



## meditate ON MY WORD

wisdom

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
And do not rely on your own insight.*

*In all your ways acknowledge him,  
And he will make straight your paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

### FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Dear Church Family,

We are back! What a delight it has been to see so many of you back on God's Acre. There is still plenty of room for those who have yet to re-engage, but we are off to what feels like a wonderful start; glory be to God! One of the truly heartening things is the participation in many of our classes and events. Before the start of school, the All Church Picnic, the kick-off of our youth and church school programs, participation in our boards, committees, and ministry teams has been truly remarkable. Personally, to have so many children back with us for worship and to see the front aisles full of kids for our Children's Message is a joy for me to behold.



In addition to what feels like a robust return to church life, we have a number of events and ministries launching in October! We have our Fall Social planned for Friday, October 15, across the street at the Historical Society. We will host New Member classes in the middle of the month, beginning on October 17.

Our Men's and Women's Small Group ministries will kick into gear this month, as well. We will also be offering a new program for parents with young children: Nurturing Nest will begin this month.

We are also relaunching our Collegiate Fellowship Bible Study on Sunday evenings for college students from God's Acre to connect with their faith and one another while at school.

Now, I realize that the pandemic is not over, and many of you are still a bit wary of engaging in communal activities. But I trust, by God's Grace, that day by day, week by week, month by month, our church family will re-gather, reconnect, and grow stronger.

There is something about people of faith managing through times of trial that strengthens character and deepens commitment. I believe we are witnessing those developments right now on God's Acre.

As I begin to think about stewardship, I'm reminded that we have one more Pilgrim 400th Anniversary of which to take note. This Thanksgiving will be the 400th anniversary of the very first Thanksgiving.

*Continued on page two*



## Join Us for Fall 2021 New Member Class

Interested in joining our family of faith? Please attend our new member sessions this fall! These sessions provide an opportunity to meet our leaders, and to learn about the religious beliefs and the traditions that have been the hallmarks of our congregational life on God's Acre since 1733.

### Dates for the Fall 2021 New Members classes:

- Sunday, October 17, 3:00pm
- Wednesday, October 20, 7:00pm
- Saturday, October 23, 4:00pm
- Sunday, October 24, 10:00am

If you are interested in joining our church please contact Amy Sheffield, [amysheff@me.com](mailto:amysheff@me.com).

## From the Pastor's Study

*Continued from page one*

The pilgrims had made it through the first winter but lost half of their company to disease and death. It was a frightful time, but as the harvest came in, and with the goodwill of the native people supporting them, our Pilgrim mothers and fathers paused to give thanks to God for bringing them through an incredibly difficult time, with a promise of a very bright and hopeful future.

While this pandemic has not been as dire for us as that first year was for our pilgrim ancestors, we have come a long way, and we have much to be thankful for, thankful to our Lord and Savior.

I am looking forward to a really exciting month of October on God's Acre, and I hope and pray you are too!

Yours in Christ,  
Chapin

## Coffee Hour Returns!

We are thrilled to have coffee hour back and the Fellowship Team did a great job taking the lead in September but now we need your help. It is a great way to serve the church and is family friendly, more hands make light work. If you are interested in signing up to host please contact Linda William, [mrswilliams@worldcontact.com](mailto:mrswilliams@worldcontact.com).

### Top 5 Myths About Coffee Hour

#### 1. Coffee hour is handled by a group that I'm not involved with. They have it under control already.

**MYTH!** Coffee hour is the responsibility and the joy of the entire congregation. Anyone who has ever grabbed a cookie after church knows how much it is appreciated. This lovely tradition occurs because of people who take the initiative to sign up. You are invited to be one of those people!

#### 2. Hosting coffee hour is stressful.

**MYTH!** Last anyone checked, there is no complaint box in Smith Hall for coffee hour. You put out the snacks and keep the coffee flowing, and that's it. When the munchies are gone, it means you did a great job!

