



meditate

ON MY WORD

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Dear Church Family,

It is Advent on God's Acre, and Christmas is not far behind! This is such a special time of year for us, but I am also aware it is a very busy time as well. I know our church is vying for your time every bit as much as your family and friends. In fact, while looking at all of the church offerings, it can feel a little overwhelming, awesome in scope, and overwhelming in breadth.

My suggestion is that you not overbook yourself this season, whether from church events, social events, or family gatherings. Too much of a good thing tends to be really too much! So be discriminating this season. Add events that will help center you without entirely consuming you. Don't try to do everything, certainly not everything at the church. When thinking about them, pick and choose those events that quicken your spirit and lift your countenance.

With that said, or rather written, do pick something from our church's sacred Advent banquet of offerings! The music, the messages, the fellowship, and the programs really help usher you into the joy and reverence of the season. The goal of the church's liturgical seasons is for our rhythms to be recalibrated from stressed to sacred, from distracted to attentive, and from overstuffed to just right.

May you have a truly meaningful and enjoyable Advent and Christmas season!

Yours in Christ,
Chapin



Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

ADVENT

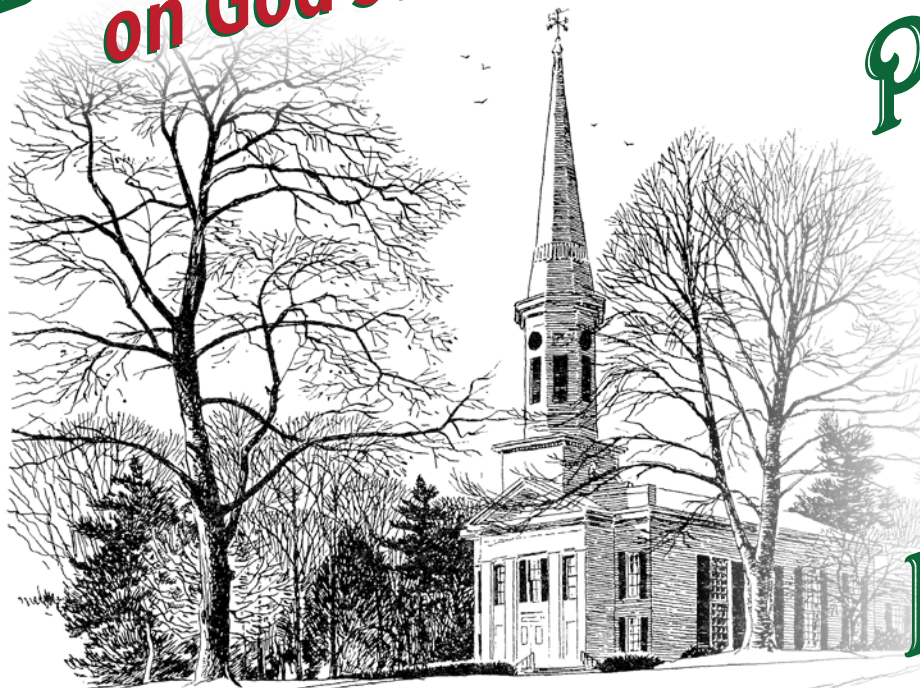
on God's Acre

HOPE

PEACE

JOY

LOVE



Adult Formation

Advent Bible Study

Nativity in Two Acts - Luke and Matthew
Mondays, December 5 & 12, 7:00am, Library
Tuesdays (Women's), December 6 & 13,
9:30am, Parlor

Children & Families

Advent Wreath Making Workshop

Friday, December 2, 4:30-6:00pm
RSVP online or to Sarah Haddad,
churchschool@godsacre.org.

Jesus' Birthday Party

Sunday, December 18, 10:00am in Church School

Fellowship

Joyful Noise at the Powerhouse

Sunday, December 4, 2:00pm
Contact Anne Gunter at gunterfamily5@gmail.com.

Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea

Thursday, December 8, 11:30am, Smith Hall
Contact Lesley Cousley at lacousley@gmail.com.

Men's Fellowship Christmas Dinner

Tuesday, December 13, 6:00pm, Waveny House
Contact Charles Crookenden at
crooko@gmail.com.

Missions & Outreach

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Walter Stewarts Market
December 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17
Contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org.

