



meditate

ON MY WORD

thanksgiving

Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:5-7

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Dear Church Family,

As we edge toward the middle of fall, I wanted to update you on a couple of significant developments in our church. First, the primary focus of our staff, leadership, and our ministry teams has been on efforts to regather our community as the pandemic begins to ease. We have had some wonderful successes, particularly in recent fellowship and youth events, and there is a growing sense that week by week, we are gaining a bit of momentum. We have a long way to go; of course, many folks have still not fully reengaged church in person, and our pledge receipts are still running a bit behind where we would be at this time of year. But we are definitely experiencing a hopeful rebound from our pandemic experience.



Amid these efforts, we have a number of staffing transitions in progress, of which I want you to be aware. Most notably is the impending retirement of Marianne Perry, our Director of Operations. While Marianne's tenure has not been particularly long in duration, the work she has accomplished has been extensive. Marianne has skillfully and successfully helped us navigate through the pandemic. There has not been a single aspect of pandemic planning and safety implementation that Marianne was not involved in. Much of our success during this pandemic is the result of Marianne's faithful service to our church. Now it is time for her to take a break, rest, and enjoy retirement.

Thankfully, we currently have a member of staff we all deeply respect and trust who has amazing administrative gifts. As we advance, Caroline Leather will be assisting me with the day-to-day operations of the church. Caroline will not initially be administering all aspects of our church life, but we believe, in time, she will be able to play a central role in our church's administration. Shean-Mei Sheu, our new and remarkably gifted Director of Finance, will play an essential role in helping Caroline learn our church's fiscal workings. In addition, Lonnie deMarco, a very talented Human Resources executive, is contracting with us to help manage all the personnel functions for our church administration until Caroline is ready to take on those processes.

As many of you know, Caroline has led our Church School program for the past five years. Blessedly, Church School has been Kibbie's specialty throughout her ministry. With the help of EmmaRae Carroll, as our Church School Coordinator, we will continue to rebuild our Church School program, which was one of the programs most significantly impacted by the pandemic.

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From the Pastor's Study

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We have also added to our children's ministry with the hiring of Sydney Anderson as our Director of Children's Music & Drama. Sydney has wonderful energy and experience and is already working hard to regather our Childrens' Choirs.

Finally, as a cost-saving measure during the pandemic, and because our program needs were not as intense, we cut back on some of our administrative support. We are now adding administrative staffing back to our youth programming and to our church's pastoral and adult ministries. Tracy Goldman will be assisting with much of the program support for our adult ministries, and Sam Garner will be working to support our youth programs.

While there is a fair bit of transition in church staffing, we are blessed with really talented and committed individuals who feel called to the work they are engaged in. Our focus will continue to be the regathering of our church family, and I trust, by the grace and guidance of God, we will emerge from this pandemic well, with an even deeper commitment to share the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout our community and beyond!

Yours in Christ,
Chapin

Farewell to Marianne Perry

The many gifts of Marianne Perry have blessed the church. Before she became Director of Operations, Marianne was the co-leader of the Stephen Ministry and facilitated their meetings and coordination of caretakers and receivers. She oversaw the Prayer Shawl Ministry and Flower Ministry.



Marianne was Administrative Assistant to music and assistant in Cherubs, Spirit Singers, and Joyful Noise choirs; she organized treats, nativity pageant costumes, and rehearsals. In addition to her administrative gifts, Marianne also sang in the alto section of the Chancel Choir.

Thank you, Marianne, for your faithful ministry to this church! Your calm and gracious personality has been a blessing to the staff and the congregation. Congratulations on your retirement! We wish you all the best of health, happiness, and success on your new journey in life.

We are a warm and welcoming
family of faith, bound together
in compassion and love.

STAFF NEWS



Caroline Leather

Associate Director
of Operations

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Tracy Goldman

Administrative Assistant

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EmmaRae Carroll

Church School Coordinator

(203) 966-2651, x826
churchschool@godsacre.org



Sam Garner

Youth Ministries Assistant

(203) 966-2651
youthgroup@godsacre.org

Bible Studies

New members are welcome and encouraged to join a Bible Study at any time.

- **Sundays 9:00 - 9:45am**
in the Parlor with BJ Flagg and Kibbie Laird
- **Mondays 7:00-8:00am**
in the Library with Marianna Kilbride and William Picard
- **Tuesdays 9:30-10:30am**
in the Parlor with Marianna Kilbride, Women's Study
- **Wednesdays 9:30-11:00am**
in the Parlor with Chapin Garner

The parlor and library are now equipped to accommodate those traveling or joining from home. Contact Marianna Kilbride, marianna@godsacre.org for a Zoom invite or more info.