#### 3. Hosting coffee hour is expensive.

**MYTH!** The Fellowship team provides the snacks, coffee, creamer, etc. Some folks enjoy making it a bigger affair with the occasional homemade banana bread, and hey, who minds that? Others happily rely solely on the provided snacks. Guess what? It gets eaten and enjoyed thoroughly either way!

#### 4. I don't know anyone to host with, so I can't do it.

**MYTH!** You can suggest that any group you are associated with host coffee hour. It is so much fun to do this way, with lots of hands and friends. You can also contact anyone on the Fellowship team (including [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org)). We will be happy to help you find a friend or family who would like to share the responsibility!

#### 5. I don't know how the coffee machine works, and I'm worried everyone will get cranky if they have to wait for their caffeine.

**MYTH!** There are instructions in the kitchen that are easy to follow. Any of the Fellowship team will be happy to give you a tutorial on the coffee machine or answer any other kitchen questions. In addition, there are LOTS of people at coffee hour each week who have done it before. They are always glad to lend a hand. In fact, some people jump in and brew a pot (or four) of coffee without even being asked. It truly is a team mentality - you're not alone!



## Join a Bible Study

New members are welcome to join a Bible Study at any time. The lineup is as follows:

**Beginners Bible Study** meets on Sundays from 9:00-9:45am in the Parlor with BJ Flagg and Rev. Kibbie Laird. We will look at the scriptures being used in Sunday worship. Don't be embarrassed by your lack of biblical knowledge. You be right at home in this class. Bring your study booklet and a Bible if you have one. The parlor and library are not equipped to accommodate those joining from home or travel. Contact BJ Flagg, [bj@nurenu.com](mailto:bj@nurenu.com) for a Zoom link.



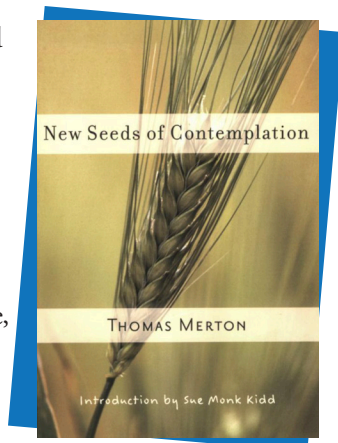
This fall, with our all-church emphasis meditating on God's word, we are studying the most quoted prophet of the Bible, Isaiah. Come find out why!

The **Monday Morning Bible Study** group meets 7:00-8:00am in the Library, and the Tuesday Women's Bible Study meets in the Parlor 9:30-10:30am. Both groups can now accommodate those traveling or joining from home. For a Zoom invite, Contact Marianna Kilbride, [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org).

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study** meets weekly from 9:30-11:00am in the Parlor. Chapin invites the group to look at the scriptures used in worship a couple of weeks in advance. Your input and the discussion informs the sermon on each given text. The discussion is always interesting and provocative. The parlor and library are now equipped to accommodate those traveling or joining from home. Contact Chapin Garner, [chapin@godsacre.org](mailto:chapin@godsacre.org) for a Zoom invite.

### Fridays with Merton

Please join us on Fridays to read and discuss short essays from contemplative Trappist monk and author Thomas Merton's *New Seeds of Contemplation*. We meet at 8:00am via Zoom. New members are welcome and encouraged to this thoughtful group. Contact Marianna Kilbride, [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org) for a Zoom invite or more information.



## October MG Plans

During October MG plans a mid month golf outing on October 13 and a regular Small Group meeting October 25 at 7:30pm. We had a successful season launch event dinner on September 27 with over 70 men in attendance. If you are interested in attending the MG events please contact the church office or Steve Case at [scaae135@outlook.com](mailto:scaae135@outlook.com).



## Fall Fellowship Social

Save The Date: October 15

The Fellowship Team is busy planning a fun and festive Oktoberfest-themed social. Check your email as the invite with all the details will be arriving soon! We will gather on Friday, October 15, from 6:00-9:00pm at the New Canaan Historical Society; Lederhosen welcome!

