

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE**

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

Senior Pastor, Settled, Full-Time



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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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Conference Minister
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Summary Ministry Description:

The Garden City Community Church, established in 1929, is a very blessed church, 96 years strong. The Greater Garden City area includes the Incorporated 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.

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, since 2007. We continue to be committed to a socially just environment for all who enter our doors, both physically and virtually! **All are welcome!** 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. Our church is well-known for its participation in a myriad of service outreach programs and strong youth programs.

We are seeking a Senior Pastor who is enthusiastic and compassionate about ministry. A Pastor who, with a sense of humor and engaging spirit, will worship with us and inspire us, broaden our community service, encourage a strong bond among our members and provide guidance and education during our own spiritual journeys. We seek a Pastor with solid and open spiritual and theological understanding and who will share inspiring and thought-provoking messages. We are a very supportive congregation willing to work with our Pastor and staff creating a joyful atmosphere for mutual ministry and outreach. We are hoping to find a Pastor with vision and creativity, who is able to challenge us and inspire multi-generations to strive to do their best on their personal life and faith journey being open to God's guiding Spirit.

What we value about living in our area:

The Greater Garden City area includes the Incorporated 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. The church is situated in an area that has an increasing culturally and economically diverse demographic. The Garden City School District is one of the top districts on Long Island.

Current size of Church membership: 215

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

Position Title: Senior 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 2025
NEW YORK CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
P.O. Box 487, Syracuse, NY 13209

1b. Scope of Work

The Senior Pastor called to this full-time, settled position will be involved with all aspects of the Church's ministry and will collaborate with the Ministry Team and the Council of Trustees in furtherance of the Mission Statement of the Church. The Pastor should be technologically savvy, up-to-date on virtual worship and other remote programming and ideally have experience leveraging social media.

- Lead the congregation in leading a life of service in the example Jesus set forth for us.
- Preparation and leadership of Sunday morning worship service including children's messages.
- Developing of Liturgy and Order of Worship for the service in collaboration with the Music Minister, Ministry Team and the Church Administrator.
- Lead faith formation through prayer, Bible Study, Forums and Service Projects.
- Foster the congregation's involvement in the community.
- Guide Lay Leaders from the congregation.
- Attend committee meetings and collaborate fully in the work of the church.
- Participate and represent GCCC in the wider church conference.
- Participate in financial development and further stewardship goals and new membership.
- Collaborate with the Personnel Chair and Office Manager who supervise staff.
- Officiate at special services including weddings, funerals, baptisms.
- Attend to Pastoral Care responsibilities and form a lay visitation group.
- Participate and provide pastoral guidance in retreats, camps, Vacation Bible School, Mission Trips, other youth events and Confirmation.

Calling of Pastors - Core Competencies:

- Open and Welcoming Personality / Sense of Humor
- Collaborative Leadership
- Inspiring Preaching
- Well Organized
- Service Oriented
- Pastoral Care and Development

1c. Compensation and Support

Salary Basis:

Base Salary (per 2025 UCC Guidelines) plus benefits including housing allowance, automobile allowance, health insurance, and pension contributions.

Full Inclusive Package Range \$150,000 – \$175,000

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.

THREE (3) month sabbatical will be granted for every FIVE (5) years of continuous service.

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.

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

As provided by the UCC Metro Association and the UCC New York State Conference.

1d. Who is God calling to minister with us?

MINISTRY GOALS:

We seek someone warm, energetic, enthusiastic and compassionate, who is loyal, has a sense of humor and an open heart and will participate in church fellowship activities. We seek an open person of strong spiritual and theological depth and relate the story of Jesus to people's everyday life. We seek a person with an ability to deliver challenging, inspiring and thought-provoking sermons and educational forums. We are looking for a Pastor 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 need a Senior Pastor who has a desire to grow the church membership. We desire a Senior Pastor who will fully embrace the theological but also the strong connections that a social and service-oriented congregation enjoy. We seek a flexible thinking Pastor who is capable of bringing together disparate philosophies and opinions and able to negotiate conflict.

Specify language requirements:

Worship services are in English. Other language skills, particularly Spanish would be welcome.

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 priority areas.

1. Strengthen Inter- and Intra-Personal Assets

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Respecting the dignity of all God's people.
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.

2. Caring for all creation

- Nurturing care and compassion for God's creation.
- Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness.
- Practicing self-care and life balance.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Attending to one's own spiritual and pastoral care, including engagement in supervision as appropriate.
- Stewarding the resources of the Church.

