



## meditate

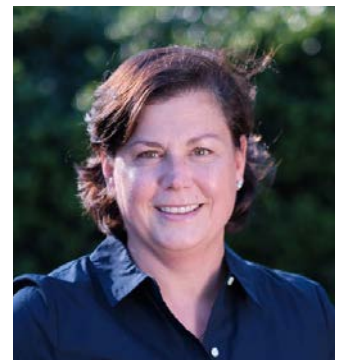
ON MY WORD

### FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Dear Church Family,

November is often thought of as Stewardship Season in the church. A few years ago, I heard Miroslav Volf, one of the best-known and most popular professors at Yale Divinity School, speak about “stuff” and our addiction to stuff in the United States. It touched a nerve (almost severed a nerve, to be honest). And I realized that, like most Americans, this was one of my biggest growth edges. Like many people in New Canaan, I grew up in a nice home, and I like nice stuff.

Volf said some people are particularly good at acquiring stuff. William Randolph Hearst was one of the most talented folks we know in this respect. He built Hearst Castle, a 72,000 square foot palace on 265,000 acres. He collected many treasures for 85 years, and then he died. When he died, his relatives fought over his stuff. Hearst had great stuff.



Professor Miroslav Volf says, “stuff never fills the hole of emptiness inside of us.” Rather, once we hop on “the treadmill of having,” it is very tricky to get off. What is the treadmill of having, you ask? Anyone who has hopped on the treadmill of having can relate to the following statement: “yesterday I didn’t know it existed, and now today I cannot live without it.” Consumerism, Volf says, is the disease of our time.

Here is the secret. We don’t really want stuff, even really nice stuff. We want to feel grateful, joyful, and complete. We want to feel at peace, deep peace with the world. This was the most remarkable take on stewardship I have ever heard. Volf was 100% correct.

So how do we get off the treadmill of having? Thank goodness there is a cure. And it is simple. We serve. Jesus served, and by following Jesus’ example of feeding the poor, clothing the naked, praying with those in prison, helping a neighbor, caring for the sick, and praying for those in need, we are transformed from people who cannot get enough to become truly grateful people. Grateful people serve. Why? Because service immediately recalibrates our inner sense of well-being. It shows us we have much to be thankful for. Service is good for the soul.

*Continued on page two*

*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 your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 4:5-7*

# Thanksgiving Service Project

## Sunday, November 20 • 11:00am-12:30pm

On Sunday, November 20 the week before Thanksgiving, our church will serve in one of its most beloved traditions the Thanksgiving Service Project. We serve 145 families in neighboring towns in need. Come grab a box and decorate it, and then fill it full of delicious food for a family of four to enjoy a Thanksgiving Feast. Everyone in our church family is encouraged to participate in this all-church effort to feed our neighbors this Thanksgiving!

### Children's Ministries

Church schoolers are busy fundraising for our Thanksgiving Service Project. During church school, each class brainstormed ways to both earn money and request donations. Armed with the knowledge that roughly \$35 provides an entire Thanksgiving meal to a family of 5, our young church members are out collecting funds that will contribute heavily to the food we will later be boxing and packing. If you are looking to participate in our fundraising efforts, please look for our middle schoolers, who will be collecting donations at a Turkey Drive table during Fellowship Hour in November.



### Youth

Our Youth Groups will have their part in our annual Thanksgiving Service Project! Our Guppies will make hot cocoa jars with marshmallows, and JYG will pack cookie in a jar mix for families served by the project. YG fish will do their annual part of the project by assisting as volunteers during the all-church packing event and then delivering the boxes to the local non-profits. The schedule of events is below.

### Monday, November 14

Guppies make cocoa jars at normal program time 5:00-6:00pm.

### Tuesday, November 15

JYG makes cookie mix jars at normal program time 5:00-6:15pm.

### Sunday, November 20

YG traveling mission fish are expected to sign up either as an individual to help with the Thanksgiving Service Project Event or with their families for the delivery of the completed Thanksgiving boxes in the afternoon. We kindly ask that if you have multiple children in the program that you plan to help deliver boxes. Each car should be able to fit 5 boxes in the trunk or back seat.

Drivers/Families should pull in the front circle during your allocated time slot, where you will be greeted by a YG advisor who will tell you what local non-profit you are delivering to. To sign-up, look for the sign-up genius from the ministry team in early November!

