC Licensed Minister
Margaret Mainusch

Signed:



Karin Melkonian, Chair, Search Committee, January 5, 2021