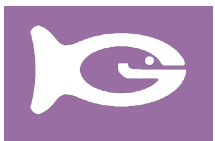
If you have questions or would like to help with the event, contact Linda Twombly, [twomblylinda@gmail.com](mailto:twomblylinda@gmail.com).



## Parents Mark Your Calendars!

October is a time for parents to get involved in Youth Ministries. All of our groups will hold their annual Parents Meetings sometime this month. Beyond being a great way to hear more about the dynamic and transformative ministry your children participate in, this is the only way to know about any travel opportunities for YG & MSYG.

**Guppies** and **JYG** will have Parents Meetings on October 11 and 12 during the respective program times. Those meetings will run concurrently with normally scheduled Guppies and JYG programs.



The **Middle School Youth Group (MSYG)** meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 6 at 7:00pm. This is the only way for parents to get the information on traveling on our two travel trips – the Winter Weekend and the Mountainside Mission Trip.

**Youth Group (YG)** will hold its annual parents meeting on October 17 from 10:00-11:45am in the Meeting House. The 10:00am service will provide youth and families with the opportunity to hear from mission fish who served on our Mission Trip to Wakefield, Massachusetts, this past June! This is a covenant event for fish and families. The parent meeting will begin immediately following the 10:00am service and should wrap up by 11:45am. This is the best way to find out

more about our community of faith and fellowship and the only way to get the paperwork for our February Mission Trip.

Our entire Youth Ministries staff and parent ministry teams look forward to spending time with parents this month. See you on God's Acre!



October is still early in the year for all of our programs, if you haven't tried youth group out yet or have a family you want to invite into our community, please do!

### Join the NEW Junior Worship Team

**Wednesdays 5:00-6:00pm**

Does your Middle Schooler like to play guitar, ukulele, violin, or another instrument?

Do they enjoy singing along to Worship Songs on the radio?

The Middle School Children's Choir, known as Joyful Noise, is being restructured as the brand new Junior Worship Team! Children grades 5-8 are invited to register for Joyful Noise, which will provide a versatile experience including group voice lessons, learning to be a section leader for the younger choir, playing instruments, and practicing worship songs to be prepared to participate in upcoming Youth Worship nights.

To register for any of the Children's Music groups, or to find out how your child might be empowered through music in the church, email Sydney Anderson at [sydney@godsacre.org](mailto:sydney@godsacre.org), or fill out a form at [godsacre.org](http://godsacre.org).

For more information:

Jody Blaine Davis, [music@godsacre.org](mailto:music@godsacre.org), (203)966-2651 x827  
 Sydney Anderson, [sydney@godsacre.org](mailto:sydney@godsacre.org) (203)966-2651 x821

## 3rd & 4th Graders to Celebrate Spiritual Milestone!

On Sunday, October 17, we will present the 3rd and 4th grade class with their very own Bible during the 10:00am worship service! Our “Bible Workshop” will take place during Church School as we invite all 3rd and 4th graders to join us to learn about their new ‘manual for life’ through music, games, and group discussion!



## 4th & 5th Grade Introductory Communion

4th and 5th graders will be preparing for their Introductory Communion that will take place on November 7 during the 10:00am Worship Service. A communion workshop will be held on Sunday, October 24, during Church School. This is an incredible moment in the life of these learners & we hope all will be present to participate in this milestone! Contact Emma Rae Carroll at [churchschool@godsacre.org](mailto:churchschool@godsacre.org) with questions/comments.

Join us in your Halloween costume for...

**Trick-or-Treat on God's Acre**

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**SUNDAY** | **10:00am**  
**October 31** | **Church School**

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Come in costume as we travel the Church treat-or-treating for faith-based prizes!

## Children's Music and Drama Updates

All Children's Choirs have begun rehearsals! Catch the Spirit Singers (grades 1-4) singing in Worship on October 17 and 24 this month! On October 17, the Children's Choirs will bless the 3rd and 4th graders receiving their Bibles with a special song of celebration, and on October 24, they will get to perform with world-renowned Jazz Saxophone player, Ken Gioffre.