Men's Fellowship Christmas Dinner

The Men's Fellowship Christmas dinner is back! This year, we plan to establish a new tradition by holding it at Waveny House, on December 14, so mark your calendars and ask your Men's Group leader for more information. Don't delay sign up today! [Click here](#) to register or contact Charles Crookenden, crooko@gmail.com, to learn more.

**SAVE
THE DATE
December 14,
2021**



Oktoberfest Fall Social

Our Oktoberfest Fall Social was a huge success! We enjoyed an Indian summer evening filled with delicious food, festive decorations, fun music, and an incredible crowd of over 80 church members. The Fellowship Team hopes for this to be an annual tradition, as those in attendance seemed to enjoy this seasonal theme. Brats, brews, and Oompah Band entertainment are here to stay!



Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea



Save the Date

Thursday, December 9, 11:30am-1:00pm
Invitation to follow.

Contact Lesley Cousley, lcousley@gmail.com, if you would like to bake or decorate in preparation for this festive, fun afternoon.

Youth Group

In October, MSYG had a full activity slate from Mead Park Games to the Most Dangerous Game. The group also had the opportunity to serve our community with Cooking for a Cause. That Sunday, our 7th & 8th graders baked 12 lasagnas for the Women's Shelter at Inspirica and learned about food insecurity in lower Fairfield county.



Looking ahead to November, MSYG will kick off the month with a Lock-in details to come via e-mail! MSYGers will have the chance to worship with YG and afterward take over the church and grounds for a night.

On November 30, Middle School Ministry Team will be bringing back a beloved tradition of the church – our Advent Wreath Making night! Please join us to kick-off the season of Advent by making your own family advent wreath. Please contact Ashley Burr ashleyburr1@gmail.com or Erik Burns burns@godsacre.org with any questions regarding the evening.



All Church Thanksgiving Service Project!

This November, we are thrilled to announce the return of our All Church Thanksgiving Service Project on November 21 from 11:00am-12:30pm! Immediately following the 10:00am service volunteers of all ages are welcome to decorate and prepare Thanksgiving dinner boxes for 140 families across Fairfield county. All attendees will require masks, regardless of vaccination status, as this is a youth-friendly event. To-go apple cider refreshments and donuts will be offered in thanks for your hard work!



K-8th Families: [Click here](#) to sign up to donate apple cider or donut holes. All items may be dropped off in the Smith Hall kitchen before service on 11/21.



9th-12th Families: YGers and families will have opportunities to sign-up to serve throughout the day. Individual fish can volunteer in the morning while families can volunteer to serve in the afternoon, assisting with deliveries to local non-profits. Look out for an email from the YG ministry team with further details. This is a covenant event, therefore, participation is required to be eligible for the February Mission Trip!



Election Day Extravaganza!

Get out and vote! Drop off your kids in Room 7 on Tuesday, November 2, from 9:30-11:00am for a movie & craft! For more information, contact EmmaRae Carroll at churchschool@godsacre.org.



3rd & 4th Graders Receive Bibles! Church School

On Sunday, October 17, our 3rd & 4th graders shared in a special milestone during the 10:00am service as they were presented with their very own Bible! This milestone is one our 4th graders missed out on last program year, and we were thrilled to welcome back and celebrate with both grades.



Children were welcomed forward and we prayed over their bibles before they headed into class for a Bible Workshop! The workshop included lessons pronouncing each book in the Bible, Bible races to find the correct piece of scripture, and moments of reflection on how your Bible will be with you through the many stages of life!

4th and 5th Grade Communion Workshop

On Sunday, October 24, during Church School, our 4th and 5th graders had a special Communion Workshop in the Library with Rev. Kibbie. We looked at the story of Jesus celebrating the Last Supper with his own disciples, and discussed the meaning of the bread and the cup.



After learning about the sacrament and the many ways it is celebrated in churches across the world with different breads and different cups, our 4th and 5th graders practiced taking communion to prepare them for celebrating with the rest of the congregation on November 7 in the Meeting House. Join us!



Holy Halloween Fun!

On Sunday, October 31, our children wore their Halloween costumes to church. Ghouls, ghosts, goblins, princesses, and wizards, crept or crawled or flew over to God's Acre. In Church School they enjoyed carnival games, prizes, and toys and candy!