Music

Advent Musical Moments

Wednesdays at 12:30pm in the Meeting House
• November 30, Anne Maguire, mezzo-soprano
• December 7, Sergio Martinez, bass
• December 14, Aram Tchobanian, tenor
• December 21, Greer Lyle, soprano

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 11, 5:00pm, Meeting House

John Rutter's Gloria

Sunday, December 18, 10:00am
Chancel Choir with a brass quartet, two percussionists,
and an organist.

Youth

MSYG & YG Christmas Worship

Sunday, December 18, 4:00-5:30pm

Minnows, Guppies, and JYG Christmas Worship

Wednesday, December 21, 4:00-5:00pm

Join Us For
**CHRISTMAS
EVE**
on God's Acre



Saturday, December 24

**Family Service with
Nativity Pageant - 4:00pm**

Experience the joy of Christ's birth through a procession of light and nativity pageant in this service designed especially for families.

Worship Service - 6:00pm & 7:00pm

Celebrate Christ's birth at these 30-minute services featuring Christmas scripture and classic hymns.

Caroling on God's Acre - 6:30pm

Join your family, friends, and neighbors for caroling on God's Acre.

Candlelight Service - 11:00pm

A contemplative, candlelight service with scripture, sermon, music, and a procession of light. Communion will be served. String Quartet prelude begins at 10:45pm.



Edwin Eberman

Our featured artist this Advent season is the late Edwin Eberman, a long time member of this church. He was known to New Canaanites as a local artist and one whose influence can be felt throughout our town and our church, painting and drawing many New Canaan landmarks. He designed the Memorial Garden and the cross there is the original one, dating from 1978.

Ed, as he was known, was born in 1905 and died in 1986. After graduating from Carnegie Melon he went to New York where he was art director at a number of magazines. He and his wife, Janet, moved to New Canaan in 1941 and became members of the church that year. He was one of the founders of the Famous Artists Schools in Westport, CT and upon retirement he enjoyed some 20 years of creativity in his studio and in his gardens. Many scenes of his travels were recorded in his annual Christmas card booklet. His pen and ink of the church was used for many decades on the weekly program.



Through all the years, Mr. Eberman nurtured and developed what became an abiding, lifelong passion for art. In fact, his daughter, New Canaan resident Alice Dalrymple, recalled recently he was known to say that he could not remember a time when he was not “always drawing.” It’s one of many ways that Mr. Eberman’s talent took form in New Canaan, along with more permanent examples such as Christmas cards, sketches of local scenes, paintings, and pieces still in place at the New Canaan Inn, Waveny Care Center and in our church.



The Nativity in Two Acts

Join our Bible studies to explore the nativity as it is told in the two gospels that, combined, make up what we know as the Nativity Pageant. In Act I (12/5&6), we will read Luke 1&2, which focuses on Mary, and in Act II (12/12&13), we will read Matthew 1-3, focusing on Joseph. The Monday Morning Bible Study meets Mondays, 7:00-8:00am in the Library, and the Women’s Bible Study meets Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am in the Parlor. For an optional Zoom link or more info, contact Marianna Kilbride at marianna@godsacre.org.



Flower Ministry

“Hallelujah!” The celebration of Christmas 2022 is about to come alive in the Meeting House. The tradition and beauty of our annual floral display will be organized by the Flower Ministry Team. The congregation is invited to make contributions to create a living tribute to our love of the season, our families and friends, and the pure joy of being together. Donations and bulletin listings should be sent to Tracy Goldman at office@godsacre.org by Monday, December 12. The flowers will be on display beginning on the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18.



Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea

Join us for the annual Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea. Please come and enjoy a seasonal lunch, fellowship, and Christmas spirit with the women of the church. We will serve lunch, desserts, and beverages in a transformed Smith Hall.

RSVP by December 1 through the online invitation or by emailing Lesley.

There is no cost to attend this event, but we would like to support Open Doors Shelter in Norwalk this holiday season. If you are able, please bring a donation of warm gloves for men or women.

Please get in touch with Lesley Cousley at lacousley@gmail.com if you would like to bake or decorate in preparation for this festive, fun afternoon.