It's not too late to join the fun – we are accepting registrations on a rolling basis.

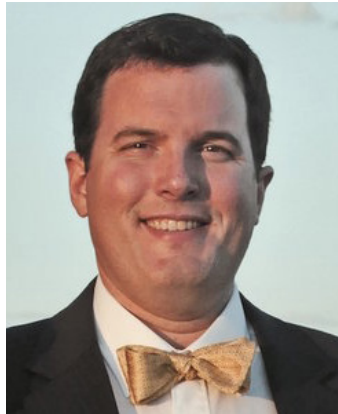
Miss Sydney has designed a program that will allow intermittent members to participate in worship, so if your child is interested, please reach out to find out how they can be a part of the musical fellowship!



## Music Department Updates and Upcoming Events

### Introducing Bryan Griffin

Welcome to tenor Bryan Griff, the new Tenor Section Leader for the Chancel Choir. Bryan is a graduate of The Juilliard School and has sung with The Metropolitan Opera Chorus since 2011. Bryan is from South Windsor, Connecticut, and grew up in a Congregational Church. His repertoire includes many styles from chorus to solo works. You will be blessed with his beautiful voice and enjoy his friendly personality.



### Local Organists Recital

**Saturday, October 16 at 4:00pm**

**Free and open to the public**

The New Canaan Historical Society features Mid-Century Modern month in October. Local church musicians will present an organ recital as part of this project. This one-hour recital is free and open to the public. Performers include Ned Tipton, St. Mark's Episcopal Church; Dr. Alla Borzova, St. Michael's Lutheran Church; Dr. John Michniewicz, St. Aloysius Catholic Church, and our Director of Music Ministries, Dr. (Jody) Blaine Davis. Jody will perform Sanctuary by New Canaan native, Dr. Gwyneth Walker.



### Welcome Ken Gioffre, saxophonist

Ken Gioffre, internationally renowned jazz saxophonist, will be in the 10:00am service on Sunday, October 24. He will play the prelude, postlude and accompany the Chancel Choir on anthems. Mr. Gioffre currently tours and records as saxophonist for Blood, Sweat, and Tears and conductor/saxophonist for Smokey Robinson. He has appeared nightly on the television show New York at Night and has also appeared regularly on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, NBC's Today Show, HBO's The Sopranos, A & E's Breakfast With The Arts, Fox News' Fox and Friends, Sinbad's Soul Music Festival as well as the movie Last Holiday starring Queen Latifa. Ken has recorded for numerous labels as well as for all major television networks.



### Sing During Advent With The Chancel Choir

If you would like to sing with the Chancel Choir but have limited time, consider singing in the December services! The Chancel Choir will sing traditional Christmas anthems in the 10:00am morning services on December 5 and 19; A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on December 19 (5:00 pm). December 12 will be the featured work with orchestra, Messiah by Georg Frederick Handel. Come Thursday evenings, beginning October 7 from 7:30 – 8:00pm for quick rehearsals for the Advent season. You will be given a singer's mask and sit next to a helpful singer who will guide you along the way. There's a place for you!



## Spotlight on Pacific House

The mission at Pacific House is to prevent and end homelessness. The agency provides fundamental needs of food and shelter while offering short-term, solution-focused case management services (free to clients), which help them access community resources to secure stable housing quickly. While Pacific House is focused on housing the homeless in Fairfield County, the agency also helps individuals get back to school or find employment to help them ultimately afford housing and help reduce the homeless population in Connecticut.



The agency has two core focal points, an emergency shelter and deeply affordable housing. The Stamford-based Emergency Shelter typically serves 60 – 85 guests each night but often serves 100 or more during winter. It operates 365 days, 24 hours per day, and provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily. The deeply affordable housing projects are a powerful example



of collaboration between the federal government, state, and town.

During Fiscal Year 2022, Pacific House will have doubled housing capacity from just two years ago (this

during a pandemic). This past year, the agency provided over 95,000 meals to shelter residents, the most in the agency's history. In addition, Pacific House diverted 108 individuals from coming into the shelter, averting their potential to become homeless. This is more than double the number of diversions from the previous year. Two case managers handle their Young Adult Program caseload and, since its inception, have helped over 150 Young Adults ages 18 – 24.