3. Building Transformational Leadership Skills

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission.
- Strategically creating the future of the Church.
- Witnessing God's redeeming power in the form of service.
- Performing necessary and appropriate administrative tasks.
- Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning.

4. Working together for justice and mercy

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression.
- Practicing the hospitality of Jesus.
- Identifying and working to overcome bias in the life of the Church.
- Navigating change with a community.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Building warm and open relationships of mutual trust and interdependence.

2. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

God is calling the Church in two directions. Inward facing; we believe that being faithful requires lifelong learning. From caring for our children, the nurturing of our youth, to expanding our understanding and history of our faith as adults is essential to our Christian identity. We are a social church and we are called to be together as a people of faith sharing our lives together. Outward Facing; we believe that being service-oriented is core to our identity. The congregation has participated in Mission Trips, Habitat for Humanity Builds, Community Garden and dry goods collection for the Food Pantry.

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. God is calling us to better understand and demonstrate Open and Affirming.

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

The Congregation was surveyed during Congregational Conversations during the Search and Call process. The overwhelming focus of the future of the church should be rooted in external mission. This calling fell off because of COVID-19 and has struggled to return. The Congregation is struggling to find that “one thing” they can rally around to provide service to our community and live Jesus’ example (found above our altar), Go Ye Into All The World.

3. WHO ARE WE NOW?

3a. Congregational Reflections

What Our Church Is About

A reflection of our Congregation

George Bashian

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 indwelt 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. 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.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

1. Service Mentality

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. Our Deacons and the Men's Saturday Breakfast Group reach out and care for members of the congregation. Our Sunday School participate in many service-oriented projects throughout the year including packing hygiene kits and snack bags for those experiencing poverty and hunger and make holiday cards for Veterans. Service to our community surfaced as a core value along with our social connections within the church during the congregation conversations for all age groups.

2. We Love to Gather Together

The social aspect of our church is part of the glue that holds us together. We enjoy each other's diverse lives outside of church and we come together because we enjoy each other's company. Throughout the year, the Programming Committee hosts events such as game nights, outdoor movies, picnics, men's breakfasts, fellowship hour-after church and meals at Thanksgiving, Christmas and other times. The social togetherness surfaced in concert with the service focus during the congregational conversations.

3. Resilient in Crisis

We rise to face any crisis in our community. When COVID-19 hit, members of the congregation stepped up to help and quickly learn how to conduct a fully virtual worship service and we have continued to try out ideas to make our services reach more than just those in the pews.

When the college-age daughter of a member family died, we knew the grief would extend far beyond just our church and we came together to effectively host a funeral service for 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.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

The Sunday 10:30AM worship service is filled with a variety of music (organ preludes, adult, children and bell choirs, instrumentalists). The service actively includes children in the first 15 minutes of the service with a weekly children's message where the Pastor gathers the children and delivers a special and meaningful mini-sermon before releasing the children to happily run off to Sunday School.

The Adult Choir is a beloved fixture of the services bringing beautiful music to the sanctuary that greatly enhances the worship service. Scripture readings are accomplished by the Pastor and Lay Liturgists. Lay Liturgist participation is an important part of the service whereby members demonstrate their faith by reading the Word to membership.

On the first Sunday of every month we celebrate Communion services. Communion is served by the Pastor and a Lay Communion Team who take great pride in their duty of assisting the Pastor in serving the sacraments.

A truly special part of our church is the Passing of the Peace. During this time, we not only greet those who are seated near us, but many leave their pews to greet friends and welcome newcomers. The Pastor also joins in the greeting by leaving the pulpit. It is a special time and the Pastor often has to encourage us back to the pews so the service may continue.

The service is followed by fellowship hour in the Parlor complete with coffee, cookies, baked goods. It is a strong social gathering component of the congregation. Often these gatherings are sponsored by families celebrating a special occasion and will include food from the family's cultural cookbook.

We worship in or around our church building, in the Sanctuary, Chapel, Gardner fellowship hall, or on the lawn for Easter Sunrise, Blessing of the Animals and Church picnics. We celebrate most baptisms with the full congregation in the Sanctuary. Extended family and siblings are encouraged to stand with the parents for baptism. After the child is baptized, the Pastor 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.