Joyful Noise

Our Women's Fellowship Ministry invites you to join us to see the play "Joyful Noise" at the Powerhouse Theatre in Waveny Park on Sunday, December 4, at 2:00pm. A joyful play that "hits all the right notes"! Clever and funny as well as inspiring. If you love Handel's Messiah, this play is a Must See! The play tells the story behind "The Messiah" and the women who influenced Handel. It is a true story and describes the politics and passion that nearly prevented The Messiah from ever being performed.



We have purchased a block of twenty-five seats. Tickets are \$25 and you can purchase yours today at: [Women's Fellowship Joyful Noise Play](#)
We hope you can join us!

December Events

Men's Christmas Dinner



Waveny House
December 13, 2022
Cocktails 6:00pm
Dinner 7:00pm

By popular demand, the Men's Fellowship Christmas Dinner will once again be at Waveny House. We have invited ten Pivot House Guests, but due to your generosity last year, we have residual funds to pay for them. There will be a fun raffle for a range of prizes, and we look forward both to the wonderful voices of Pivot House and our very own Congregational Church Men's Carolers!

The cost remains the same at \$70.00 and includes wine and beer provided by the Men's Fellowship Fund.

Please contact Charles Crookenden at crooko@gmail.com with any questions or special requests.

Registration Form:
[MG Christmas Dinner](#)



Men's Small Group



The Men's Small Group effort is up and running. Our next meeting is on Monday, December 19, at 7:30pm. If you have questions or want to get involved, contact Steve Case at scase135@outlook.com.

Friday M4 Breakfasts have begun. Our next meeting is on Friday, December 9, at 7:30 am. Contact Dirk Dunlap at dirkdunlap@hotmail.com for details.

Children's Choir Appearances This Month

Children's Choirs have been having a wonderful fall: dressing up for Halloween, joining the congregation for the monthly Hymn-Sing, and of course singing beautifully during Worship.



Our choristers are featured throughout Advent and December. You can hear them on the following dates:

Sunday, December 4
10:00am Worship Service

Sunday, December 11
5:00pm Lessons and Carols (featuring Margot Emson on the beloved opening "Once in Royal David's City" solo!)

Saturday, December 24
4:00pm Family Christmas Eve Service

Junior Worship Team

Members of the Junior Worship Team will be featured as carolers in the Christmas Eve Nativity Pageant. They have been working on blending classical and popular singing techniques throughout the fall. Come hear these talented Middle Schoolers featured in vocal solos for this special occasion.



Nativity Pageant

Rehearsals are underway for our beloved Nativity Pageant, which will occur during the 4:00pm Family Service on Christmas Eve. We have over 50 children participating in the pageant this year, and it promises to be a beautiful occasion for all! The final Dress Rehearsal is Monday, December 19, and parents are welcome to come to watch and take photos before the Meeting House is filled with people! Costume call and photos at 4:00pm, and the dress rehearsal will take place from 4:30-5:30pm.



Thanksgiving Service Project

What fun and what wonderful fellowship and ministry we had on Sunday, November 20, after worship. Our congregation, young and old, packed boxes for 140 families to receive a Thanksgiving Meal for a family of 4. We are grateful to all who sponsored these meals! The church school children collected over \$500 in their turkey banks and by selling feathers for the turkey in Smith Hall.



Communion

Our Fourth Graders received communion, and what a joyful celebration it was to teach them about this beloved sacrament and to watch them partake of the Lord's supper.



Advent Wreath Workshop

Friday, December 2, 4:30pm-6:00pm

Come one, come all to this beloved tradition in our church! Advent is a time of holy expectation as we prepare our hearts for the birth of the baby Jesus. Advent literally means coming, and as we wait for the Christ child to come, we meditate weekly on Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

You are invited to come with your family and make an Advent wreath. Decorate it with bows, bells, berries, and whatever your heart delights. We will sing carols around the piano in the Meeting House and light the first Advent Candle together. As this is the same night as the Holiday Stroll, we hope you will join us and then stroll into town for dinner and festivities. This event is sponsored by the Children and Families Ministry. The cost per family to cover the wreath is \$30. Look for an invitation; we hope to see you there.



Giving Thanks

Through the church school's combined efforts we were able to raise over \$500 to contribute toward our Thanksgiving service project. A giant turkey in Smith Hall proudly displays the names of many of the participants. A big thank you to the children, their families and those who made generous offerings towards the cost of this important project.