### Shifts for YG fish volunteering individually

10:00-11:30am

11:00am-12:30pm

12:30-1:00pm

2:45-3:30pm

### Driving Shifts for Families

1:00pm

3:00pm

5:00pm

### Missions & Outreach

Our November plate offering goes towards the 2022 Thanksgiving Service Project.

Benefitting the following local agencies:

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

During the month of November, we partner with these agencies to feed about 1000 individuals a full Thanksgiving meal. Like last year, we will gather at the church the Sunday before Thanksgiving, 11/20, 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 the "Thanksgiving Project." You can also give a cash or check donation in the Sunday plate or stop by the church office. Contact Tracy Goldman, [office@godsacre.org](mailto:office@godsacre.org), or Marianna Kilbride, [marianna@godsacre.org](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org).



## 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 link here:

[Women's Fellowship Joyful Noise Play](#)

We hope you can join us!

## Ladies' Night Out

**Thursday, November 17, 7:00-9:00pm**

Wine, cheese, and friends. What more would you ask for? Treat yourself to a Ladies' Night out before the busy holiday season begins. We will gather at the home of Stephanie Radman (912 Wedd Street), where we'll learn about wines from Italian wine specialist Alessandro Dellascenca and enjoy good conversation with friends old and new. The event cost is \$25. Please make sure to RSVP at the link below by November 10. [Ladies' Night Out RSVP](#)



*Continued from page one*

Our church believes in mission! Each year we give away \$350,000 to 12 mission partners. Beyond that, however, we know the value of hands-on involvement. We have many opportunities to serve in the coming months and throughout the year. Look for the Thanksgiving Service Project where you can sponsor a family of four for a Thanksgiving dinner, look for our Dove Tree, go through your closets and give coats and sweatshirts and other warm items to Midnight Run, sign up to serve at Pacific House, or sign up for our OG Mission Trip in March!

The truth is we don't really want stuff, even really nice stuff. We want to feel grateful, joyful, and complete. We want to feel at peace, deep peace with the world. The joy is not, as it turns out, in the getting. The real joy is in the giving.

Blessings and peace,  
Kibbie

## Save the Date



## Ladies Christmas Tea

**Thursday, December 8  
11:30am-1:00pm**

Invitation to follow. Contact Lesley Cousley, [lacousley@gmail.com](mailto:lacousley@gmail.com), if you would like to decorate in preparation for this festive and fun event.



# 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](mailto:marianna@godsacre.org).



# Circle of Friends

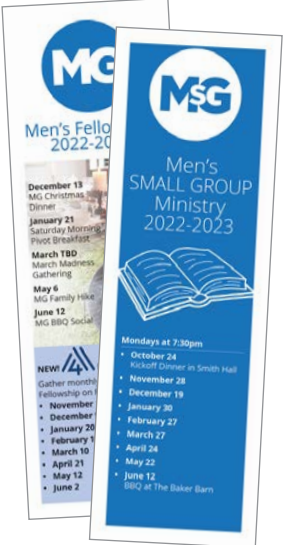
November 13, 2022 - Our First Circle of Friends Guest Preacher - Reverend Kate Murphy

As I mentioned last month, we will periodically host a friend of Chapin's for a weekend as a guest preacher and conversation partner. This month we welcome Reverend Kate Murphy. Originally from Louisville, KY, Kate studied biology and music at DePauw University in Greencastle, IN. She received her Masters of Divinity and Masters of Sacred Theology from Boston University. Kate moved to Charlotte in 2004 when she accepted the call to be the Associate Pastor for the Youth and Children's Ministry at Cook's Memorial Presbyterian Church. In 2008, she became the Pastor of Hickory Grove Presbyterian Church, guiding the church through a transformation process that resulted in a growing, diverse congregation that serves the Hickory Grove community.



# Upcoming MG and MG Small Group Events

After a successful launch on October 24, MG and MG Small Groups are off and running. The next MG Small Group meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 28 at 7:30pm, initially meeting in the Meeting House before breaking into Small Groups. Contact Steve Case at [scase@outlook.com](mailto:scase@outlook.com) to learn more.



# 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 with which 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 as well as 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](mailto:crooko@gmail.com) with any questions or special requests.

Reserve Your Seat: To reserve your seat click the link below: [Men's Fellowship Christmas Dinner](#)





SAVE THE DATES

*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

**Sunday, December 11 at 5:00 PM**

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols presented by the Chancel Choir.

