

Updated FAQ for 2024 - Gather 55

What is Gather 55?

Gather55 is a participation model restaurant that brings people from all walks of life together to enjoy good, nourishing food in a friendly, warm, respectful place. Gather55 harnesses the power of delicious food to connect diverse communities through a restaurant with an inclusive vibe where all can gather regardless of ability to pay.

How does Gather55 operate? What are the hours?

Gather55 operates through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and staff. From cooking to serving, our team is committed to providing a unique equitable dining experience. We are open from 9am – 2pm Mondays through Thursdays.

What changes have been made to the menu?

We have created 3 sections of the menu - \$3 offerings, \$5 offerings and an ala carte section. Each menu section has multiple options to choose from.

So I can no longer pay \$2 for a meal?

In order to have a sustainable restaurant model we need to raise our prices. We do this with an eye towards keeping food accessible and extremely moderately priced. Diners will now need to pay a minimum of \$3 for a meal if they don't choose to volunteer.

How do I participate for a free meal?

If you are unable to pay for your meal, you can volunteer for a half hour in exchange for a meal from our \$3 section, or visit our Day Center staff for services and receive a voucher.

How do the finances work at Gather55?

Gather55 is generously supported by a variety of funders – individuals, sponsorships, corporations, foundations, and diners who pay extra for their meal to cover the cost of our subsidized meals. Although our menu prices are low, it actually costs us a minimum of \$15 to serve each meal. When folks dine at the low price they are in essence making a donation towards a meal that costs much more.

Can I volunteer at Gather55? How?

Absolutely! We welcome individuals who are passionate about our mission. If you're interested in volunteering for your meal, you can come to the restaurant during business hours and talk with our volunteer coordinator to find an opportunity that same day. Please keep in mind that our volunteer spots are limited and first come first serve.

What if I want to volunteer on a regular basis?

To volunteer on a regular basis, please fill out a volunteer application in person or visit the Hands on Hartford website and visit our volunteer opportunities section. You can also send an email to volunteering@handsonhartford.org or call (860) 706-1522.

How can I support Gather55 other than volunteering?

You can support Gather55 by making a donation, purchasing gift cards, attending our fundraising events, and spreading the word about our mission!

Are there any special events or promotions at Gather55?

Yes, we occasionally host special events or promotions. Stay tuned to our social media channels and website for updates on upcoming events, special menus, or promotions.

Can I make a reservation at Gather 55?

Reservations are available for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Please call +1 860-929-2316 or email gather55@handsonhartford.org. For dinner reservations only, you can also use OpenTable. *Groups of six or more guests need to make a reservation in advance.*

Does Gather55 cater events?

Yes, Gather55 offers catering services. If you're interested in catering for your event, please contact Rob Maffucci at rmaffucci@handsonhartford.org or call 860-706-1527.

How are funds raised at Gather55 utilized?

Funds raised at Gather55 go directly towards supporting Hands On Hartford's programs serving the Hartford community in areas of housing, health and nutrition.

What payment types does Gather55 accept?

Gather55 accepts cash, debit and credit cards, and contactless payments such as Apple and Android Pay for a quick and seamless transaction experience. We do not accept SNAP or EBT in the restaurant.

Can I pay in advance for a meal or contribute to someone else's meal?

Certainly! If you wish to pre-pay for a meal or contribute towards someone else's dining experience, please let our staff know, and they will assist you with the process.

Are tips included in the menu prices, or should I tip separately?

Our staff do not accept tips as we all receive a livable wage. However, we accept and appreciate any donations! If you enjoyed your dining experience and would like to leave a donation, you can do so on the tip line of your bill or can give your donation to your server or the front greeter.

Are Hands on Hartford Day Program services still available?

Yes, Hands on Hartford staff continue to provide social service referrals, help with accessing benefits, housing assistance, and other Hands On Hartford services; and things like socks and toiletries are offered. Health and recovery support activities provided, as well as fun activities like music, bingo and access to phones and computer connections.

How do I dine at Gather55 in the evening as a diner paying what I can?

We have a limited number of reservations for diners who would like to pay what they can. Pay what you can diners need to make a reservation at least 24 hours in advance. We can accommodate up to four diners in a pay-what you can party. Pay-what-you-can diners need to wait at least one month before making another reservation. Donations to the mission of Hands On Hartford are always appreciated.