ADVENT

Musical Moments

Wednesdays at 12:30pm
for 30 minutes

NOVEMBER 30

DECEMBER 7



Anne Maguire
mezzo soprano



Sergio Martinez
bass

DECEMBER 14

DECEMBER 21



Aram Tchobanian
tenor



Greer Lyle
soprano

Relax and enjoy the music of the season with Advent Musical Moments. Hear scriptures, prayers, and sacred vocal solos presented by Chancel Choir members. All are invited to bring a friend, too!

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



Sunday, December 11
5:00pm

You are invited to A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols presented by the Chancel Choir and readers from the church. This candlelight service of scripture, carols, and anthems is a tradition in our church and around the world. The entire family will enjoy this Christmas service, which is open to the public. For more information please contact Jody Davis at music@godsacre.org or (203) 966-2651 x827.

HYMN SING-A-LONG

Sunday, December 4
9:45am

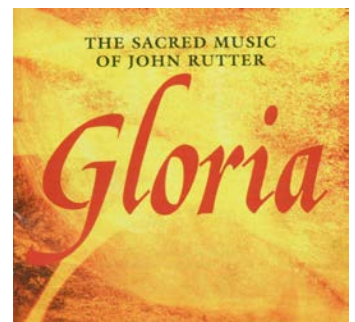
Select your favorite hymns for this informal time to sing with the congregation and organ!



Sunday, December 18

John Rutter's *Gloria*

Sunday, December 18 at the 10:00am service the Chancel Choir and an orchestral ensemble of brass, percussion, and organ will present John Rutter's *Gloria*. The prelude will begin at 9:50 to include festive music.



Christmas Eve Bell Ringing

We are looking for Middle Schoolers interested in ringing bells on Christmas Eve. Time commitment is minimal:

December 11 after church

December 19 5:30–6:00pm

December 24 Call time 3:15pm, 4:00pm Service

Email sydney@godsacre.com if your Middle Schooler would like to make a joyful noise this Christmas.



Join Us For
**CHRISTMAS
EVE**
on God's Acre

Saturday, December 24

4:00pm – Family Worship Service

Cherubs, Spirit Singers, and Joyful Noise will sing at the Family Christmas Eve Service.

6:00 and 7:00pm

Informal 30 minute services

Hear section leaders Sydney Anderson, soprano and Anne Maguire, mezzo soprano sing Pietro Yon's "Gesù Bambino" and Bryan Griffin, tenor sing "O Holy Night" as they lead in Christmas carols.