**Sunday, December 18 at 10:00am service**

John Rutter's Gloria will be presented by the Chancel Choir. The choir will be accompanied by a brass quartet, two percussionists, and organist.

All Saints Sunday Celebration

Sunday, November 6 at the 10:00am service

To celebrate All Saints Sunday, hear guest French Horn player Robert Hoyle. He will play solos as well as accompany the Chancel Choir.



Pivot House Men's Chorus

Sunday, November 13  
10:00am service

Hear the Pivot House Men's Chorus raise their voices in song. Pivot Ministries is a long-time benevolence of The Congregational Church that offers a spiritual turning point for men with drug and alcohol addictions. Pivot Ministries is a non-profit, Christian residential outreach program that began in 1970 and has worked with hundreds of men from across the nation as they begin a new life. The Men's Chorus was established several years ago to help talented men heal through music. The chorus has recorded several CDs, which will be available for sale. You may greet our guests in Smith Hall during Fellowship Hour. Pivot House Men's Chorus is sponsored by the Mary Bradley Clarke Fund.



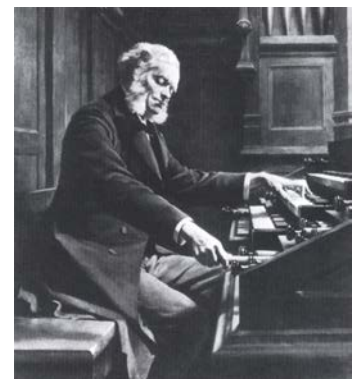
Organ Celebration of César Franck

Sunday, November 13 at 4:00pm

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 111 Oenoke Ridge Road

Jody Blaine Davis will join Fairfield County Organists in a recital to memorialize the 200th anniversary of organist César Franck's death. Sunday, November 13, at 4:00pm at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in New Canaan will host this one-hour concert, free and open to the public.

Jody will play a quiet, reflective piece, *Fantasia in C Major, opus 16*.





## Children's Choirs Sing in November

Don't miss our children's choirs sharing their voices during worship this month!

### November 6

Spirit Singers and Joyful Noise join Chancel Choir at the 10:00am worship service.

### November 20

All Children's Choirs sing at the 10:00am worship service, including Cherubs, Spirit Singers, Joyful Noise, and Junior Worship Team.



### Nativity Pageant Rehearsals are underway!

We have 45 children who have committed to acting out the Blessed Christmas Story, and it's going to be beautiful! If your child would like to get involved in the pageant on Christmas Eve, we still have room for non-speaking roles such as animals, shepherds, and angels, as well as Stage Crew duties for 5th-8th graders who would like to remain "behind the scenes." Email [sydney@godsacre.org](mailto:sydney@godsacre.org) to register.

Upcoming Nativity Pageant rehearsals this month:

**Sunday, November 6** – 11:15am-12:00pm

**Sunday, November 20** – 11:15am-12:15pm

**Monday, November 21** – 4:00-6:00pm (Dinner included!)

**Monday, November 28** – Call times TBD





## Looking Back

### October Church School Highlights

October was a busy month in the life of our church school. From holding our first chapel service to completing and launching service projects and celebrating spiritual milestones, the month was rich in fellowship, service and learning. Check out some of the highlights!



Children through grade 4 attended their first chapel service, joining together to explore song, scripture, and prayer as a church school community. Here, fourth graders read the scripture of the day.



Grades 5-7 complete a service project, gift wrapping and writing cards to the many children who received new sneakers through our church wide sneaker drive.



Third graders celebrate a cherished spiritual milestone and received their Bibles.



## Election Day Fun at Church

We welcome all children Pre-K through 7th grade to join us on Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, from 9:30-11:00am. While grown-ups head to the polls, we will exercise our own right to vote on snacks and movie selections and have crafts and games to provide entertainment and fellowship on this day off from school. Please feel free to drop in for all or part of the morning, as it works for your family!



We had 75 children and adults come for our first ever Family Night Spooktacular. There were prizes for the most creative costumes, games, and wonderful fellowship.



SAVE THE DATE - NOVEMBER 6

## Fourth Grade Communion in Worship

Bring your 4th grader for this very special day where our Fourth Graders will stay in worship and receive communion for the first time. Whether you attended our Communion Workshop on October 16 or not, everyone is welcome. Come early to worship, we will have photos taken!