We have a strong vision of where we want the educational program to be but sustaining that vision has come with ebbs and flows of participation. Young people are engaged in leadership and mission at the GCCC (for example, there is a youth member on the Search and Call Team). Our youth programs from K-12 (Sunday School, Middle School Group, Confirmation and Youth Group) provide a strong faith foundation for our children that prepare them for life's challenges. Our youth serve on church boards, participate and plan church-wide activities and are attend a summer Mission trip every year.

As a congregation, we continue to grow in faith through our Bible studies, forums, intergenerational service projects and various social events. Challenging educational opportunities was a reoccurring theme in the congregational conversations. There is opportunity for growth and work in the education program.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

The work of the church is divided into 5 committees: Ministry, Finance and Administration, Membership, Personnel and Programming (Connections, Service and Education). Committee membership and terms are defined by our By-laws. The Council of Trustees is made up of a member from each of these committees, plus a Chairperson, a treasurer and information officer.

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

The Council of Trustees generally meets once a month for about 2 hours but has the flexibility to meet more or less frequently as needed. Most of the 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 at our Annual Meeting in February. A Senior Pastor should expect to spend approximately, 15-20 hours per month in meetings.

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

After 9/11 shook our community, our Senior Pastor 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. The church held a 9/11 candle lighting service for almost 20 years following the 9/11 disaster where members could light a candle in remembrance one lost. A Member of the Fire Service would go last and light all the remaining candles in remembrance for so many lost. This disaster and others still resonate deeply with this community of faith and they are continuing to heal from great loss and grief.

Can you provide the next Pastor 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, can be provided upon request.

3b. 11-Year Report

Please see attached the 11 year report provided by UCC Metro Association.

3c. Congregational Demographics

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	215	Actual
Number of active non-members:	30	Yes
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	245	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>
10%	5%	5%	10%	20%	20%	10%	10%	10%	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	20%	Includes 18-34 years old recorded as single or with no marital status
Households with minors:	40%	Members, not households
Single adults age 35-65:	5%	
Joint households with no minors:	25%	Members who are married or unspecified, not households
Single adults over 65:	10%	

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

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	200	Yes
Adults who are retired:	40	

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, professional trades, non-profit work, and law enforcement.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation

The 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 congregation with an evolving commitment to social justice, diversity and inclusion within our church. We recently participated in the UCC Welcoming Diversity Inventory Survey in preparation for Search and Call. The process included a training portion, survey portion and a results portion. We had good attendance during the survey process. In summary, the results demonstrated that we are a generally an open and affirming congregation. The survey also identified several areas where education about diversity would be helpful. Finally, the survey demonstrated that the congregation was open to conversations and training regarding welcoming diversity. While our congregation is mainly of Caucasian ancestry, we have members of various ethnicities, color and sexual orientation. There is opportunity for growth in this area for the congregation and they are open to the conversation.

3d. 2025 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	Senior Pastor, Forum Committee, Programming Committee (education)
Baptisms	20 per year est.	Senior Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	Church Sunday School, Vacation Bible School Family Game Night	Senior Pastor, Programming Committee (education)

	Communion Class, Movie Discussion ~50	
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Family Christmas 250 Christmas Eve 200 Easter Sunday services 200	Senior Pastor, Ministry Committee
Church-wide Meals	Christmas Vespers Service and Progressive Dinners 150	Council of Trustees, Programming Committee (connections)
Choirs and Music Groups	Bell 12 Carol 10 Adult 20	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	15	Senior Pastor, Lay Leaders, Programming Committee (education)
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Monthly 10:30am worship service 50-80	Senior Pastor, Ministry Committee
Community Meals	80	Programming Committee (service)
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	Confirmation 1 10 Confirmation 2 10	Senior Pastor, Lay Leaders
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	24	Senior Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	50	Programming Committee (connections)
Outdoor Worship	Sunrise services; Blessing of the Animals	Senior Pastor, Ministry Committee
Prayer or Meditation Groups	Tues Prayer Group 4	George Bashian (licensed minister)

Retreats	Women 60 Men 25	Senior Pastor, Programming Committee (education)
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	Garden City Clergy Fellowship 30	Senior Pastor, Programming Committee (education)
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	4	Senior Pastor
Worship (time slot: 10:30 am Sunday)	50-80	All clergy and musicians, Ministry Committee
Young Adult Groups or Classes	5	Senior Pastor, Youth Lay Leaders
Youth Groups or Classes	5	Amanda Dias
Other – Mission Trip	40	Mission Committee
Americana Fair	>100	Cindy Campbell
Lenten/Advent book discussion	20	Clergy and Melva Victorino
Blessing of the Animals service	75	Senior Pastor
Home Communion	15	Senior Pastor/Clergy/Ministry Committee
Tree Sale/Plant Sale	40	Mission Committee