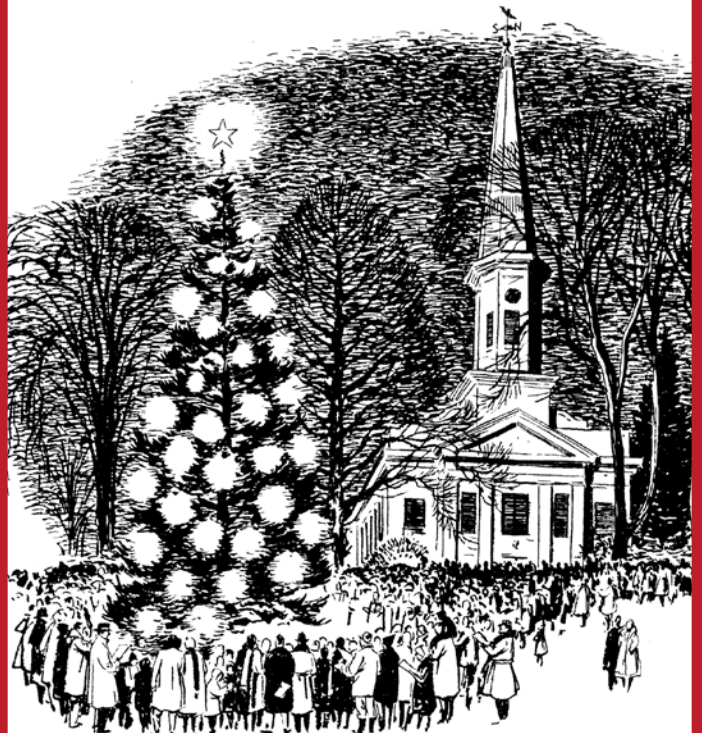
11:00pm

Contemplative Candlelight Service with Communion

String Quartet prelude begins at 10:45pm

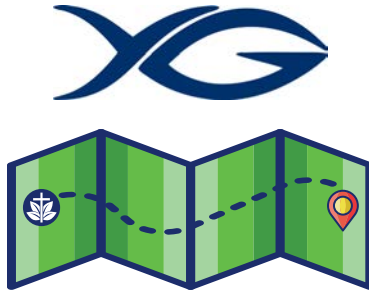
Hear the string quartet, led by Mariusz Skula, play a contemplative prelude of Christmas carols before this candlelight service. Singing anthems of the season will be Sydney Anderson, Anne Maguire, Bryan Griffin, and Hans Tashjian.

There will be NO choir rehearsals the week of December 26. All Choirs resume in 2023.



Save the Date YG Comissioning Sunday

Our Mission Trip location will soon be revealed to our 90 YG Fish, who will be traveling to serve their fellow brothers and sisters this February! We are excited for our annual YG Commissioning on Sunday, January 8th, at the 10:00am worship service! Please mark this date in your calendars, as we are grateful for the prayers and blessings of our congregation.



25th Annual YG Team Reveal

On Sunday, November 13, our YG fish gathered for our 25th Annual YG Team Reveal and Bake-off! In true Christian youth group spirit, we gathered in the Meeting House to lift up prayers and intentions for our year ahead. All fish shared one thing they hoped for our smaller youth group families. A balloon dropped over 100+ balloons in Smith Hall to reveal team member names as laughter and joy filled the room! As per tradition, the first thing we did as teams was to make lasagnas and cookies for Open Doors Shelter. Many of our youth are involved with Feeding 500 at New Canaan High School, which also supports Open Doors Shelter; we're glad to continue their efforts here at church.



MSYG Annual Overnight

MSYG hosted its annual overnight at the church the night before election day! 7th & 8th graders got to take over the church, eat pizza, make ice cream sundaes, and play classic MSYG games. It was a night full of fun, fellowship, and laughter. Later in November, the group had the opportunity to serve with the Waveny Lifecare network, helping to refurbish a staircase at the Waveny Inn and working on giving the New Canaan thrift store some much-needed TLC.



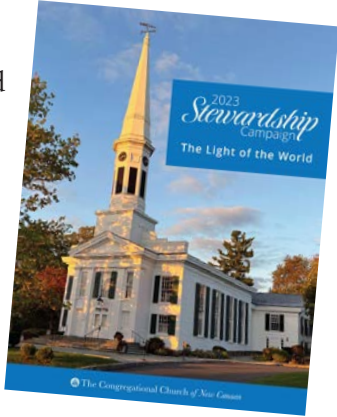
Looking ahead to December, MSYG will have the opportunity to ring bells and raise money for the Salvation Army on Sunday, December 4.

Youth Christmas Worship

On Sunday, December 18, MSYG and YG will combine forces for our annual Christmas Worship. Both groups will meet from 4:00-5:30pm in Smith Hall to ring in the season with reflection, song, and of course, Christmas cookies. Later that week, on Wednesday, December 21, Minnows, Guppies, and JYG will meet for a combined "Littles Christmas Worship" from 4:00-5:00pm.

2023 Stewardship Campaign

On November 20, we kicked off our 2023 Stewardship Campaign. As we begin this new season preparing for our future together, we are focused on Jesus' call in the Sermon on the Mount to be light to the world and to allow God's light to be reflected in our living and giving. We ask that you consider how our community of faith has brightened and enlightened your lives – and that you support our church by pledging to the very best of your ability. We hope and pray that 400 individuals and families will participate in our campaign this year. For the past decade, the number of folks pledging to the church has been about 350. We have set this bold goal knowing we are reaching many more people in person and virtually than ever before. We invite you to reflect and prayerfully consider how much you would be willing to give to thank God and support His work in the world through our church in 2023. Please return your pledge card to the church by mail or pledge online at godsacre.org by December 31.



“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”
 – Matthew 5: 14-16

Celebrating Births in our Congregation



Lille Kellen Maier, daughter of Jacqueline and Kelly Maier



Victoria Mina Murano, daughter of Angelo and Stephanie Murano

Welcoming Team

Welcome New Members!

