

SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

CITY OF ONEIDA SEPTEMBER 11TH REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

INTRODUCTION: City Manager Kyle Lovell

INVOCATION: Dr. Jack Fucci, OPD Chaplin

SPEAKER: Penni Jennings Conley-American Legion Auxiliary President

08:46-FLIGHT 11 STRIKES THE NORTH TOWER (76 passengers and 11 crew members on board)

- 2 BELLS

09:03-FLIGHT 175 STRIKES THE SOUTH TOWER (51 passengers and 9 crew members on board)

- 2 BELLS

09:37-FLIGHT 77 STRIKES THE PENTAGON (53 passengers and 6 crew members on board)

- 2 BELLS

10:03-FLIGHT 93 CRASHES IN PENNSYLVANIA (33 passengers and 7 crew members on board)

- 2 BELLS

MEMORIAL WREATH PRESENTATION BY OFD/OPD COLORGUARD

BENEDICTION: Dr. Jack Fucci, OPD Chaplin

CLOSING REMARKS: CITY Manager Kyle Lovell

September 11, 2025

Good morning, everyone.

On behalf of the Mayor, Common Council, and the City of Oneida, thank you for being here. My name is Kyle Lovell, City Manager for Oneida, and a retired Master Sergeant of the United States Air Force. It's an honor to welcome you to this solemn ceremony of remembrance.

Twenty-four years ago, on September 11, 2001-our nation was changed forever. Nearly three thousand innocent lives were taken at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in a quiet field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. We remember the passengers and crews, the workers and visitors, and the first responders who ran toward danger and never came home. We also remember those who have suffered and passed in the years since-- firefighters, police officers, and survivors whose health was forever altered by that day.

We gather not to reopen wounds, but to ensure that memory does not fade. As a community, we hold three commitments today: to remember, to honor, and to serve.

We remember. We remember the people-mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, friends and neighbors-whose names are etched in stone and in our hearts. We remember the sounds and images we can never forget. And we remember the unity that rose from the smoke of that morning-the way strangers became helpers and neighbors became family.

We honor. We honor the courage of first responders-fire, police, EMS-who answered the call with no guarantee of return. We honor the men and women in uniform who deployed in the months and years that followed, and those who still stand watch today. If you are a first responder or a veteran, or you're serving today in our Armed Forces or Guard and Reserve, thank you. Your example reminds us that service is not an abstract idea; it is a choice we make for one another.

We serve. The best memorial we can build is the community we strengthen. Here in Oneida, that means looking out for our neighbors, teaching our children what this day means, and living with the quiet courage that ordinary people showed in extraordinary moments. It means showing up-like you've done today-so those we lost are never reduced to a date on a calendar.

Before we begin the formal program:

- Please take a moment now to silence your cell phones.

To our Gold Star families and all who carry a personal loss from that day or the years after, there are no words equal to your sacrifice, but there is a community here that sees you, supports you, and stands with you.

To our Oneida firefighters, police officers, dispatchers, and EMTs-thank you for the watch you keep every single day. To our veterans and military families-thank you for the steady, unheralded service that has safeguarded our freedoms for more than two decades in the long shadow of 9/11.

As we move through this ceremony, I ask each of us to hold three simple reflections:

1. **A name.** If you know someone connected to that day, speak their name in your heart.
2. **A promise.** Choose one act of service you will do this week, big or small-in their memory.
3. **A hope.** Commit to teaching the next generation not only what happened, but how we came together afterward.

With that spirit, we will now begin.

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise if you are able to for invocation by Chaplin Jack Fucci.

Kyle Lovell
City Manager
City of Oneida

September 11, 2025

Penni Conley

Good Morning, everyone.

As I stand here today, I carry with me memories that will never fade—memories of September 11th, 2001. That morning began like any other, but in an instant, our world changed forever. Like so many others, I didn't think twice, I responded to Ground Zero as an EMT with Greater Lenox Ambulance out of Canastota

I can still remember the sound of the sirens, the smoke filling the air. The ambulances lined up the staging area - Chelsea Pier waiting to be dispatched to a location, and the faces of people running not away from danger, but toward it.

What I'll never forget isn't just the devastation. It is how people came together. Amid the chaos, there was courage. Amid the loss, there was love. Strangers reaching out to help one another. Firefighters, police officers, EMTs, construction workers, and ordinary citizens stood side by side, doing whatever they could. We were no longer divided by our differences—we were united by our humanity. That day, and in the weeks after, we witnessed humanity at its best in the face of the very worst.

I witnessed firefighters who had already been on their feet for hours keep going, not because they had to, but because someone else needed them. Police officers clearing paths through the debris. I saw doctors, nurses, showing up with no expectation of recognition—just a determination to help.

Ordinary people became heroes. Volunteers lined the streets with food and water for those working in the debris. People from every corner of the country sending supplies, prayers, and hope. It didn't matter who you were, where you came from, or what you believed in—what mattered was that we stood together, we were one, united in heartbreak, but also in hope.

Working at Ground Zero on the corner of Church and Liberty Street across from where the towers fell, I realized that tragedy may break buildings, but it cannot break the human spirit when we come together. The strength of America doesn't just live in our buildings or our landmarks—it lives in each and every one of us.

So today, as we remember those we lost, and as we honor the heroes who answered the call, let us also remember the spirit of togetherness that rose from the ashes. Let us carry that spirit forward—into our communities, into our daily lives, and into the way we treat one another.

On that day, and in the days that followed, we saw the very best of what it means to be American.

The same spirit of unity that carried us through the darkest of days is the same spirit that can heal, strengthen, and lift us up every day.

When we stand together, there is nothing we cannot overcome.

To all those that lost their lives 24 years ago, we have not forgotten you.

To all the brave men and women who have served and are currently serving as 1st responders – firefighters, police officers, EMT's, paramedics, doctors, nurses – your courage, your sacrifice and your dedication does not go unnoticed. Thank you! Not just today, but every day!

Thank you, and God bless.