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			Prayer Group	N

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
Office Staff	Yes	Full Time	Personnel Council of Trustees	5 years
Frank Crosio	N	Full Time	Senior Pastor & Ministry Committee	14 years
George Bashian	N	Part Time	Senior Pastor & Ministry Committee	20 years

3e. Church Finances

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

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 298,802
Endowment Proceeds <i>(as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)</i>	\$ 223,434
Endowment Draw <i>(beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal")</i>	\$ 251,566
Fundraising Events	\$ 16,438
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$ 8,775
Grants – FEMA COVID Reimbursement	\$ 44,878
Rentals of Church Building (USAGE)	\$ 96,772
Rentals of Church Parsonage – No Parsonage	\$ 0
Support from Related Organizations – Garden City Community Church Nursery School	\$ 99,797
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$ 0

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$ 1,091,878

**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 pledges as well as unpledged 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 Feb 2025, \$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)? Draw on endowment capped goal of 4.5% has been exceeded for the past 4 years to meet expenses.

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

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? 15 Years

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: The Church building is comprised of the Sanctuary, Newly Renovated Gettemy Chapel, Church School Wing, Nursery School Wing, Meeting Spaces and Administrative Offices.

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

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

Most of the church is accessible except the Pulpit/Chancel, Youth Room 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 Pastor. We have a sound building/physical plant and maintain spaces to accommodate different types of worship and social events. We have and continue to enhance our virtual capabilities to reach those members who cannot attend services in person. To help offset expenses, we have expanded the rental revenue generated by the building with local community organizations. We also need to expand the size of the congregation to increase the number of pledge units and thus pledging income.

3f. Historical Information

Significant happenings in the history of your church.

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 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.

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

Our Senior Pastor retired and we had no associate Pastor. We were left with no Pastor. The Council of Trustees planned for the retirement and hired an Interim Pastor for 1 year. The Interim was successful in helping the congregation find its voice and a way forward and departed at the end of his contract. The Council then hired two Pastors to act in the Pastor Plus position. They platoon the duties of the Pastor with one helping to guide the Search and Call Team. Change management has been accomplished by communicating with the congregation, listening and working through issues with an open mind and thoughtful consideration. The Search and Call process has also been an opportunity to demonstrate change management to the congregation with great success. The Council utilized multiple means of communication and open meetings to address changes in the Bylaws.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.

The congregation has had ebbs and flows regarding its ability to manage conflict. The historical approach has been bylaw and rule focused. At times, interpretations of the rules has been the source of conflict. The current Council of Trustees are comprised of members who are fostering an environment of discussion and collaboration as evidenced by the Bylaw Changes, Search and Call Team and WDI Survey processes. There was careful consideration and planning given to agendas, venues and speakers. There was ample time for the congregation to be heard and open discussion was encouraged and occurred. The last meeting was a bylaw meeting where afterwards people commented that it was actually fun! We are on the right track and moving forward but we have struggled in the past and there is still room for growth.

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

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Rev. James Adelman, Senior Pastor	1990-2015	Yes
Rev. Sara Fetty, Associate Pastor	1990-2000	Yes
Rev. Lynn Sullivan, Associate Pastor	2000-2015	Yes
Rev. Ian Rottenberg, Teaching Pastor	2015-2018	Yes
Rev. Lynn Sullivan, Senior Pastor	2015-2023	Yes
Rev. Arlen Vernava, Interim Pastor	2023-2024	Yes
Rev. John Livingston	2024 - Current	Yes
Rev. Bonnie McDougall Olson	2024 - Current	Yes

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

There have been several pastoral structures in the life of the church. In the early 1960s, the church experimented with having three co-pastors and then returned to having one Senior Pastor. Followed by a Senior Pastor and 2 Associate Pastors. Most recently, we had one Senior Pastor as the sole pastoral staff. We have always had a Music Minister. The youth program has been run many Youth Pastors or Associate Pastors and is currently run by Lay Leaders and a Youth Coordinator. The Church has learned that they are a Congregational Church and they are responsible for what happens in the life of the church. Senior Pastors must work in collaboration with the Council of Trustees and church membership. Warm and open communication assuming positive intent is the way forward.