This November we were overjoyed to welcome 19 new families into our church community. We hope you will join us in embracing them into our family of faith.



Allison Ambler
 Summersweet Lane
 Perrin & Christopher

Rich & Shana Miller
 Weed Street
 Brenna & Andrew

Charles & Alexandra Craige
 Oenoke Ridge Road
 Wells

Jack & Lysie Miller
 Forest Street

Chris & Madeleine Hannah
 Sleepy Hollow Road
 Grant, Eloise & Claire

Dan & Jackie Pellenberg
 Beech Road
 Tommy & Miller

Kim Keenan
 Ponus Ridge Road
 Rowan, Callum & Galen

Kristin Redaelli
 Woods End Road
 Filippo, Nicola, Leonardo & Olivia

Tim & Jessica Knowles
 High View Terrace
 Kaitlyn, Alexandra, Griffin

Alyssa Resnick
 Running Brook Lane
 Layne & Camille

Jeanette Lewis
 Cradle Rock Road East
 Pound Ridge
 Asher

Aziza Roberto
 Thurton Drive
 Cyrus, Blair & Luke

Rowena Lewis
 Cradle Rock Road East
 Pound Ridge

Robert & Nika Sequeira
 Little Brook Road
 Nicolas & Alessia

Jane Loop
 Leslie Lane
 Charlie

Bernadette Shouplin
 Selleck Place

Brendan & Jackie McEwan
 Glenbrook Road, Stamford
 Chloe

Noah & Emily Uzal
 Mill Road
 Gray & Samuel

Denney & Mary Lou Voss
 South Avenue

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 annual Christmas projects target that issue.



The Angel gifts we buy are for children in the homeless or working poor communities.
Due date: December 4



The Dove donations provide food for an entire day for a family or individual in need.
Due date: December 11



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.
Spots still available.



Contact Tracy Goldman at office@godsacre.org with questions.

Mission Trip to Puerto Rico

March 4 – 10, 2023

Sign Up Deadline December 11

Travel with us to San Juan, Puerto Rico, to partner with The First Baptist Church of Rio Piedras. Still suffering from the destruction wrought by Hurricane Maria in 2017, the community is grappling now with fresh damage from Hurricane Fiona. Our work will focus on repairing homes and there will be time to enjoy the island, and explore our faith and fellowship.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayers Shawl Ministry Team meets every other Monday from 10:00am-11:30am in the Parlor. Whether you knit or want to learn, we invite you to join our fellowship and ministry team. Our ministry reaches out to people all over the world who have ties to our church. We would love for you to join us. Our prayer shawls have been given to families at the death of a loved one, on the diagnosis of an illness, and those facing depression, job loss, and many other things. They are a tangible reminder that you are loved and that you are not alone.



Stephen Ministry

Since 2006, our church has had an active Stephen Ministry Team. Today with over 25 active Stephen Ministers, we are here to help walk with you or someone you love through a difficult season in life. Please reach out to one of our Stephen Leaders for more information:

Beth Baker
bethcudabaker@gmail.com

Maria Hemmings
mariahemmings@hotmail.com

Rev. Kibbie Laird
kibbie@godsacre.org

In Loving Memory



Irene C. Swanson
 6/18/1929 - 9/20/2022



OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

Ministers

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

The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird, x2
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

Lindsey Daly
Director of Children's Ministries

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

Tracy Goldman, x829
Administrative Assistant

Sarah Haddad, x826
Church School Coordinator

Karl Hedrick, x839
Organ Scholar

Anthony Jones
Sexton

Marianna Kilbride, x832
Director of Missions and Outreach

Caroline Leather, x835
Director of Operations

Shean-Mei Sheu, x823
Director of Finance

Allison Wolter
Youth Ministries Administrative Assistant

Church Lay Leadership

Diane Bailey
Chair, Personnel

Chris Baker
Chair, Board of Trustees

Barbara Clayton
Chair, Nominating and Governance

Hoyt Davidson
Chair, Board of Deacons



The Congregational Church
of New Canaan

23 Park Street
New Canaan, CT 06840
(203) 966-2651
www.godsacre.org

We are a Stephen Minister Church

Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the January newsletter, please submit by December 19.
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