Choirs on God's Acre

Did you forget to join a choir? The Chancel Choir is back in the choir room for Thursday rehearsals (7:30pm– 9:00pm) and in the choir loft on Sundays at the 10:00am services. There's a place for you! Join us for festive Thanksgiving music on November 21 and Advent music in December. Handel's Messiah with a chamber ensemble is Sunday, December 12 at the 10:00am service, and A Festival of Lessons and Carols is Sunday, December 19 at 5:00pm.

Children's Choirs are rehearsing and singing regularly in the services. They are working on music for the traditional Christmas pageant, too.

Annual Nativity Pageant

Casting is complete for the Christmas Eve Nativity Pageant.



IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sunday, November 7, 11:15am**
Parent Information meeting in the Chapel.
- **Sundays throughout November and December**
Rehearsals
- **Wednesday, December 22**
Dress rehearsal
- **Christmas Eve, 4pm**
Pageant

Upcoming Children's Choirs Appearances

- 11/17/2021** Junior Worship Team: Youth Worship Night
6:30-8:00pm
- 11/21/2021** Spirit Singers and Joyful Noise:
10:00am Service
- 12/19/2021** Spirit Singers and Joyful Noise:
10:00am Service
- 12/24/2021** Annual Nativity Pageant:
4:00pm

Calling All Handbell Ringers

Bells are ringing! If you read music, enjoy making music in a small group, and don't want to sing, join Joyful Ringers! We meet Thursdays from 6:30-7:20pm. For more information, contact Jody at music@godsacre.org or (203)966-2651 x827.



SAVE THE DATES

Advent MUSICAL MOMENTS

WEDNESDAYS AT NOON FOR 30 MINUTES

December 1



Aram Tchobanian, tenor

December 8



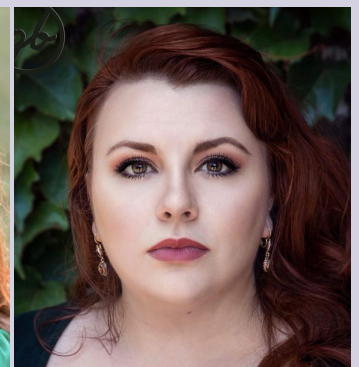
Dimitrie Lazich, baritone

December 15



Jenny D'Alba, soprano

December 22



Anne Maguire, mezzo soprano



Advent Project Kickoff

Families in need have hard choices at Christmas. Paying for food and winter utilities often leaves no room in the budget for gifts. In working with local partners, our three yearly Christmas projects target that issue.



The Angel gifts we buy are for children in the homeless or working poor communities.



The Dove Bags of groceries provide food for an entire day for a family or individual in need.



The Salvation Army Bell Ringing funds raised provide help primarily with heat and electricity needs of local residents through our Health and Human Services Department.

Signups begin November 14 or contact Marianna Kilbride, marianna@godsacre.org.

November Plate Collection

November's plate offering goes towards the 2021 All-Church Thanksgiving Project.

Benefitting:

Inspirica	Grace Baptist Church
Macedonia Church	Carver Foundation
Person to Person	Fairfield Aids Project
Open Door Shelter	Pacific House
Pivot Ministries	Liberation Programs

We partner with these agencies to feed about 1000 individuals a full Thanksgiving meal. This year we will resume our custom of gathering at the church the Sunday before Thanksgiving, 11/21, to pack, stack, decorate, and deliver boxes of food to our neighbors in need.

Congregants wishing to support this beloved church tradition may make a monetary donation to this project by visiting our website, using the GIVE button, and designating the gift to "Thanksgiving Project" or cash or check donation in the Sunday plate or church office. Parents, let your kids help by earning donation dollars with chores! The pandemic has been hard on shelters and agencies supporting the poor. Please join us in giving them a hand in their efforts!

Contact Caroline Leather, caroline@godsacre.org, or Marianna Kilbride, marianna@godsacre.org.

Meals on Wheels Needs Volunteers!

Would you please help us reconstitute our 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, at 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 a most rewarding relational service engagement.



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

EmmaRae Carroll, x826
Church School Coordinator

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

Sam Garner
Youth Ministries Assistant

Tracy Goldman, x829
Administrative Assistant

Anthony Jones
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, x832
Director of Missions and Outreach

Caroline Leather, x835
Associate Director of Operations

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

We are a Stephen Minister Church

Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the September newsletter, please submit by November 20.
Email submissions to: 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
2. Go to 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 laurel@godsacre.org