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

Yes. Many years ago, we hired a youth Pastor 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?

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. 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.

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

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. There has been considerable effort placed on having less and shorter meetings and going out and doing God's work. We are well organized internally but are working through what the outward work should be going forward in the church's future.

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. The financial profile of the community is stable but surrounding areas are changing 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 stable for the foreseeable future with a strong tax base in 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 homogenous 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.

We have an increasing number of members joining the church from the surrounding communities.

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. Reasons for this decline have been correlated to an individual's personal life, having less time available, competing interests, their personal faith, unsure about their beliefs or don't believe in God. Some reasons lie with the church itself and include services being boring, stale and not current. The community longs for a social atmosphere with faith minded people who are service oriented and active.

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. They will tell you they love service projects and mission trips and long for more programs like that during the year and not only on summer mission trips.

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. We also attract families with a mixed and varied religious background consistent with our Open and Affirming position.

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

REFERENCE 2

Rev. John Livingston
247 Harborview Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605
Telephone: 203-858-6436
Email: ucr210john@aol.com

6. CLOSING THOUGHTS

6a. Closing Prayer

God,

Help us to find a Senior Pastor and teacher who is able to learn with us; a leader who knows when to follow; someone who can push us when we need challenging; 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 Senior Pastor 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:

Russ Fincher, Search Committee Chair
Kirsten Bahlke, Counsel of Trustees Chair
Robert Gordon
Nicki Frazer
Tom Masters
Joe Socha
Catherine McCullough
William Stone
Steve Short
Ivette Olivo

Signed:

Russ Fincher, Search Committee Chair

6c. VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: 

Name / Title: Conference Minsiter

Email: mwilliams@uccny.org

Phone: 845-500-5082

Date: 3/31/2025

11 Year Report

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS



Church#: 61240

Assoc: 532 Schedule: 0 Garden City Community Church UCC Garden City NY 1530

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2013	692	123	124	0	0	12	10	0	2
2014	712	113	123	17	0	4	1	0	20
2015	705	116	113	25	0	4	6	30	-7
2016	557	140	131	0	0	12	12	148	-148
2017	557	127	151	0	0	7	7	0	0
2018	554	94	77	11	0	4	18	0	-3
2019	564	90	76	9	0	16	15	0	10
2020	564	90	76	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	387	90	76	0	0	0	0	177	-177
2022	401	99	54	14	0	5	5	0	14
2023	356	102	54	10	0	0	14	41	-45

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2013	\$984,474	\$0	\$40,000	\$4,690	\$44,690	\$40,601	\$85,291	4.06	\$1,069,765	\$493,141
2014	\$983,777	\$0	\$40,000	\$5,369	\$45,369	\$0	\$45,369	4.07	\$1,029,146	\$459,947
2015	\$1,109,692	\$0	\$36,000	\$5,731	\$41,731	\$26,657	\$68,388	3.24	\$1,178,080	\$464,228
2016	\$992,560	\$0	\$25,232	\$6,946	\$32,178	\$23,100	\$55,278	2.54	\$1,047,838	\$492,874
2017	\$992,560	\$0	\$25,000	\$9,228	\$34,228	\$23,100	\$57,328	2.52	\$1,049,888	\$458,111
2018	\$681,747	\$199,781	\$25,768	\$1,971	\$27,739	\$39,195	\$66,934	3.78	\$748,681	\$468,099
2019	\$842,381	\$150	\$22,802	\$2,898	\$25,700	\$5,495	\$31,195	2.71	\$873,576	\$454,444
2020	\$842,381	\$0	\$19,217	\$1,318	\$20,535	\$0	\$20,535	2.28	\$862,916	\$0
2021	\$842,381	\$0	\$16,171	\$1,974	\$18,145	\$0	\$18,145	1.92	\$860,526	\$0
2022	\$842,381	\$0	\$17,125	\$3,495	\$20,620	\$0	\$20,620	2.03	\$863,001	\$0
2023	\$1,222,463	\$0	\$12,947	\$2,490	\$15,437	\$0	\$15,437	1.06	\$1,237,900	\$389,894

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2018-2023	-35.74	8.51	-29.87	-33.33	205.56	79.31	-44.35	65.34
2013-2023	-48.55	-17.07	-56.45	-16.67	450.00	24.17	-65.46	15.72