## Confirmation this November

Confirmants are headed into New York City on the evening of November 11 to serve the homeless through Midnight Run. This is an incredibly transformative evening that provides perspective for our 8th graders. Sweatshirts, sweatpants, and jacket donations are needed leading up to this evening. If you would like to make a donation, please drop off your items in the bins labeled "Midnight Run" in Room 8.



## October was a great month for Youth Ministries!

YG finished off the month with two big events. Seniors and Freshmen in Youth Group (YG) had the opportunity to serve with Midnight Run on the morning of Sunday, October 23. Both grades slept over at the church the night before and traveled into New York City the following morning to serve the local homeless population. The group then had an afternoon of fun in the Big Apple. That evening our Sophomores and Juniors met at Filling in the Blanks to pack backpacks for those living in food-insecure households.

The following weekend our YGers set up a trunk-or-treat for the youth of our church. Seniors decorated their cars according to a theme decided on by their team. All in all, it was a successful event to gear up for Halloween!

November has a lot to offer for MSYG. MSYG will host its annual overnight at the church from the evening of November 7 to the morning of November 8. Come for pizza, games, and worship. This will not be an evening to miss!





# 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.



The Dove donations 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 13 or contact Tracy Goldman at [office@godsacre.org](mailto:office@godsacre.org).



## Mission Trip to Puerto Rico

March 4 - 10, 2023

Travel with us to San Juan, Puerto Rico, to partner with The First Baptist Church of Río 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. Signups begin November 6.





## Prayer Shawl Ministry Blesses Friends Around the World

The Prayer Shawl Ministry Team meets in the Parlor every other Monday morning. They open in prayer, tell stories while they knit, and share their lives. When a prayer shawl is complete, each person in the room prays over it, not knowing where it will go. They pray for healing, for grace and strength, for God's presence, and for peace whatever may come.

The following letter of thanks was received from a prayer shawl recipient. It gives you an indication of how special these prayer shawls are and how comforting they are to the recipients:

To the Prayer Shawl Ministry,  
 I want to thank you for the Prayer Shawl I received from your group upon the sudden death of my husband of 70 years. Your kind message of blessings and love is most comforting as I wrapped the shawl around my shoulders as I begin each day and as I end each day, alone. The shawl reminds me to seek courage and know that God's love and peace surround me.  
 God bless all in your group. Thank you for participating in such a meaningful way. My prayers are with you.

If you would like to join this wonderful ministry, please reach out to Twee Haffner at [tweehaffner@gmail.com](mailto:tweehaffner@gmail.com) or Kibbie Laird at [kibbie@godsacre.org](mailto:kibbie@godsacre.org). We are seeking more knitters!



## Transportation Ministry Restarts!



We are looking to restart our Transportation Ministry as a part of our Pastoral Care team. If you would be willing to drive a member of our congregation, typically seniors, to and from church once a month or to and from one of our fellowship events, please contact Kibbie Laird at [kibbie@godsacre.org](mailto:kibbie@godsacre.org). Our live-streamed services are wonderful and convenient, but there is nothing like being at church in person! We want everyone to be able to enjoy the fellowship of dear friends and neighbors. Let Kibbie know if you think this is something you might like to do and how often you would like to be a driver. The only thing needed is gentleness and patience.

## Maria Hemmings Installed as New Stephen Leader

On October 9, we installed Maria Hemmings as a new Stephen Leader in our church. She will join Beth Baker and Kibbie Laird in running our Stephen Ministry program.

Stephen Ministry is a lay care giving ministry that supplements the pastoral care of the ministers. The program teaches laypersons to provide one-on-one care for individuals who request support. The confidential care-giver and care-receiver relationship, usually conducted by weekly visits, may continue for months or years.

In our church, we have over 25 trained Stephen Ministers. Among us, we have seen a lot of life. Some of us are widowed, others divorced, some have lost jobs, some struggle with chronic health concerns, or care for aging parents. Whatever the challenge you or a loved one is facing, we are here to help. We are trained to walk beside you, confidentially.



Stephen Ministry's motto is Christ caring for people through people. We hope you will reach out if you need help. And if we reach out to you, we hope you will receive help and let us walk with you for a time, while the path is difficult.



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

*We are a Stephen Minister Church*

## Newsletter Submissions

If you are planning on contributing to the November newsletter, please submit by October 19.  
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 [laurel@godsacre.org](mailto:laurel@godsacre.org)