Pacific House advocacy is making a difference, and The Congregational Church of New Canaan is proud to support its efforts. Larry Servin, MSA liaison to Pacific House



## Pacific House Monthly Service

The familiar Matthew 25:35 verse reminds us that Jesus said: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink ...”

Once a month (every third Thursday) our church provides and serves dinner at the Pacific House Homeless Shelter in Stamford. Volunteers are needed to both contribute food items and serve a hot meal to the approximately 40 men residing at the shelter. [All Covid protocols are observed.]

These men always express their sincere gratitude for our hearty meal (usually ziti!) and in serving them, we truly see the face of Jesus.

Please contact Andy Parkin, [andyparkin7@gmail.com](mailto:andyparkin7@gmail.com), for details on how to help.

## Meals on Wheels Engagement Opportunity

Our church has a longstanding relationship of service with Meals on Wheels of New Canaan. Prepandemic 25 church members were responsible for delivering healthy hot and cold meals to our neighbors on 12 routes per month. Many of our members delivered once a month on a Thursday in a team or individually. We want to recommit to these regular routes together again. All volunteers must be vaccinated, but there are no age limits. Please contact Ann Gervase, [anngervase1@gmail.com](mailto:anngervase1@gmail.com), to find out more, ask questions, arrange to shadow a volunteer, or commit anew to a route. Our volunteers consistently find this to be the most rewarding and uplifting of service engagements.



## Stephen Ministers are here for You!

### Could a Stephen Minister help you or someone you love?

Since 1975, more than 600,000 people from more than 13,000 congregations and other organizations have been trained as Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministry has been active at The Congregational Church of New Canaan since 2005. Currently, we have 38 commissioned ministers, and we have Stephen Ministers available at this time for those in need of care. Please let us know if you or someone you love needs a Stephen Minister.

Stephen Ministers provide one-on-one care and support members of the congregation who are going through a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. While our Pastors will always be on the front line of Pastoral Care, especially during times of crisis, our Stephen Ministers are available to give supplemental care and support when the needs arise.

A Stephen Minister begins a caring relationship when he or she is matched with a person experiencing a life crisis. The Stephen Ministers then meets with that person on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support. The caring relationship lasts as long as the person is in need of care. With our new class of trained Stephen Ministers in the spring, we currently have more than a dozen Stephen Ministers waiting for care receivers.

If you are going through a difficult time or know someone who is, and would like to request a Stephen Minister, please contact one of our Stephen Leaders: Beth Baker, [bethcudabaker@gmail.com](mailto:bethcudabaker@gmail.com) or Rev. Kibbie Laird, [Kibbie@godsacre.org](mailto:Kibbie@godsacre.org), (203)966-2651x831



**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

## Join the Flower Ministry!

We would love to have any church members who would like to join the flower ministry! Want to Join the Fun? A creative and fun group arranges the flowers you see every week at our Sunday services. These arrangements enhance our services and then are broken down and delivered by the deacons to church members who might need support or are celebrating something.



If you arrange flowers and would like to join us, you are welcome. If you have never arranged flowers but would like to learn, you are welcome. Come join the fun. To learn more contact Juliet Howe, [juliet@eehowe.com](mailto:juliet@eehowe.com).



## SAVE THE DATE

## Tuesday, October 26

### The New Canaan Land Trust Religion and Environment Panel

Gather to hear local clergy and scholars as they discuss the intersection of these two relevant areas. An email invitation will follow with further details.





## Please Consider Being An Usher!

### A message from Todd Baker & Bently Elliott, Co-Head Ushers

We all know that giving is better than receiving, and the wonderful thing about ushering is that we can give (by serving our church) and receive (by attending our wonderful services) at the same time! Ushering is a great way to stay in touch with the congregation, get closer to clergy and church leaders, and also a great entry point that can lead to other forms of church service. Because the commitment is on Sunday morning, work conflicts are rare, and if you are already a frequent attendee, the time commitment is incremental in the sense that you arrive a little earlier and leave a little later. It's easy, fun, and most importantly, fulfilling.

We basically have three types of ushers:

#### **Rotational Team Members:**

Regular commitment once a month and front line opportunity to substitute for others when necessary

#### **Super Subs:**

People who are regularly away or have frequent Sunday conflicts and can't commit to monthly service, but who like to serve whenever possible, often on short notice, and are proactive about their ability to serve on a given Sunday

#### **Regular Subs:**

People who are regularly away or have frequent Sunday conflicts and prefer to have their potential service solicited in advance so they can manage their time

If you are interested, have questions, or would like to discuss, please email Todd Baker at [tmcbaker1@gmail.com](mailto:tmcbaker1@gmail.com) and/or Bently Elliott at [bentlyt@aol.com](mailto:bentlyt@aol.com) – we'd love to hear from you!



## Nurturing Nest

### Mommy & Me – Music, Bible Stories, and Play

Our Church is launching a new program for very young children designed to facilitate their spiritual nurture and understanding. This Christian Mommy and Me program, lovingly called “Nurturing Nest” will feature age-appropriate music, Bible Stories and interactive play around a monthly theme (love, joy, peace, etc).

We are welcoming both members and prospective members wherever they are on their faith journey and wants to offer a safe space for young children and their parents to gather weekly and explore our Christian faith together.



In lieu of a program fee, we hope each family will consider supporting one of our monthly mission partners, showing their children from an early age what it means “to love our neighbors.”

### Date and Time Details

- Nurturing Nest for 18-24 months old will meet on Tuesdays 9:30am-10:30am
- Nurturing Nest for 2-3 year old's will meet on Thursdays 9:30am-10:30am
- Nurturing Nest for infants and babies will meet on Thursdays from 11:00am-12:00pm

All Children must be accompanied by their parent. The classes will be assigned on a first come, first served basis, and limited to 12 children each class. Classes begin October 5 and run until Thanksgiving. If you are interested in joining one of our classes which will run fall, winter, and spring, please fill out our Nurturing Nest Form at [godsacre.org/nurturing-nest](http://godsacre.org/nurturing-nest).

**We hope you will come grow with us at God's Acre.**

## OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

### Ministers

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Chapin Garner, x1  
Senior Minister

The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird, x2  
Acting Associate Minister of Children,  
Youth, and Families

### Staff

Sydney Anderson, x821  
Director of Children's Music and Drama

Kelly Leather Antonson, x824  
Senior Youth Director

Erik Burns, x834  
Youth Director

Laurel Carr, x833  
Director of Communications

Dr. Jo Deen Blaine Davis, x827  
Director of Music Ministries

Anthony Jones  
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, x832  
Director of Missions and Outreach

Caroline Leather, x835  
Director of Children's Formation

Marianne Perry, x822  
Director of Operations

Shean-Mei Sheu, x823  
Director of Finance

### Church Lay Leadership

David Carlson  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Hoyt Davidson  
Chair, Board of Deacons

Barbara Clayton  
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Lonnie deMarco  
Chair, Personnel



The Congregational Church  
of New Canaan

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[www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org)

*We are a Stephen Minister Church*

## Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the September newsletter, please submit by October 20.  
Email submissions to: [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org).

## myConnect Corner

Become part of myConnect, our online church community!

Within myConnect you can:

- view an online directory
- interact with groups
- set up and manage your online giving
- view giving statements
- register for events
- find ways to volunteer

Two ways to login:

1. Visit [www.godsacre.org/myconnect](http://www.godsacre.org/myconnect)
2. Go to [www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org) and click "myConnect@God's Acre" in the upper left corner.

Need an Account?

Click "Sign Up Here" on the login page, enter your info, and look for our email to get started.

Questions?

Contact [marie-ange@godsacre.org](mailto:marie-ange@godsacre.org)